

**Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee**

**Wednesday 8 May 2024**

**8th Meeting, 2024 (Session 6)**

## **Inquiry into A9 Dualling Programme: Evidence session**

### **Introduction**

1. This paper provides a brief overview of the Committee's inquiry into the A9 Dualling Project. This inquiry was prompted by [the Committee's consideration of petition PE1992: Dual the A9 and improve road safety](#).
2. The subject of this petition falls within the remit of the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee. They were invited to nominate a reporter to attend and contribute to consideration of PE1992. The Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee nominated its Convener, Edward Mountain MSP, to this role.

### **Background**

3. The Committee began its consideration of petition PE1992: Dual the A9 and improve road safety in February 2023 by inviting views from a range of stakeholders including community councils, the transport and engineering industry, and road safety organisations. [12 written submissions have been received and are available on the petition webpage](#).
4. On 14 June 2023, [the Committee heard evidence from the petitioner, Laura Hansler, the Civil Engineering and Contractors Association \(CECA\) Scotland, and Transport Scotland](#).
5. [A call for views ran from 9 August 2023 to 15 September 2023. SPICe have provided a brief summary of the responses received](#).
6. Having gathered initial views on the issues raised by the petition, the Committee agreed at its meeting on 6 September 2023 to elevate its scrutiny of PE1992 to the level of an inquiry.
7. Four oral evidence panels have taken place so far as part of this inquiry:
  - [On 4 October 2023 the Committee heard from Alex Neil, former Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure and Capital Investment](#)
  - [On 24 January 2024 the Committee heard evidence from CECA Scotland, and then from current and former senior officials at Transport Scotland](#)
  - [On 7 February 2024 the Committee heard evidence from the then Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Net Zero and Just Transition, Máiri McAllan](#).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Changes to Scottish Government ministerial portfolios took place following this evidence session.

8. The Committee has also received written evidence from Transport Scotland, including 74 documents relating to advice provided to Ministers between 2012 and February 2023 on progress to dual the A9. [SPICe have provided a summary of the documents received from Transport Scotland.](#)
9. [Written evidence has also been provided by 7 former Ministers, who held portfolio responsibility for infrastructure or transport between 2012 and 2023.](#)
10. The Committee has also received two written submissions from the then Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Net Zero and Just Transition:
  - [Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Net Zero and Just Transition submission of 24 November 2023](#)
  - [Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Net Zero and Just Transition submission of 20 December 2023](#)
11. [The interim Chief Executive of Transport Scotland wrote to the Committee on 12 February 2024.](#)
12. At its meeting on 21 February 2024, the Committee agreed to write to the CECA Scotland, and to invite former First Ministers, Alex Salmond and Nicola Sturgeon, to give evidence on this inquiry.

## Key issues

13. Based on the evidence it has heard to date, the Committee have identified the following key issues:
  - Funding for the A9 Dualling project
  - Governance and decision-making structures, including how progress on the project was and is being monitored
  - Confidence in the process going forward, including the availability of the skills, workforce, and materials necessary to complete the project within the revised timescales set out by the Scottish Government.

## Today's meeting

14. At today's meeting, the Committee will hear evidence from:
  - Alex Salmond, former First Minister
15. This evidence session will provide the Committee with the opportunity to further explore the Scottish Government's decision in 2011 to commit to a 2025 target for dualling the A9 between Perth and Inverness.

**Clerks to the Committee**  
**May 2024**