

# Intelligent transport systems: construction of high speed scales is delayed, there are also shortcomings in the way the Ministry of Transport managed the construction of systems

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The Supreme Audit Office focused on how the Ministry of Transport (MoT) had managed and, together with the Road and Motorway Directorate (RMD), had introduced selected road Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) between 2012 and 2018. Following the so-called ITS Action Plan<sup>1</sup> to improve the safety and fluidity of transport operations, these systems are built by the Ministry of Transport and the RMD with the aim not only to synchronise and optimise the transport of passengers and freight, but also, e. g., to reduce the environmental impact of transport. The identified shortcomings relate mainly to how the MoT manages the ITS deployment. The set objectives are general, necessary indicators have not been laid down, so the MoT cannot objectively monitor and assess whether the procured ITS helps to achieve the expected benefits. In total, this leads to a lack of real project management.

In fact, the objectives of the Action Plan are not concrete and measurable, and thus, substantial SMART indicators are missing. These are, however, a prerequisite for the Ministry to find out, for example, whether the strategy is being implemented or whether it is necessary to accept certain changes. This has one goal - to ensure that the public funds are used in the most efficient way. About CZK 9 billion had been allocated for ITS projects in the Action Plan, while at the end of 2018, projects worth more than CZK 2.3 billion were started or completed.

In the case of supported systems, the Ministry and the RMD did not assess their effects — namely the impact of the systems on road safety, reduction of congestion, or, for example, road traffic compliance.

Auditors continued to focus on three specific elements of ITS. One of them were scales for high-speed control to prevent damage caused to the motorway and road network, mainly by overloaded haulage vehicles. By the end of 2018, the RMD had failed to put into operation any scales of this type on the roads which come under its management, even though, according to the Plan, the first scale for high-speed control was already supposed to be in operation in 2016 and 2017. Compared to regions, five such scales were in operation in autumn 2018.

The activity of the National Traffic Information Centre as the main office of the Single Traffic Information System, which was the second of the ITS examined, was assessed positively. The Centre ensures collection and evaluation of traffic information, which it subsequently provides to both public and private bodies. The system receives data from already operating ITS and other sources to the desirable extent, approximately 3 000 traffic information per day.

The SAO recommends the MoT to establish indicators to assess benefits of ITS deployment, including its initial and expected values, and continuously assess the achievement of the objectives of the Action Plan according to these indicators. On the basis of such an assessment, the MoT is also supposed to transparently select ITS projects to be supported, which at the time of the audit did not happen — the Ministry of Transport was selecting them without defined objective criteria.

“We report on similar weaknesses in programme management in other ministries as well. Moreover, in the case of the Ministry of Transport, it is a pity that it has not made use of the proposals already developed by its own organisation - the Transport Research Centre - in 2017, to assess performance of installed road ITS, which is exactly the same that we recommend. On the other hand, it is also good to see that some information systems in the public administration actually operate and provide quality services, “said Jan Kinšt, Member of the SAO who headed the audit.

**Communication Department**  
Supreme Audit Office