
A dispute between two mayors in Paris has brought traffic chaos to the city. Confused motorists didn't know which way to turn when they saw two different one-way system signs. Alasdair Sandford reports:

Commuters had a nasty surprise on Monday when they found one of the main routes into the French capital **was blocked**. Drivers **heading the other way** were confronted with "no entry" signs in all directions. For two days there was **chaos among bemused drivers** at the point where the two **rival systems converged**, with all traffic **forced down one side road**.

Vox pops: "It's a real mess now for a lot of people who are forced to go by car to their work and go back to their home by car."

"It's difficult to go to work. We lost between 15 or 20 minutes, per day."

The confusion followed a decision by the mayor of Levallois Patrick Balkany, from France's ruling right-wing party. He wanted to introduce a one-way system to free up traffic through his borough. Fearing an **overspill** into his district, the mayor of Clichy Gilles Catoire, a socialist, brought in a one-way system running the other way. The local prefect, representing the French state, has **issued a decree** ordering the immediate return of two-way traffic in Clichy, accusing its mayor of **provoking serious disorder**. Mr Catoire is refusing to **back down**, saying he'll challenge the decision in court.

Alasdair Sandford, BBC News, Paris

Vocabulary and definitions

1	commuters	people who travel from their homes to work (usually in a city) every working day
2	was blocked	here, traffic wasn't able to move
3	heading the other way	driving in the opposite direction
4	chaos among bemused drivers	disorder among the drivers who were confused
5	rival systems converged	different and competing ways of doing things (here, ways of controlling and moving traffic) came together
6	forced down one side road	had to go down a small road (one that's usually not suitable for a lot of traffic)
7	overspill	here, the extra traffic, caused by the first one-way system, from Levallois, coming into Clichy
8	issued a decree	sent out an official ruling
9	provoking serious disorder	here, making drivers confused and causing serious traffic problems
10	back down	admit that he is wrong

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