

French towns on one-way street to head-on collision

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LEVALLOIS-PERRET, France — French commuters ran head-on into a local political standoff Tuesday after feuding towns redirected road markings to leave two busy one-way streets facing off against each other.

The Paris suburb of Levallois-Perret and its conservative council lies next door to middle-class and Socialist-run Clichy-la-Garenne. Daily, thousands of motorists pass between the two, heading into and out of the capital.

This week, after deciding that the D909 route brought too much congestion to his town, Levallois mayor Patrick Balkany declared his portion of it a one-way street, speeding traffic into neighbouring Clichy.

Balkany's Clichy counterpart, Gilles Catoire, was not amused, and promptly issued a decree of his own, declaring his section of the D909 one-way as well, only this time in the opposite direction.

Chaos naturally ensued, and on Tuesday both local and national police were deployed to direct traffic away from the gridlock on the towns' borders and onto narrow suburban routes unsuited to high volumes of commuter traffic.

"What Clichy has done is not a long-term solution, but it is a response to a unilateral decision by the town of Levallois," said Clichy's deputy mayor Alain Fournier, a Green Party member.

"Such a matter should have been dealt with at an inter-municipal level, but we were never invited to discuss it," he told AFP.

Balkany denied this, and insisted: "The mayor of Clichy has taken a position that is unreasonable and is hurting his own constituents."



Chaos ensued when two sections of a road were declared one-way streets but in opposite directions

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