



National Coring Programme of Road Reinstatements 2019/2020

NATIONAL CORING PROGRAMME

All Roads Authorities across mainland Scotland, along with Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and Transport Scotland have completed a programme of coring reinstatements undertaken by the Statutory Undertakers following their works on the road network. This was to determine if the reinstatement of the bituminous layers had been undertaken to the required specification. This was the tenth National Coring Programme and the cores were taken on reinstatements carried out between 1st April 2018 and 31st March 2019.

The report was published the Scottish Road Works Commissioner's website on the 15 July 2020:

<https://roadworks.scot/index.php/publications/national-coring-report-20192020-programme>

Following years of improving the quality of reinstatements, this last coring programme has again noted a further increase in standards. A total of 1666 cores were taken and 201 failed to comply with the specification. This equates to a pass rate of 88%, which is an increase of 6% since the previous 2015/2016 programme.

Whilst noting the majority of Statutory Undertakers have performed well, improving on the previous programme, the results from some telecommunications undertakers remain disappointing. This sector only achieved a pass rate of 80%, which remains below the required 90%. Representatives of this sector have fully accepted that this standard of reinstatement is not acceptable and will engage with the Scottish Road Works Commissioner to develop plans and procedures to improve their performance.

Notes:

Utility companies have statutory powers to place and maintain their apparatus in the public road but must comply with legislation: codes of practice and co-operate with roads authorities to minimise the disruption and damage caused by their road works.

The Roads Authorities and Utilities Committee Scotland (RAUC(S)) is a body set up to co-ordinate issues arising from this throughout Scotland. It has joint chairs representing the roads authorities and utility companies as follows:

Roads Authorities co-chair – Martin Polland (Transport Scotland)
Martin.Polland@transport.gov.scot

Utility companies co-chair – Jim Forbes (City Fibre)
Jim.Forbes@cityfibre.com

When roads are excavated by utility companies, they must be reinstated in accordance with a national specification issued by the Scottish Government.

This can be viewed at <https://roadworks.scot/legislation-guidance/codes-practice/specification-reinstatement-openings-roads>

The coring programme involves taking cores from a representative sample of recent reinstatements and checking to ensure they comply with this specification. At the time of testing, the reinstatements are not showing any outward signs of failure, but those that do not meet the specification are considered to be more likely to give rise to problems in the future. Road works in Scotland are monitored by the Scottish Road Works Commissioner who has a duty to promote good practice and the power to impose penalties on organisations who are not complying with their duties.