



ROADS AUTHORITIES & UTILITIES COMMITTEE (SCOTLAND)

ADVICE NOTE 33

SROR Panel and A9 Approval Trial Process

Version 2.0

November 2025

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Version History

Version	Date	Notes
1.00	June 2025	Initial version. Approved by RAUC(S) on 25th June 2025
2.00	November 2025	Voting alterations for approvals

Specification for the Reinstatement of Openings in the Road

SROR Panel and A9 Approval Trial Process

A9.4.5 Constitution and Makeup of the SROR Panel

A9.4.5.1 The role of the SROR Panel is to objectively guide, monitor progress, communicate, and approve any Live Trials that are being promoted. Where there have been previous Trials approved, the SROR Panel would continue to monitor, update, and communicate any findings. In addition, the SROR Panel will give further guidance to issues raised in terms of clarification of the Statutory Specification, either through enquiry or remit from RAUC(S).

A9.4.5.2 The SROR Panel will consist of the following membership:

Joint Chairs: 1 Road Authority and 1 Utility

Main Members: 4 Road Authority Members (1 from each Area RAUC committee)

4 Utility Members (represented from each sector – Water, Gas, Electricity, Telecoms, etc.)

Other Members: Office of the Scottish Road Works Commissioner

A9.4.5.3 The combination of the Utility sector membership should be decided by SJUG where there are more than 4 sectors wanting to be involved on the Panel.

A9.4.5.4 The Road Authority membership should be a representative from each of the Area RAUC's.

A9.4.5.5 Depending on the type and subject of any A9 Trial, as well as other initiatives (which is extended to Surfacing Materials), the SROR Panel

may wish to extend the membership, over and above that of those in A9.4.5.2. to other relevant bodies (e.g., Testing Laboratories, Quarry Material Suppliers, CECA, etc.) to provide subject matter expertise to any given part of the process. These will be “Corresponding Members” and will have no voting privileges.

- A9.4.5.6 All involved with the panel should remain objective and based upon any decisions on engineering facts and results.
- A9.4.5.7 Where there is a need to vote on any item, it is the Main Members that will vote on these. The Joint Chairs are to guide and be objective to allow a fair and unbiased view of the matters concerned.
- A9.4.5.8 In the result of any deadlock, or any negative response, in any voting outcomes, the Joint Chairs must deliberate on the reasons of the result and attempt to resolve accordingly. In the unlikely event that the Joint Chairs cannot decide or resolve, as a last resort, it is referred to the Scottish Road Works Commissioner to have final and deciding vote on the matter.

A9.4.6 A9 Register

- A9.4.6.1 The A9 Register will be a live Appendix for the “Specification for the Reinstatement of Openings in Roads” (SROR). Therefore, any item that has been approved will be available, within its parameters of use, in Scotland as a whole. The administration and website will be maintained by the Office of the Scottish Road Works Commissioner.
- A9.4.6.2 All items that are going through A9 Trials at any given time will be listed and all relevant information to its progression available to be viewed, within reason and for communication purposes.
- A9.4.6.3 Once approved, all relevant documentation relating to the Trial and its use will be available through the A9 Register. In the spirit of continuous improvement, any future relevant updates after its approval on the item’s performance, conditions of use, etc. will be added for general awareness.

A9.4.6.4 The A9 Register is to be updated within a month of Panel convening to allow effective communication to the RAUC(S) community, Industry and interested parties for awareness. Only information that is within the parameters of the A9 Trial and subject to its confidentiality should be communicated.

A9.4.7 A9 Trial Approval Framework

A9.4.7.1 Any Approval Trial that is to be considered and progressed must be underwritten with how these benefits the Road Works Community in either or all the following:

- Carbon Reduction (i.e. Net Zero)
- Improved impact on Whole Life Cost (Durability and Performance)
- Increased Productivity (i.e. Reduced disruption)
- Improved Safety (i.e. digging technique)
- Or significant other items

A9.4.7.2 Trials may be undertaken in any location of the road and/or in any way that is pertinent to the purposes that it is demonstrating and attempting to be proven.

A9.4.7.3 All proposed criteria of the trial (including any Success Criteria and claimed benefits) must be laid out in the proposals for the Trials at the submission stage to the Panel.

A9.4.7.4 All information relating to Finance and Intellectual Property will remain confidential throughout the Trial Process.

A9.4.7.5 The selection of sites, if needed, will be dictated by the specific item that is being trialled. Any proposal must indicate the number of sites that it is considered needed, where (location types and Road Authority area), and why these are applicable to the Approval Trial.

- A9.4.7.6 Approval trials that are situated in carriageways for Materials should consider a suitable number of sites to represent a range of traffic conditions, ground conditions, and positions in the carriageway (e.g. within and outside a wheel track, longitudinal and transverse orientation (for trench reinstatements)). These should be agreed with the Panel.
- A9.4.7.7 The duration of all Approval Trials (if a physical trial is required at all) is to be at the discretion of the Panel.
- A9.4.7.8 Where an item seeking A9 Approval in Scotland has considerable evidence and proven demonstrative performance elsewhere, it may not need significant, or any, physical A9 Trial at all. If the Promotor can provide the required and pertinent evidence demonstrating a compliance, performance and matching criteria set out in A9.4.7.1 above, this may be sufficient to the Panel for acceptance.
- A9.4.7.9 A record of all tests and/or test sites must be kept enabling effective monitoring and management of the Trial. Specific details must be agreed and approved by the Panel as part of the Memorandum of Understanding for the Approval Process and placed upon the A9 Register.
- A9.4.7.10 Any Inspections (Initial, Interim or Final) and Testing Requirements (such as Core Sampling) is to be advised in the submission of the A9 Trial Proposal. This would include their frequency and timescales. Their results will be made available to the Panel at the relevant times and submitted to the A9 Register and SRWR.
- A9.4.7.11 Where reinstatements may have been accidentally damaged during a trial for any reason and, subsequently, rendered unsuitable for accurate assessment, these will have remedial action applied and may have to be removed from the process. Reasons for the failure and removal would be submitted to the A9 Register and will not affect the overall objective of the result and purpose of the trial. It is, therefore, recommended that trials should include duplicate sites for each road type, category, position,

orientation, etc. for this reason.

A9.4.7.12 In the case where an approval trial reinstatement requires remedial action, then regardless of the reason, the undertaker must provide both the authority concerned and the Panel with full details of the remedial measures and why they were needed within one month of its completion. Where practicable, records of surface measurements, photographs etc taken before and after the remedial work should be kept by the undertaker and copies provided to the authority and the Panel for submission to the A9 Register. As in A9.4.7.10 above, this may not automatically mean that the trial has failed or been connected to its objectives.

A9.4.7.13 With the approval of the Panel, further use of the ARMs or ATs under trial may be permitted before completion of the trial if they are used within the initial parameters of the A9 Trial Proposal. These subsequent sites and/or usage will be required for evidence of a successful conclusion to an A9 Trial and the Panel may have to consider an extension to its duration.

A9.4.7.14 On successful completion of the Approval Trial, its results, audit trail and appropriate Factory Production Control or Quality System documentation is to be entered onto the A9 Register for transparency and confidence of use purposes. The level of documentation to be available on the A9 Register will be by agreement between all the parties involved.

A9.4.7.15 After successful completion of an Approval Trial, permission for further use of the ARM or ATs must not be unreasonably withheld by any authority and must only be denied for legitimate engineering reasons. Where reasonable engineering concerns are expressed, the nature of which must be stated and relayed to the Panel for their consideration.

A9.4.7.16 Further use of the item involved in any successful trial can only be used in the way it has been proven. For example, this may be a limitation of use in certain road categories, ground conditions, etc.

- A9.4.7.17 Due to the open nature of the Trial Process, consultation will be ongoing throughout the Trial Process. Opportunity to discuss any aspect of the Trial will be afforded (e.g. Local or Area RAUC(S), etc.).
- A9.4.7.18 Upon Approval Recommendation from the SROR Panel, the Trial Promotor will communicate to RAUC(S) in the appropriate way for Final Approval.
- A9.4.7.19 No parties involved in the Approval Trial will withhold information to any aspect of its progression to the Panel. Also, no parties will unreasonably obstruct Approval Trials, or cause its termination, provided it has been carried out in accordance with the terms of the Approval Trial Agreement
- A9.4.7.20 Where there is a dispute of use, this should follow the Disputes process through RAUC(S).
- A9.4.7.21 Final determination of an A9 Trial will be concluded within three months of its end date. All results and necessary paperwork will be checked and assessed against any Success Criteria and the aims of the individual A9 Trial. The Panel will assess all information objectively against the engineering, environmental, and benefit of the Material, or Technique, against the agreed objective/s and criteria of the A9 Trials. If the outcome of the Trial meets, or exceeds, these then the Panel will recommend to RAUC(S), and all relevant parties, the successful conclusion and fit for use (usually within the parameters used within the A9 Trial) for Scotland.
- A9.4.7.22 In the event of an A9 Trial not being successful, either in full or part, this will be carried out in the same framework in A9.4.7.21. Where a Trial has not been completely successful, this could mean that a conditional Approval be recommended to RAUC(S) for use in certain situations or locations, for example. It is important not to waste the resources that have been used throughout an A9 Trial and there's moral duty to explore, encourage, and nurture the results of innovation to a positive end.

A9.4.8 Information for Approval Trial Agreement

A9.4.8.1 Before starting an Approval Trial, the following information (not an exhaustive list) may be considered by all parties involved for inclusion in the Approval Trial Agreement:

Initial Application for an A9 Trial (Proposer)

- a) **Parties to trial** – all parties participating in the proposed Trial (may or may not be known at this point)
- b) **Synopsis of the Item to be demonstrated** – A brief overview of the item to be trialled together with which of the criteria set out in A9.4.7.1 does it seek to demonstrate?
- c) **Evidence of previous use** – any documentation and evidence of successful use of the proposed item
- d) **Desired duration of Trial** – Proposer's considered length of time to demonstrate the item's performance and benefits for approval
- e) **Indication of Success Criteria** – Proposer's considered criteria to demonstrate performance and benefits of item
- f) **Considered Locations** – Proposer's considered locations where use can be demonstrated effectively (i.e. carriageway transverse or longitudinal track, etc.)
- g) **Testing and Inspection Requirements** – Proposer's consideration of the Testing and Inspections that will be needed to demonstrate items performance and criteria.

For the Memorandum of Understanding (Proposer)

- a) **Parties to trial** – confirmation of all parties participating in the proposed Trial.
- b) **Scope of trial** – Purpose of Approval Trial. Which criteria set out in A9.4.7.1 does the objectives of the Trial demonstrate?

- c) **Contacts** – approved officers of appropriate seniority who are permitted to commit their organisation to the execution of the approval trial and who can approve the terms and conditions of the trial
- d) **Evidence of previous use or successful trials** – Information on the use of the proposed Trial item to support performance and criteria of its application.
- e) **Confirmed Locations** – Proposer's confirmed locations of where Trials will take place (i.e. Road Authority area, etc.) and their aspect in the Road (i.e. carriageway transverse or longitudinal track, etc.).

For the Memorandum of Understanding (Panel)

- a) **Success Criteria** – Benchmarks demonstrating the performance and proof of concept.
- b) **Extent and Duration of Trial Period** – Confirmation of the parameters and length of the Trial Period.
- c) **Criteria for Termination** – conditions under which agreement may be ended and notice of termination.
- d) **Inspection and Testing Criteria** – confirmation and agreement of the Testing and Inspection regimes that will be needed for proof of concept.
- e) **Approval Milestones** – confirmation and agreement of appropriate milestones throughout the Approval Trial process.