



Notes of Meeting

Meeting Roads Authorities and Utilities Committee (Scotland)

Place of Meeting held on MS TEAMS

Date: Wednesday 21st February 2024

Present: -

Fiona McInnes (S.U. Co-Chair)		F.McI.	Scottish Water
Philip McKay (R.A. Co-Chair)		P.McK,	Aberdeenshire Council
Kevin Abercrombie	K.A.	Aberdeen City Council	
Ainsleigh Brown	A.B.	Transport Scotland	
David Armitage	D.J.A.	Aberdeenshire Council	
Caroline Auld	C.A.	Network Rail	
Joanne Bain	J.Ba.	Axione	
Clive Bairsto	C.B.	Street Works UK	
Lee Bromhall	L.B.	Royal Mail	
Kenneth Brown	K.B.	West Lothian Council	
David Capon	D.C.	JAG UK	
David Carter	D.Ca.	South Lanarkshire	
Ian Clarke	I.C.	Virgin Media / O2	
Fraser Conway	F.C.	Balfour Beatty	
Gerry Cullen	G.C.	Amey	
Karyn Davidson	K.D.	Vodafone	
Jim Forbes	J.F.	CityFibre	
Carlyn Fraser	C.F.	Edinburgh City Council	
Roger Garbett	R.G.	Improvement Service	
Darren Grant	D.G.	SSEN	
Julie Greig	J.G.	SGN	
Lauren Goodman	L.G.	BEAR Scotland	
Michael Grunwell	M.G.	Dumfries and Galloway Council	
Barry Hall	B.H.	GTC - UK	
Kevin Hamilton	K.H.	Scottish Road Works Commissioner	
Frederick Hart	F.H.	Argyll and Bute Council	
David Hearty	D.H.	MBNL-EE/3	
Colin Heggie	C.H.	Amey	
John Henderson	J.H.	Scottish Borders Council	
Ewan Hogg	E.H.	Falkirk Council	
Alan Houston	A.H.	East Dunbartonshire Council	
Edward Johnstone	E.J.	SSE	
Ian Jones	I.J.	Fife Council	
Matthew Jones	M.J.	LastMile	
Carol McDonald	C.McD.	Fibrus	
Jordan McDonald	J.McD.	CityFibre	
Neil MacFarlane	M.MacF.	Transport Scotland	
Steven McGill	S.McG.	Energy Assets	

Present continued: -

Michael McHale	M.McH.	WSP
Elizabeth MacIver	E.MacI.	Highland Council
Gordon MacLachlan	G.MacL.	Clackmannanshire Council
Graeme McLaren	G.McL.	Renfrew Council
Graham Milne	G.M.	o.S.R.W.C.
Ryan Newman	R.N.	Amey
Clare O'Brien	C.O'B.	Argyll and Bute Council
Nigel Nichols	N.N.	ESPUG
John O'Neill	J.O'N.	Netomnia
Elaine Paterson	E.P.	BEAR Scotland
Kat Quane	K.Q.	Transport Scotland
David Robertson	D.R.	Dundee City Council
Ian Scott	I.S.	Ineos
Riley Shannon	R.S.	Amey
David Shaw	D.S.	Ayrshire Roads Alliance
Nuala Shelly	N.S.	ESPUG
Calum Stewart	C.S.	Glasgow City Council
David Thomson	D.T.	SPEN
Scott Walker	S.W.	North Lanarkshire Council
Marie Weeks	M.W.	SSE
Martin Wendland	M.W.	Balfour Beatty
Donald Wilson	D.W.	Orkney Islands Council

In Attendance: -

George Borthwick	G.B.	RAUC(S) Secretary
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Apologies: -

Nichola Millar	N.M.	West Lothian Council
Martin Polland	M.P.	Transport Scotland
Ruth Scott	R.S.	Neos Networks
Kevin Skinner	K.S.	Scottish Water

1. Introduction and Apologies

F.McI. welcomed all to the meeting.

The Commissioner introduced Rob Fraser (Compliance Officer) to the meeting indicating that Rob was the first Officer to start in post in his office. The second Officer will start in post in about 2 weeks.

The Representatives heard a short message of condolence from Fiona relating to the sudden death of Andy Matheson. There was a short period of silence while the Representatives had the opportunity to read the on-screen message provided by Andy's Family.

The thoughts of the Community are with Andy's family following his sudden death which will be a huge loss to them and the RAUC(S) Community. Andy had been involved in the Community for several years during which he provided input in many ways which was appreciated by all.

The Apologies were recoded as above.

2. Presentation

HAUC UK Road to Net Zero

Alison Williamson

The project related to the decarbonising of road works to meet the targets set north and south of the border. At present this is not being driven by legislation but as the target times draw nearer regulation may be introduced where it can be.

What is the Road to Nat Zero: -

- Get an understanding of the base line figures.
- Set targets for the reduction of carbon emissions across the various elements of the sector.
- Look for alternatives to achieve the reductions.
- Develop a tool to calculate the reductions based on options data to see what the best action would be on choosing options.
- Understand the effects of changing factors in the process.
- Make informed choices.

The programme is for the design phase to be completed by April 2024.

The Calculator will be available to all users and their participation will be kept anonymous to help Community involvement in order to drive development of the system.

Information on Contacts within an Organisation who would be interested in the development would be welcomed. More involvement by R.As would be appreciated to get the balance across the Community.

Check out our website: - www.roadtonetzero.org.uk

Sign up to the Charter: -

- If you don't have the authority to sign for your organisation, signing as an individual will help us updated you on progress of the project and how to get involved.
- Get involved in the governance groups (steering group, working groups).
- Connect us with the Sustainability, Environmental or Climate Action lead within your organisation.
- Tell us about any decarbonisation case studies that you would like to share.

C.McQ asked if the calculator could deal with site specific journeys. At present the calculator deals with bulk data on fuel, materials etc and is not site specific. The point was made that in the Scottish rural areas journeys are often the main factor in assessing savings on carbon emissions.

An optioneering tool may be able to be used for site specific calculations.

There was a need to collect data on how jobs were done in order to develop suitable tools to estimate savings from alternative options.

J.F. asked how the system would be used in the future. A.W. replied that there was no mandate to use the facility and it was only to provide advice on where savings could be made.

The Committee noted that lower carbon emissions could be more expensive and the results of trial and testing information will be valuable.

Using the advice and data from the calculator will help to develop an understanding of developing methods to gain the most beneficial outcomes – lower carbon emission / costs.

J.G. indicated that SGN collects data and calculates the carbon for each month. SGN would be interested in a projection tool to design work methods and bring forward innovation to reduce the emissions.

Manufacturers are making data available which will be fed into the calculator. A.W. can provide more information on this matter.

Data from all Organisations (S.U.s and R.As and their Contractors and Manufacturers / Suppliers) is welcomed for the development of the system. There was some concern about the information being captured from say a S.U. and their Contractor leading to double counting.

F.McI. thanked A.W. for her informative presentation and hoped the RAUC(S) Community would get involved with the Calculator / Carbon emissions reduction.

3. Minutes of previous Meeting held on 25th October 2023 and any Matters Arising

a) Accuracy

The minutes of the last meeting held on 25th October 2023 were agreed as read.

b) Action Tracking and Review

The Action Tracking Summary was reviewed and updated.

See the Action Tracking Summary for updates.

4. RAUC(s) Working Group Reports

a) Reports from Working Groups as follows: -

ai. Coordination W.G.

D.S. reported as follows: -

Two R.A. Representatives had left the Group. The East Area have provided one replacement with one in reserve if required. The South Area had provided a replacement, but the Community should note that there would now be 3 SAREA Representatives on the Group. This could be accepted but should a Representative from either NAREA or WAREA volunteer they would be welcomed and the number from SAREA revised. **Action – NAREA / WAREA**

The Group had reviewed Advice Notes 20, 23 and 27 and had incorporated the data into the Code.

aii. Inspections W.G.

J.G. reported as follows: -

A number of remits had been dealt with.

The wording on the use of photographs had been strengthened. The use of photographs is not mandatory but was good practice and beneficial to both sides.

Work will be needed on the Code to accommodate the changes needed to incorporate the 6 Year guarantee.

To deal with the delay caused by 2 meetings being cancelled and to accommodate the increased work load the Group will consider increasing the number of meetings for a period of time.

aiii. SROR Working Group

The Group has not met but the Membership will be confirmed to deal with remits when they are raised.

aiv. National Coring Working Group

The Group has continued to meet monthly.

It was agreed at the meeting that the next national programme will assess reinstatements carried out between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025.

The Group is reviewing how the last programme was carried out and will in due course bring forward a draft Advice Note for the next programme.

A questionnaire has been prepared and will be sent out to all who took part in the last programme to gather information on their experience. Their replies will be analysed to feed into the development of the next programme.

The suggestion has been made that SCOTS be asked to manage the Contract for the Programme.

I.J. thanked all who had in any way assisted in completing the Programme.

J.G. reported that to date there had only been 20 responses to the questionnaire and asked all Representatives to chase this up with the relevant staff in their Organisation.

Action – All

J.F. asked for the narrow trench reinstatements be considered and included in the programme. The telecom industry was using these tracks widely so the programme needed to accommodate and report on them.

Overengineering e.g. thicker layers than required will be considered in the review. In addition the changes in the SROR need to be reflected in the programme.

The coring of Section 109 reinstatements was suggested and will be considered.

The review of national coring advice note is to be completed and reported to the RAUC(S) Meeting in June.

Action- Coring WG

I.J. intimated that he was retiring and a new Co-Chair would be needed. This replacement is urgent to take forward the plans for the next Programme. **Action – R.As**

F.McI. on behalf of the Community thanked I.J. for his input to the Coring Programmes.

av. Gazetteer Group

The previously circulated Report was taken as read with the following comments from R.G.: -

- Meetings are taking place with the individual R.As to discuss their Gazetteers.
- Asset Management – The Group is to look at incorporating data from Asset Management systems into the gazetteer.
- All 42 Organisations had successfully loaded their Gazetteer data uploaded to the SRWR in November.
- New validation checks now live in the OSG portal to improve geometry quality.
- The Introduction to the Street Gazetteer training sessions have been well attended and the next scheduled ones are: -
Thursday - February 29th 10:00 – 13:00
Tuesday - March 26th 10:00 – 13:00
Tuesday - May 7th 10:00 - 13:00
- New Transport Scotland Companies 1 to 1 meetings have been scheduled in mid / late February (each OC and DBFO will have separate meetings). These will have a similar agenda to the LA 1 to 1's to discover resourcing issues, highlight data improvements and see if any assistance / training is required. Transport Scotland have a representative at each session.
- 5 Regional Gazetteer meetings will take place in March covering Address & Street Gazetteer data usage, sharing case studies and best practice.
- The Organisations are receiving a message in relation to specific AsD Maintenance Responsibility - Trunk Road Reinstatement Category - Special & Type 1 Roads, High Amenity Footways and Carriageways.
- All are being asked to review their Special Designations including Protected Roads, Traffic Sensitive, Bridges and Hazardous Substances and revise where necessary.

R.G. gave a short presentation with before review and after review maps which indicated how the data had been improved recently.

R.G. asked the Community to contact him with any queries so that they could be dealt with.

Brian Wilson has retired and a new Representative is required. **Action – R.As**

F.McI. on behalf of the Community thanked Brian for his input to the Gazetteer Group and the other Groups he attended.

The Commissioner reminded the R.As that the review was to deal with **corrections** to designations and not **changes** to designations. Changes need to be carried out in accordance with the Codes. The process required any additions to be reported via the Area Meetings with time allowed to submit comments on the proposal.

For roads to have protected status they must meet the Section 120 requirements.

There is a legal process to be followed for all other special designations including to give a road Traffic Sensitive status.

The Commissioner will discuss adding awareness of these regulations to the Webinars to be held over the summer. **Action – Commissioner / I.R.**

The next Gazetteer upload deadline is 31st May 2024.

There will be discussions with any R.As which are not making progress with the revisions but the Commissioner anticipates a big improvement in the next Quarter.

D.Ca. suggested that this topic should be raised at the Area Meetings giving the R.As a reminder of the required processes for changing the status of roads. He would raise it at the SAREA Meeting in May. The Secretary was asked to reinstate the Item on changes to road status on the Area Meeting Agenda. **Action - Secretary**

D.Ca. has indicated why there is a protected road in South Lanarkshire.

b) Working Group Recruitment

The Schedule was taken as read and the Area Chairs were asked to fill any vacancies as they arise. **Action – All Area Chairs**

bi. Working Group Remits

The previously circulated paper indicating the Working Group Remits was taken as read and the Chairs were asked to keep the information on their Group up to date. **Action – W.G. Chairs**

5. Area RAUC's Action Reports

EAREA RAUC – Report from J.G.

There was a good attendance with 58 Representatives.

- The LRAUC Chairs are not providing written reports ahead of the meeting.
- Eleni Gigourtaki has left East Lothian so they will need to provide a new Representative.
- J.G. has served her 2 Years as the Area Chair and has passed the baton to James Watson at Perth and Kinross Council. His name should be added to the invitation list for the next RAUC(S) meeting. **Action – Secretary**
- The Temporary Traffic Signal User Guide may needs some changes, but it is better than not having guidance.
- The S.U.s have concerns about Report No. 34. The Report is counting both work e.g. reinstatement defects and plant e.g. covers and frames defects. The view is that the report should only count work defects.
- Katrina Hardy (Ineos) has recently sent out an email inviting Representatives to attend presentations on underground pipelines. The presentations will be held in Grangemouth and online. The events are free. All wishing to attend should contact K.H.

NAREA RAUC – K.D.

Management of Section 120 Notices - Protected Roads

Scottish Water raised this Item because they were being asked by Transport Scotland for payment for a retrospective permit for works, they had carried out on their plant on the route

of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Road. In the discussions with T.S. the issue being raised is that there is no definitive guidance.

The works were carried out under the diversionary works code prior to the construction of the A.W.P.R.

There is a process specified for the road to be classified as Protected and it lays down the rules under which a road can be proposed for this status to process the road to be classified as Protected.

If these requirements have not been followed before / during or after the road was constructed it is not classified as a Protected Road.

The options are: -

- Protected – traffic volumes etc – laying of plant is restricted in accordance with the Code
- Special Road – Category of traffic using the road
- Restricted Road – Newly reconstructed / resurfaced - laying of plant in the road restricted as per the code for 2 years.
- Category 0 Restrictions as per the NRSWA. - Roads carrying over 30 to 125 msa

The Diversionary Works Code is being redrafted, so any related issues should be passed to K.Q.

The Working Group would review the issue of Special, Protected etc road classifications and consider if an Advice Note should be issued.

Withdrawal of Portable Traffic Signal Guidance (Pink Book) – Concern was raised that Red Book and Advice Note No.8 direct the users to the Pink Book. These references will need to be reviewed and revised.

Safety Barriers Joined using Black InsulationTape

A Dispute Panel has been set up for an Inspection Failure issued by Dundee City Council against CityFibre relating to Safety Barriers on a site joined together with tape.

K.D. has served her two years as Chair and now passes the baton over to A.MacL.

SAREA RAUC – M.G.

M.G. reported on the last meeting as follows: -

The Open Golf Championships will be held at Troon between 15th July and 21st July 24. Council Roads and Trunk Roads will be subject to Embargoes between March and August to accommodate the event, set up and dismantle of the site.

Attachment of Photographs to Notices was discussed and the request to do this as a matter of course noted. There did appear to be some issues with the App which will be checked and reported to the Support Desk if needed.

The decline in the use of the Register e training was noted.

M.G. has served his two years as Chair and now passes the baton over to I.D. (Openreach).

WAREA RAUC – S.W.

There was a good attendance at the meeting with good discussion between the Members on a number of items including:-

- The processes to be followed when shallow services are discovered during excavation. J.G. asked for these sites to be made known to her so that they could be investigated and dealt with.
- Increased use of blanket notices for major projects without proper programming. This was a problem in more than one R.A. and was resulting in scarce staff time being used investigating and responding to complaints raised by Councilors and the public.
- Need for clear guidance when working in areas where Coal Tar is present. Full support to KQ's proposals to engage with SEPA.
- Concerns were raised over safety of front-line operatives due to increase in site incursions and escalating road worker abuse. This was also affecting staff attending meetings. There are trials of bodycams and CCTV on some sites.
- Change of Chair and Co-Chair – now Jim Forbes (CityFibre) and Kevin Burns (Inverclyde) respectively.

S.W. has served her two years as Chair and now passes the baton over to J.F.

6. RAUC(S) Business

a) Safety – Issues for consideration

The meeting noted that Bulletins were being issued via the Secretary when they were made available to him.

ai) ARTSM Guidance on the Use of Portable Traffic Signals

The Committee noted that this was not a Legal document but could be used as advice in place of the Pink Book which has been withdrawn.

The view was that it could be promoted with the proviso that the necessary revisions were made with input from the Scottish Community.

D.T. and E.H. offered their services to provide input to the ARTSM. The Commissioner indicated that this would be a good idea and L.H. could assist. The Commissioner is considering whether he needs to endorse the document

The document will need to be aligned with the final version of the Red Book.

It was agreed that the co-chairs would go back to ARTSM and agree a way for RAUC(S) to provide input to future versions of the document.

b) Environmental Issues

There were no issues raised for discussion.

c) Advice Note No. 30 - Addendum to Appendix B of the Code of Practice for the Co-ordination of Works on Roads (Terms of Reference and Constitution)

Some minor amendments had been suggested by JF and these were now incorporated into a minor update which had been agreed by the co-chairs and would be uploaded on to the Commissioner's website in the next week or so.

The Committee noted that when the Constitutions were adopted an undertaking was made that there would be a review after 2 years. It was now time to carry out a review and a short-term Working Group would be set up. Volunteers for the Group were invited to contact the Co-Chairs.

This Item would remain on the Agenda for the next meeting. **Action - Secretary**

7. HAUC UK and Associated Subgroup Reports

a) HAUC UK Report

D.C. was not at the meeting but provided the HAUC UK Report as follows:

Training and Accreditation. There has been a data breach relating to the question bank and affecting 4 of the units. In essence questions and answers were published on the internet. The source of the breach has been traced but this leaves us real issues and even facing the potential for revocation of the street works cards issued by SWQR. The four units are:

- Monitoring-reinstatement-of-sub-base-and-base-in-non-bituminous-materials
- Monitoring-reinstatement-of-bituminous-materials
- Monitoring-reinstatement-of-backfill materials
- Signing-lighting-and-guarding

Security of the question bank has always been a concern of HAUC(UK). The intention is to set in motion the following plan: -

- a. Discuss the issue with the Awarding Organisations at an emergency meeting on Friday 16th February
- b. Inform National Governments
- c. Put in place a review of those units and deliver a new set of questions by April 2024. A group is already looking at updating the questions and this will become a priority for that group.
- d. Ask the A.Os for data on volumes of cardholders this breach may affect
- e. Scope out a plan and get everyone's agreement as to the required remedial action
- f. Feed this Incident into the current T and A review.

The integrity of the questions must be 100% and this breach must not undermine the Training and Accreditation process. All will be updated following the meeting with the A.Os and please contact D.C. if there are any questions.

The meeting with the A.Os was held and we are in the process of collating some data to see if there are any trends around the four units in terms of pass / fail rates, average time taken on the tests etc. Everyone expressed some concern about the incident and were very positive in their attitude towards getting this resolved and supporting HAUC(UK).

Initial investigations by the AO linked to the training centre has found that all 16 units are available which is concerning but they are going through their own malpractice investigations with the training centre to gauge the size of the issue. Once that has been done, more information can be shared on this event e.g. who was involved and when.

The A.Os will provide the data by Friday 23rd Feb 2024. This will feed into the review of training and accreditation currently underway.

HAUC(UK) Vision

C.B. and D.C. will be drafting a vision covering the next five-year plan 2025 - 2030.

HAUC(UK) App

There are currently up to 8500 users per month. HAUC UK is now investigating how the future running, maintenance and improvements can be secured. Lane rental funding cannot be relied on forever and an alternative source of finance is required to ensure this work is not lost.

- b) HAUC UK Working Group Representatives

There were still vacancies on the Working Groups and the Area Chairs were asked to try to find Representatives from their Area who have an interest in the topic and would be prepared to put themselves forward to represent Scotland. **Action – Area Chairs)** TAG Report

As above.

d) Diversionary Works

The work is ongoing if slower than desired, but the date of completion will be in 2024.

e) Safety at Road Works

The review is ongoing and progressing well in the individual sub groups. The sections will be pulled together to produce a draft for consultation.

8. Standing Reports

a) Scottish Road Works Commissioner

The Committee received the report as follows: -

Compliance with Safety at Street Works Code of Practice (Red Book)

The Commissioner is investigating a Local Authority whose contractor was observed carrying street lighting upgrade works with no appropriate signing and guarding. There is evidence of repeated incidents of a similar nature.

Several issues have emerged from the ongoing investigation which the Commissioner highlighted: -

- Authorities should ensure that their contract processes refer to compliance with the Code of Practice for Safety at Street Works and Road Works (the Red Book) which has been mandatory since January 2022. References to ‘Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual’ are not appropriate if the works are on urban low speed roads.
- Authorities should ensure that the site inspection processes of their works are identifying and recording signing and guarding issues along with any other health and safety issues. If inspections are consistently not identifying issues, this should be challenged and checked.
- Authorities should ensure that their processes for ensuring contractors meet the requirements for having qualified operatives on-site and supervised by qualified staff are robust. It has been a legal requirement to have qualified operatives and supervisors since April 2023.

Ensuring compliance with the Red Book will be a Commissioner priority for 2024/25 and this will be a focus of the new Compliance Officers.

Noticing Failures

There has been an improvement, but Commissioner remains concerned that both R.As and S.U.s. are failing to meet the 4% target for noticing failures. The year average for R.As. is 5.9% and S.U.s. is 7.5%. There has been a significant improvement in compliance recorded by the Telecom sector.

Inspection Processes

The Commissioner has carried out an investigation into Roads Authority sample inspections.

A significant number of authorities are recording a pass rate of >95% for Cat A, Cat B & Cat C inspections. There is concern that the majority of inspections do not have photographic evidence to support the results. R.As which routinely take photographs during inspections

record a lower pass rate. The Commissioner would strongly encourage all R.As. to routinely take photographs to support inspection results. This is easy to do with the SRWR Inspectors App.

R32 – Inspections recorded late by RAs

Excellent progress has been delivered by all authorities with the exception of Transport Scotland Southwest Unit.

R34 – Outstanding Defects > 6 months

Progress has been delivered although there are still large numbers against BT, Scottish Water, GN, SP Energy Networks and Virgin Media. The Commissioner requests that R.As and S.U.s work together to significantly reduce the number of defects outstanding by the end of Q4.

Extension of works without agreement-

The Commissioner was recently made aware of an overrunning works by a member of the public. The S.U. carrying out the works indicated that this had gone into overrun because the R.A. had declined to issue an extension. For the avoidance of doubt, in situations where an extension cannot be agreed, undertakers should extend their works without agreement. This will ensure visibility to users on both the SRWR and [Scottish Road Works Online \(roadworksscotland.org\)](http://roadworksscotland.org).

Undertakers should only extend without agreement as a last resort and must not overuse this function.

R.As are reminded that they can issue a Section 125 Notice in circumstances where works are taking a longer period than is reasonably necessary.

It was noted that the Coordination Code covered the above if the R.A. could not be contacted.

Section 125s should only be issued where there was just cause and where the matter has been fully discussed.

National Coring Programme

The Commissioner has issued penalties totaling £138,000 to seven S.U.s following the publication of the National Coring Programme results. The Organisations and the values of the penalties issued are as follows:

Company	Penalty amount
Virgin Media	£80,000
Last Mile Electricity	£15,000
Vodafone	£15,000
Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution	£12,000
Neos Networks	£7,000
Mua Electricity	£5,000
Commsworld	£4,000

ai. Code of Practice for Penalties

The previously circulated document was taken as read with the following comments: -

- There are updates to legislation references throughout document.
- Minor amendments to terminology to make differentiate between non-compliance with legislation and the specific compliance notice process.
- Clarification of potential for a Commissioner Penalty for a one-off failure.
- Additional sections (various places but mainly 2.11- 2.15) added to address introduction of Compliance Notices.
- Appendices E,F, and G have been amended.

While this was a minor update a Working group is required to carry out a major review.

Action – RAUC(S)

The Code was approved by RAUC(S) and will now be published on the Commissioner’s web site.

b) Management and Operation of the SRWR

T(S)A Changes

Transport (Scotland) Act changes to the SRWR dealing with Unidentified Buried Objects and Compliance Notices are expected to roll out on 4 April 2024

The legislative requirement for all Undertakers to have submitted a data set to Vault also comes into force on 1 April 2024. Last Vault submission date to meet this deadline was 15th February 2024.

Vault

The Vault FAQ has been updated to reflect the change related to showing assets by type rather than by owner. There is also updated guidance on how higher risk assets can be highlighted to users of Vault.

BT is now submitting data to Vault using an “on demand” model. The data is taken live from BT servers.

The option to provide data using an “on demand” model like BT’s is available to other Organisations should they be interested.

SRWR Procurement

The current contract for the provision of the SRWR has been extended to end on 31 March 2025.

Following a recent procurement gateway review it was decided to delay the issue of the Invitation to Tender until January/February 2024. This will not impact the delivery date for the new service on 1 April 2025.

New Organisations on SRWR

Eclipse Power Networks Ltd has been given access to the SRWR.

Broadway Partners Limited entered into administration and its assets were bought by Voneus Limited, which has taken responsibility for both the assets and reinstatements.

F.H. raised a query about the data is not being recorded in the Register in part or in full when submitted via the Inspections App. This is not just a rural location problem but has been noted

in urban areas. The matter has been passed to the Support Desk and F.H. will raise the call again.

M.G. commented that this problem may be dealt with by updating the App on the device and he is having that checked in the Dumfries and Galloway area.

K.H. will relay this matter to I.R.

Action – The Commissioner

There is an apparent problem with closures posted via the App not always being recorded on the Register. This will be chased up with the Support Desk.

J.G. reported that the App is sometimes producing a duplicate of a posting. There can be a few minutes between the two records. There is no clear pattern of location.

There was some concern that Organisations had gaps in their records. K.Q. indicated that they can only post what they had in their records, but all new schemes would be expected to be submitted.

As the recording of plant in VAULT was an Act of Parliament, there is a requirement for the provision of VAULT ready data be included in future contracts issued by Transport Scotland.

F.McI. indicated that there was a meeting arranged with J.G., I.R. and Symology to review the LRAUC standard performance reports which were now ready to be available on the Register. The last step will be to ensure that the Reports can be collated for more than 1 R.A. (as required by Central LRAUC for instance) to remove the need for manual creation of the Report.

c) Scottish Government

The Secretary apologised for the wrong papers being circulated via the folder and he would arrange for the correct papers to be circulated.

Action - Secretary

The correct papers were shared on screen with the following comments from K.Q.: -

The Items indicated in green are already in place. The Items in Blue are due to be introduced and those in brown are under consideration.

Progress is ongoing on the introduction of the various sections of Transport (Scotland) 2019 Legislation. The previously circulated batch diagram was commented as follows: -

The following three sections will come into effect on 1st April 2024

Compliance Notices (Multi part provision)
SRWC Inspectors (Multi Part Provision)
Make Vault Mandatory (Multi part provision)

While these deal with the legal introduction, the Commissioner has prepared documents on the Operation of the Compliance Inspectors.

The mandatory action on Vault requires all to submit details of the plant they are constructing or working on. This does not affect the ongoing requirement to maintain and submit the plant data already provided on the regular updates. At present there is no check on quality of the data.

This will be a soft introduction initially requiring as much data as possible to be provided but there will be a quality element introduced once the standard is decided.

At the last PDG Meeting the decision was made that the Symbology element of VAULT should remain the responsibility of the Community to maintain and agree.

The remaining Legislation on the Batch Diagram is the review of the FPN management which will follow on from the above-mentioned Legislation. This will consider the following issues:

FPNs for a wider range of offences
FPNs increased in value (index)
New FPN for not complying with compliance notice/ RQP (SRWC only)
Sanctions for cat A inspection failures

A review of the FPN system includes the introduction of two new penalties outlined in the 2019 Act This includes consideration of a specific FPN for failure to provide an RQP, and a specific FPN for failure to follow a compliance notice.

There are existing Ministerial commitments including expanding the scope and scale of the FPN framework, and a commitment to a specific sanction for poorly guarded live sites in addition to the inspection fee.

Codes of Practice

The SRWC has published his Authorised Officer Code of Practice, which was a Ministerial requirement as part of the Transport Bill. The o.S.R.W.C. is responsible for this document.

The National UK wide Diversionary Works Code and the Safety at Street Works and Road Works a Code of Practice are currently under review. DfT have recently appointed a consultant to facilitate the review of the Safety Code.

SEPA/Coal Tar

The Community is reminded that while SEPA/EPA do analogous functions in England and Scotland, they are two separate agencies which answer to the different Governments. On that basis, agreements or policy positions made by one Organisation are not automatically applicable to the other.

SEPA supports evidence-based policy making, and are open in general to reviewing any new evidence put before them on subjects for which they are the regulatory body, particularly where that evidence is broad/activity based and not specific to a Sector or Organisation i.e. submitted by say RAUC(S)

SEPA have advised that in general terms, they would be willing to review new evidence on the matter of coal tar ideally if it has whole community applicability and not affecting one Organisation.

This matter will be remitted to the SROR Working Group. **Action – D.C. / K.S.**

Fees and Amounts 2024.

The Fees and Amounts consultation has now closed. There was one suggestion for a change to the mechanism for the allocation of the fees between R.As and S.U.s. If RAUC(S) wish to progress a review and take forward any change, the proposed mechanism would need to be submitted to Transport Scotland officials by September 2024 to make the deadline for the next consultation.

VAULT

C.McQ commented on the data available in VAULT being at least 2 months old while much more up to date is available on other systems. C.McQ commented on the data available in VAULT being at least 2 months old while much more up to date is available on other systems. When VAULT becomes a recognized source of data alongside PIRs it should be providing up to date data.

The schedule of uploading should be updated to allow input of plant data immediately it is available to the submitting Organisation.

No plant data source is totally accurate and on-site safe digging should always be in operation. There was a suggestion that HSE required plant to be on record within three months. K.Q. was asked to check that out with HSE and inform the Community. **Action – K.Q.**

The next stage of the introduction of VAULT as mandatory will be discussed with the Community.

G.C. asked for guidance about providing Transport Scotland Plant to VAULT when it is located on any works. As much of the work is carried out by Contract including works carried out by Operating Companies a process will be required to record plant and guidance is needed on recording and submitting the data.

9. A.O.C.B.

a) Committee Dates

The Schedule was circulated for information.

b) RAUC(S) Meeting Attendance

The Members were reminded that at the last RAUC(S) meeting this was discussed and noted that as per the Constitution 12 R.A. and 12 S.U. would receive invites to attend the RAUC(S) Meetings. SJUG had agreed who would attend and the AREA R.As should have agreed their attendees.

The remainder of the Community can receive the meeting papers but will not receive the invitation.

The suggestion was accepted that the May / June meetings should follow a face to face format with hybrid available for Members who require to travel a distance. The location of any suitable venues should be made known to the Chairs so that they could arrange for their meetings to be held. The Commissioner commented that there was a limited budget available.

The suggestion was made that a limited number of attendees should be catered for with the remainder attending online. All should check potential venues in their Area. Where possible meetings should be arranged in central belt venues easily accessible by public transport.

c) The 6 Year Guarantee

The Register will need to be revised with suitable wording relating to the 6 year Guaranteed inspections.

The “Blue Book” Code of Practice for the Co-ordination of Works in Roads had wording for Inspections which could be modified for the Register.

The Guarantee process will be governed by the Legislation.

I.R. and J.F. will meet to discuss a draft which had previously been produced. They will speak to the Coordination and the Inspections Working groups. **Action – J.McD.**

The wording should be in accordance with the Legislation for the relevant sites noting that some surfaces are exempt from the extended guarantee. The percentage of exempt surfaces is very low.

10. Dates of Next Meetings

RAUC(S) Agenda Setting Meeting: Wednesday 12th June 2024

RAUC(s) Meeting: Wednesday 26th June 2024
Future Meeting Dates: -

RAUC(S) Agenda Setting Meetings

RAUC(s) Meetings

Wednesday 2nd October 2024

Wednesday 23rd October 2024

The meeting closed at 13.10