

SCOTTISH ROAD WORKS COMMISSIONER

Scottish Road Works Register Steering Group

The minute of the meeting of the SRWR Steering Group held on Thursday 18th November 2021 on MS TEAMS

Present: -

Kevin Hamilton	Scottish Road Works Commissioner	K.H.
David Armitage (Chair)	Aberdeenshire Council	D.J.A.
Mike Bartlett	Symology	M.B.
Clare Callaghan	Scottish Water	C.C.
Jim Forbes	CityFibre	J.F.
Darren Grindell	Symology	D.Gri.
Fiona McInnes	Scottish Water	F.McI.
Andrew Matheson	Virgin Media	A.B.
Valery Park	South Lanarkshire Council	V.P.
Alex Rae	SGN	A.R.
Iain Ross	Office of the SRWC	I.R.
Brian Wilson	Scottish Borders Council	B.W.

In Attendance: -

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

Julie Greig	SGN	J.G.
Darren Grant	SSE	D.G.
Ian Jones	Fife Council	I.J.

1. Introduction and Apologies for absence

David Armitage welcomed all to the meeting.

Apologies were recorded as above.

2. Minutes of the last Meeting

a. Accuracy

The minutes of the last meeting of the SRWR Steering Group held on MS TEAMS on Thursday 19th August 2021 were agreed as read.

b. Matters Arising

All recorded on the tracking Summary

3. Management and Operation of the SRWR

a. Quarterly Management Report

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

- **Fees and Amounts**
The draft matrix with the estimated fees to be charged for 2022 / 23 has been circulated for budgeting purposes. The draft figures are likely to change prior to 1st April but not by much.
- **SRWR Aurora V2**
Symology released Ver 2 of Aurora containing features to enhance the look & feel of the system, making it more user friendly and usable; improve the mapping, including allowing a view closer to the street; and some new functionality around reporting. Further details can be found on the Aurora Community Portal news page.

There were several issues relating to the new release but most of these were rectified in the first week. There were a few which needed further work which have either now been dealt with or are on the outstanding list. Further information can be found on the Aurora Community Portal news page.

- **RAUC(S) Papers Distribution**
The Secretaries now have access to Office 365 and will be issuing the papers via a link to the One Drive Shared Folders. The George Borthwick's new email address is george.borthwick@raucs.scot. He can also still be contacted at secretary@raucs.scot.
Brian Cooper's new email address is brian.cooper@raucs.scot. He can also be contacted at se.raucs@raucs.scot.
- **RAUC(S) Website**
A reminder was being issued to all Chairs of Local RAUC meetings and Working Groups to keep George apprised of changes to their groups so he can keep the RAUC(S) website up to date and they were reminded that they must provide him with copies of Minutes/Papers that should be online.
- **New Undertakers**
Two new organisations have been given access to the SRWR this quarter. They are: - Borderlink Broadband (telecoms) and Netomnia (telecoms).

Borderlink Broadband has already commenced works in Aberdeenshire.

All Secretaries will need to be kept advised of the representatives for the new Organisations and which Areas they are working in order that they can receive the correct papers from the Local Meeting Secretaries. **Action – I.R.**

ai. SRWR Service Report

The Group noted the version of the Report which was previously circulated. The content of the report was summarised as follows: -

- Calls recorded by the Support Desk were up on the previous quarter which was likely to be due to the introduction of Ver No. 2
- There were three calls which had not yet been completed.
- Dial Before You Dig was running more or less on the same level as before
- The number of Enabled Users had dropped.
- There was a reduction on the numbers of Concurrent Users operating on the Register at any one time.
- The number of VAULT users was remaining consistent.
- Use of the Apps was remaining consistent with no new users.

- There were 9 outstanding issues on the system.
- The numbers of users of the training modules has dropped. This will be monitored.

b. Quarterly Operational Report

The previously circulated Report was taken as read with the following discussion: -

- Despite changes made by Symology to the app to use the new certificate, it appears the Android subsystem refused to ignore the old certificate and generated errors. A simple workaround for users to manually disable the old certificate was urgently posted and users successfully implemented this. A subsequent new version of the app was posted which avoids the need for the manual workaround.
- On 13 October 2021 the mapping services in the SRWR were slow to respond. The relevant services were restarted and the normal operation resumed within 25 minutes.

Issues with the Mapping Layer should be reported to the Helpdesk. These will be investigated, and corrections made as required but there may be a slight delay as the system settles down again. The Helpdesk will be able to indicate the system speed.

The number accessing the system at any one time and the detail being requested can have an affect on the speed of the system.

- Aurora Ver. 2 was rolled out to the Community on 18th October. There were a number of issues which were reported to the Support Desk. The majority of these were rectified in the first week and others have been dealt with since then.

Symology accepted that the release was not up to the usual Company performance and apologised to the Community. The issues have been analysed and a comprehensive list of changes have been identified and these are being implemented. Several of these changes are: -

- More formal testing following user scripts by our PQT team.
- The addition of staff dedicated to testing to our PQT team.
- More automated testing by the Development team.
- Full copies of the SRWR Production system replicated into our Sandbox, Development and Pre-Prod environments to ensure testing by teams is performed on realistically scaled datasets.
- Installation of a Sandbox version of the Road Works Scotland website.

Several issues were resolved with configuration or database changes that could be applied within hours of being identified. Other issues required software changes. As a result, the normal 2 weekly release cycle was suspended and an even more agile approach on software releases introduced where fixes were available they were grouped them together into a hotfix release and following suitable testing applied asap. There have been three hotfix releases so far with another planned. Once all the important fixes have been dealt with, it is likely that further upgrades will be suspended until into the new year to ensure a period of stability for users of the register.

Defect / Unattributable Works – The system was turned off pending a temporary repair being made before it was restarted. All objects / attachments were re-attached.

- The roadworksscotland.org website was upgraded as part of the Ver 2 release but due to a significant issue it had to be disabled whilst the problem was resolved. The service was fully restored on 20 October 2021.

- There has been an on-going Steering Group item related to the helpdesk, which was closed at the last meeting. At the August Contract Liaison (2 days prior to the Steering Group meeting) Symology agreed with the SRWC an action resulting from this which although agreed and implemented it has never been formally documented anywhere.

The issue relates to users reporting problems/bugs with the register and raising concerns about the Customer Support team closing the case. This approach is in accordance with ITIL standards. Once the “incident” has been resolved and a “problem” identified, the case should be closed (in simple terms) and it becomes the responsibility of the Development team, not the helpdesk team. The problem is then added to Development list of Backlog Items, and it is also added to the Known Issues list published on the SRWR Community Portal and updated every 2 weeks. To alleviate concerns an additional standard paragraph (shown in yellow below) is provided in all support responses where a problem has been identified for development and as such considered to be the end of the dealings by the Support Desk).

Thanks for reporting the issue. I have now reproduced the problem myself on the test system and have recorded problem reference P-0023999 to cover this scenario.

This case will now be marked as Solution Proposed and will close automatically in 14 days. The problem raised will be added to our product backlog and will continue to be considered and prioritised for inclusion in a future release. It will be published here as a known issue within the next two weeks: <https://aurora-portal.symology.net/category/srwr-news/known-issues/>

When the problem is resolved by a software update, it will be published in the release notice: <https://aurora-portal.symology.net/category/release-notices/>

Please ensure you quote the problem reference if you want to raise any follow-up queries.

In general, the helpdesk team are unable to provide timescales for when the problem will be resolved. They should be able to let you know if it is considered a critical/urgent issue that is being prioritised for the next update.

We have had several reports of users calling the helpdesk and not accepting the explanation as commented on above, or simply reporting the same problem again and again. If the issue does not appear on the Portal Known Issues List within two weeks, then the matter should be fed back to Symology and they will ensure that it is updated. If you need to escalate the priority then it is a matter for the SAT team, the SRWC or Darren Grindell/Mike Bartlett.

- SRWR APIs – there have been some enquiries from Organisations about the use of APIs and discussions are ongoing. BT / Openreach have started using an API.
- Progress is being made with BT / Openreach on the access to their plant information for the Register / VAULT and discussions are ongoing.
- All R.As have submitted SDTF 4 data but there is a problem with the way the ASD is plotted in this format which degrades the service to the user. It is likely that ASDF 2 gazetteers will be loaded in December 2021.
- There are some 100 registrations for the course registration each month. It was noted that users who have sat previous the transitional training modules are being asked to resit the Introductory Course prior to using other modules. This should be reported to the Support Desk and after validation it should be possible to progress direct to the new units.

- Webinar No. 8 was run prior to the launch of Ver 2 to cover new features which would be available.

New Webinars are likely to be provided in the new year.

- SAT met in November when business was back to normal following the work done on Ver 2.
- The new Symology Company branding has now been launched alongside the introduction of Ver 2. This is now in line with the Aurora branding that the SRWR Community has had a look at over the last 12 months. There is also a new web-site purely for Aurora. It is <https://aurora.symology.com/>
- D.J.A. commented that although there had been issues with the launch of Ver 2 the reported problems had been dealt with timeously. He also considered that the decision on the Public Facing site was the correct one.

c. Training Updates

All as previously discussed.

I.R. has revised the screen for the Training Report so that it is more user friendly.

4. VAULT

a. Future Development

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

The colouring for the plant has yet to be progressed to development by Symology.

Dealing with abandoned plant is covered in the paper.

A seminar will be held with Developers to provide guidance on the use of VAULT.

b. Vault Scorecard

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

- Assistance is being given to Dundee Council to get their data loaded.
- Organisations which are recorded in the red are receiving reminders to update their data.
- Stirling Council have also had some problems, and these are being addressed.
- Transport Scotland Data is now being fed into VAULT.
- As new Organisations join the Register, they are being asked to get their existing data loaded and new plant added as it is laid.
- Community Heating Organisations will be asked to add their plant to VAULT but secondary legislation will be needed to compel them to do so.
- Network Rail is being pressed to add their plant to the VAULT.

5. Gazetteer Group

a. Gazetteer Update Submission Report

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

- SDTF files need to be updated with intermediate points and revised geometry.
- The Software providers should be able to assist with up to 80% of the files. A deadline needs to be set for this modification. As this update affects the way data

is provided pressure needs to be exerted to complete the revision. B.W. indicated that Borders Council had taken a year to complete 90% of their files but that time included dealing with other duties.

The Committee agreed that a year should be given to complete the task.

- The Gazetteer Group had requested that the five Area Groups which meet as at present continue to meet. The Committee agreed to this proposal. The Chair will be asked to attend future RAUC(S) Meetings. **Action – I.R.**

b. Gazetteer Group Highlight Report

The previous circulated Minutes of the last meeting were taken as read.

6. SRWR System Assurance Team

a. SAT Report

The Team had a productive meeting on 11th November. There was a good attendance and the discussions went well with a number of Change Requests being closed.

Symology were thanked for their input to the meeting.

Section 109 and Section 56 Permits

Section No. 58 covers works with no excavation e.g. Deposit of materials in the road.
Section No. 56 covers works with excavation.

The Register has been set up with Section No, 109 requiring closure and registration and Sections 56 and 58 requiring closures but with no registration. Which appears to be in order.

There should be no requirements for the R.A. to record information which has not been supplied and the Notices should not be monitored by the Commissioner.

This was agreed by the Committee.

Recording Details of Remedial Sites

The previously circulated paper provided the following scenarios.

The Item considered different remedial works scenarios and outlined how the SRWR accommodated the recording of relevant site details to reflect the remedial works that have been undertaken. Three different scenarios are considered as follows: -

1. Where the remedial works results in an extended area of reinstatement, and is subject to a re-setting of the warranty starting from the date of the remedial works completion.

This scenario is where the remedial works that are carried out result in a reinstatement covering an area which is larger than the previously existing site and the new area is subject to a reset warranty period. This is recorded by updating the original site details and setting the checkbox to reset the warranty.

2. Where the remedial works is wholly within the area of the original reinstatement and is not subject to a reset of the warranty period.

This may include such activities as resealing the edges of the reinstatement or painting yellow lines. The original site details are updated to reflect the date of the remedial works, but the warranty reset checkbox is not set, so the warranty end date remains unaltered. There is no need to amend the dimensions as they are unchanged.

3. Where there is a latent defect affecting a small part of a long trench and the works requires a reset of the warranty, but only for the area affected by the remedial, whether or not that is within the area of the original reinstatement.

An extended warranty is required for the remedial area, but this may just be a small part of the original trench and the warranty in the remaining area of the trench should remain unchanged. This is recorded by leaving the original site unchanged, but adding a new site record with the details of just the remedial area. In this case, there is no need to set the warranty reset checkbox. As the remedial area is recorded in a new site, it will automatically attract a warranty period based on the site reinstatement date, whilst the full extent of the original site will have an unchanged warranty.

b. Change Requests

The four C.Rs escalated to the meeting were discussed as follows: -

C.R. No. 769 – Reinstatement Materials Drop Down List - Looking to enhance the detail in the register in relation to Hot Rolled Asphalt. Can there be a distinction made between 15/10 and 30/14 as this will assist in identifying materials.

There was extensive discussion on this C.R. and it as follows: -

- There was general agreement that a revision was required but this was tempered by the concern that too many variations would lead to misuse of the table. The use of the Quarry Tickets would be a fall back to check the actual material used in the reinstatement.
- Symology indicated that the process was more complicated than just introducing a new table. There needed to be coding, dating and mapping to ensure that data was correctly logged against the Notices past and future for interrogation. The date for any change would need to be agreed so that the design process could be programmed to meet that date with the Community advised of the revision and the need to record the material used correctly on the new drop-down.

To avoid users defaulting to a particular number of materials when completing Notices, the list should be as concise as possible.

- Scottish Water were keen to have the revision made as soon as possible and suggested that the SROR Working Group could be asked to review the list and provide their input. The Commissioner asked for the new list to be created and submitted with mappings to the next meeting for approval. He indicated that a protocol for such changes was essential as it was likely that there would be more revisions required going forward.
- The Committee agreed to proceed as suggested by the Commissioner and I.R. and M.B. would proceed to develop the process / final table for approval at the next meeting.

Action – I.R. / M.B.

C.R. No. 775 - UPRNs - Can we have this included in Aurora. I see these records are free.

Comment was made as follows: -

- The facility to use the UPRNs is already on the Register but they cannot be searched or extracted at present. I.R. and C.C. will discuss the facility offline.
Action – I.R. / C.C.
- The current service has been shown to Improvement Services and they are happy with it.
- D.J.A. indicated that their use would improve the location data for Service connections.
- The data is available on the One Scotland Gazetteer.

C.R. No. 784 – I am raising the issue with registering remedial repairs (smaller than the original size) as a change request following our SAT meeting on 18/5/21. Registering a remedial repair larger than the original size is not an issue, we create a new site enter the new date and this is subject to a new warranty period. Repairs smaller than the original size is proving tricky. If we create a new site with a new date, it prompts a new warranty period which shouldn't happen. If we enter the new smaller repair size on the original site, put the new date of repair but don't tick the warranty box, this doesn't reset the warranty.

The previously circulated papers were taken as read with the following comments: -

- J.F. indicated that he was happy with the paper but that the dates recorded should remain the same.
- Carole McDonald will comment on the paper at SAT.
- The Commissioner indicated that the content of the paper was in line with the current legislation.
- With the proposal being in line with the current guidance the C.R. can be referred back to the SAT to complete and close.

C.R. No. 789 - Would it be possible to have Footpath Closure on as a choice for Traffic Management? At the moment we have to select Road Closure (which flashes up that it may not be suitable) so this would be much more appropriate for closing a footpath.

Symology and SAT had agreed the C.R. referred to Footways and they were quite happy with the arrangement which was fairly commonly used.

On the basis that the C.R. refers to Footways it will be referred back to the SAT who will arrange with Symology to proceed with development, listing it as low priority.

Action – C.C.

7. Scottish Road Works Commissioners Report

a. Changes in Legislation

The Commissioner reported: -

Sections of the (Transport Scotland) Act 2019 which will be submitted to the Scottish Government this month are as follows: -

- Red Book becoming Mandatory for R.As.
- Increase in the charges to be levied for penalties (£50k raised to £100k).
- Revocation of Section 61.
- Sections in the previous Act which have not been enacted will be removed from the Legislation.
- The introduction of Quality Plans (S.U.s Mandatory – Soft introduction April 2022 – Hard introduction April 2023) R.As can be asked by the Commissioner to set a Q.P. in place. R.As will also need to prepare a Q.P to be issued to Section 109 Applicants.

- The Commissioner will be able to set up an Inspectorate.

The Commissioner referred to the Webinar which he had shared with Transport Scotland to remind Senior Managers of the new Legislation (as above) which they would require to accommodate. The Seminar had been well attended with good feed back.

The PDG is considering the 2-hour period for recording actual start / stop times on the Register. The issue is what the 2-hour period means i.e. is it two hours from the event no matter when or can it be recorded at the start of work on the next day etc. The proposal is likely to be issued to the Community for consultation. Symology is aware that a revision to the operation of the Register will be required

8. RAUC(s) Remit

a. Vault / Gazetteer Committee Structure

This was discussed and minuted above under the VAULT Item.

9. SRWR System

a. Inspection Sample Calculation

The previously circulated papers was taken as read with the following discussion: -

- The question had been raised about how the Register calculated the numbers of Inspections as there was a variance being found between these and the ones calculated by individual S.U.s.
- There was a view that the Inspection Number calculation should be taken from the Register and not from manual calculation. Different S.U.s can use different base data and will therefore not produce standard results.
- M.B. explained the information included in the paper. He was asked for a Knowledge Base item to be provided so that all could be aware of the method used. He commented that this was not a new calculation having been used in previous versions of the Register over the years. The Register provides a set of calculations but it is up to the Community how they used it when setting the final estimates including taking into the equation any predicted variance in the S.U.s programme.
- A query was made on why the calculation was based on the year of the Registration and not the year when the work was carried out. If a programme is changed the affect on the calculation based on Registration could be skewed either up or down.

The Chair indicated that the process already has the facility to take a manual assessment to accommodate programme variation into consideration was already there and was used. His view was that the estimates calculated by the Register should be used however he would want to take time to review the paper and the Legislation / Codes before any final decision was made.

- The matter should be added to the R.A. and SJUG meeting agenda to get their input.
- The Commissioner indicated that the Code of Practice for Inspections was not explicit on some issues. It indicates that the figures provided by the SRWR should be used as the basis for agreement of the inspections for the next year.

This may not reflect the Legislation and a review of both should be carried out to ensure a match.

- The situation was that the figure provided by the Register was there as a basis for discussion taking all other factors e.g. changes in programmes into consideration. If there was a disagreement it should be discussed ,and a final figure agreed based on reasonable projections.
- The Commissioner was in agreement with the Chair and asked him to review the Code and Legislation and report back to the next meeting. The issue must be resolved before the figures are required for use in the 1st Quarter of 2022 / 23.

Action - D.J.A.

10. A.O.C.B.

a. Checking Randomness of Sample Inspection Selection

Since the last meeting the Commissioner's Office had carried out a review on randomness of Inspections.

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

The B and C Inspection appeared to be in order but the concern of the S.U.s appeared to be related to the Sample As which they felt the R.As inspected on any sites they saw at the correct stage and recorded them to maintain their Commissioners performance statistics. In their view only sites which failed were being recorded.

The Commissioner responded that on the sample of inspections which had been interrogated, the non-random inspections related to 1% of the total and only 10% of these were failures. In his view there was not a problem, but the situation would continue to be monitored and any R.A which appeared to be acting unreasonably would be interviewed.

The Committee noted the Commissioners comments and agreed to accept the situation that the records on Sample As would be monitored.

b. Changes to SRWC Indicator Reports

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

The Commissioner is always considering which Indicator Reports are useful and where new Indicators need to be introduced.

With that in mind the Commissioner would like to introduce a new Report No. 34 Reinstatement Defects Awaiting Repair.

The purpose of the Report would be to keep track of how many reinstatement defects an undertaker still has outstanding for repair. This report will count all defect inspection results which have been accepted but 6 months later have no remedial works recorded as having been carried out or recorded as planned. This figure will also be included in Combination Report 3 for each organisation.

The Register raises prompts for d1, d2 and d3 inspections. The proposal is to clear all old prompts pre-April 2021 from the Register on 1st April 2022. There are issues relating to the way defect notices are dealt with. In several cases inspections of a defect are recorded in the wrong way leaving the D3 as not dealt with.

J.F. welcomed the Report but needs to know the parameters of the close down.

The R.As continue to be concerned about when defects which are notified and accepted will be dealt with as the R.A. has a safety responsibility for the road. R.As do not have the staff resources to make repeated inspections of the reported sites and are likely to only discover the need for work to be carried out during a road safety inspection. Where defects are not dealt with there needs to be an escalation process raising awareness of the site and raising the possibility that the R.A. will make the site safe and recharge the costs.

The clear down of the relevant Defect Notices would be a one of event allowing data for the new Report going forward to be based on a clean sheet.

R.As must be aware that when an S.U. accepts a unattributable works notice they must revise the status or it remains on the to do list to be dealt with.

Scottish Water asked for the planned work phases to be recorded in the Report so that they could be readily monitored.

The Committee agreed that this was a way forward and all were asked to review the content of the Report and pass any comments to I.R. This should be done at an early date as the clean down must be planned and expedited by the end of March 22.

c. Meeting Dates 2022 / 23

The Committee agreed that the meeting dates will be set in accordance with the new Constitution.

d. User Satisfaction Survey

I.R. indicated that a user satisfaction survey was planned. He asked the Members to forward any questions to him which they considered beneficial to be included in the Survey

11. Dates of Future Meetings

The next meeting will be held on: - Thursday 17th February 2022

Venue to be MS TEAMS

Future Meeting Dates: -

Thursday 23rd June 2022

Thursday 20th October 2022

Venue to be MS TEAMS or as agreed.

The meeting closed at 13.50