

NAREA ROADS AUTHORITIES & UTILITIES COMMITTEE
**Minutes of the
QUARTERLY MEETING**
Date: Wednesday 19th September 2023
Meeting held online on MS TEAMS
Present:

Karyn Davidson (Chair)	K.D.	Vodafone
Kevin Abercrombie	K.A.	Aberdeen City
Caroline Auld	C.A.	Network Rail
Lee Broomhall	L.B.	Royal Mail
Ainsleigh Brown	A.B.	Transport Scotland
Sharon Burns	S.B.	GoFibre
Ian Clarke	I.C.	Virgin Media O2
Fraser Conway	F.C.	Balfour Beatty
Rob Cowan	R.C.	WiFi Scotland for Interetty
Ian Dalrymple	I.D.	Openreach
Scott Dryden	S,D.	Angus Council
Irvine Ellis	I.E.	SSEN
Jim Forbes	J.F.	CityFibre
Ross Gray	R.G.	SSE for Optimum Power Systems
Julie Greig	J.G.	SGN
David Hearty	D.H.	MBNL – EE / 3
Colin Heggie	C.H.	Amey
Lindsay Henderson	L.H.	o.S.R.W.C.
Matthew Jones	M.J.	Last Mile – UK
Angus MacDonald	A.MacD.	Western Isles Council
Jordan McDonald	J.McD	CityFibre
Steven McGill	S.McG.	Energy Assets
Fiona McInnes	F.McI.	Scottish Water
Donald Macleay	D.A.MacI.	Western Isles Council
Alison MacLeod	A.MacL.	The Highland Council
Andrew Matheson	A.M.	Virgin Media
Colin Matheson	C.M.	The Moray Council
Jim Moran	J.M.	Lothian Broadband
Ryan Newman	R.N.	Amey
Ian Peacock	I.P.	Aberdeenshire Council
Allan Pryde	A.P.	Openreach
Kat Quane	K.Q.	Transport Scotland
David Robertson	D.R.	Dundee City Council
Neil Robertson	N.R.	Shetland Islands Council
Iain Ross	I.R.	oSRWC
Wendy Ross	W.R.	Amey
Ruth Scott	R.S.	NEOS Network

Martin Wendland	M.W.	Balfour Beatty
Erin Wharry	E.W.	Balfour Beatty
Donald Wilson	D.W.	Orkney Islands Council

In Attendance:

George Borthwick	G.B.	Secretary
Robert Young	R.Y.	Scottish Government

Apologies:

Joanne Bain	J.B.	Axione
Michael Casey	M.C.	Royal Mail
Jean-Donan Olliero	J.D.O.	Axione
Garry Duncan	G.D.	SEEN
Lauren Goodman	L.G.	BEAR Scotland
Barry Hall	B.H.	GTC-UK (Unable to Access Link)
Kevin Hamilton	K.H.	Scottish Road Works Commissioner
Owen Harte	O.H.	Virgin Media
Elizabeth MacIver	E.MacI.	The Highland Council
Philip McKay	P.McK.	Aberdeenshire Council
Craig McQueen	C.McQ.	Scottish Water
Peter Mortan	P.M.	Angus Council
Kenny Roy	K.R.	Orkney Islands Council
David Thomson	D.T.	SPEN
Steven Tilson	S.T.	Zayo (Logged in but was not invited into the meeting)
Matthew Wylie	M.W.	Orkney Islands Council
Natalie Wood	N.W.	Aberdeenshire Council

1. Welcome and Introductions

Karyn Davidson (Vodafone) welcomed all to the meeting of the NAREA RAUC and thanked all Representatives for attending.

The oSRWC requires to know which Utility an Organisation is working for e.g. Wi-Fi Scotland on behalf of Internetty

Apologies were recorded as above.

Presentations

There were no presentations at this meeting.

2. Minute of the last Meeting held on 23rd May 2023

a. Accuracy

The Minutes of the previous NoSRAUC meeting held on Monday 23rd May 2023 on MS TEAMS were agreed as read.

b. Matters Arising

Matters arising from the previous meeting are recorded on the Action Tracking Summary.

3 Written reports from Local Co-Ordination Meetings

The Chairs of the Local RAUCs commented on their last meetings as follows: -

Aberdeenshire / Aberdeen City Councils – Kevin Abercrombie

There were no issues to report to this meeting.

Highland and Moray Councils – Colin Matheson

Following the last meeting there were no issues to report to this meeting.

Angus Council – David Robertson

There were no matters to raise.

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles Council) Donald Macleay reported: -

Scalpay Bridge - overnight closures between 2nd Oct to 28th Oct 2023 for joint repairs. Access will be provided for Emergency vehicles and residents.

Orkney Islands Council – Donald Wilson

The next meeting is due to be held in 2 weeks.

Shetland Island Council – Neil Robertson

The next meeting is due to be held on 27th September.

There were no issues to report from the last meeting.

Three Island Authority meeting: -

There were no matters to raise.

Tay Bridge Board – David Robertson

Carriageway works are ongoing using contraflow.

4. Matters Arising from the previous RAUC(S)

The draft minutes of the last RAUC(S) Meeting held on 28th June 2023 were noted with no issues raised. All were encouraged to read the draft if they had not already done so.

- a. A presentation was given at the meeting by SLR on developments in Temporary Traffic Signal equipment. This provided good information on the equipment available and how it can be tailored and monitored for individual sites and Organisations.

5. Government and S.R.W.C. Reports

a. Scottish Government Report

The previously circulated papers were taken as read with the following comments from K.Q.: -

Progress is ongoing on the introduction of the various sections of Transport (Scotland) 2019 Legislation. The batch diagram had not changed since the May meeting but would be revised with new sections being introduced from 1st October 2023

Roadworks Reform and related Legislation

- The major legislative review is nearing completion with Compliance Notices, Officers and VAULT due to be in place by April 2024. The major review of FPNs and the remaining FPN related commencements will take place after the final VAULT legislation and guidance is published.
- VAULT legislation is being introduced in three legislative steps. Broadly it will become a requirement to supply data from 01 April 2024, but with a ‘bedding in period’ and further guidance on the information, required to be in place by October 2024. As the enforcing body and under his general remit, the Commissioner may also set best practice in this area which further supports or supplements the legislation.
- Although at the conclusion of this process, VAULT data will sit equally alongside other ‘plant data gathering’ sources (commercial suppliers, direct access etc) it is important that the community keep in mind that safe digging techniques will always be required, and that no data gathering service will ever entirely negate the need for onsite safety measures. There are no plans for separate rules on safe digging for Scotland.

Codes of Practice

- The updated SROR fifth addition will come into force on 01 Oct 2023. The Transport Scotland website has also been updated to show the final date when the 4th Edition will be applicable, and redirects to the Commissioners website for the 5th Edition.
- The Scottish Coordination and Disputes Codes will need an update to include reference to the Commissioners Compliance Officers, including how to respond to a formal (SRWR) issued Compliance Officer Observation. This will be analogous to the HSE’s first stage sanction to ‘provide information and advice face-to-face or in writing’

HSE Policy Opportunity

- The Health and Safety Executive are undertaking a policy review on issues relating to vibration (with the aim of reducing Hand Arm Vibration). At this very early stage there is no formal consultation, however it would be very beneficial to the Executive to get a broader understanding of the types of compaction tools currently in use. They have produced a short list of tool types and would be interested to hear if your organisation/supply chain uses them.
- The questions are very generalised and informal – e.g. “HSE believe anti vibration compaction plates (whacker plate with insulated handle) are commonly used and easy to obtain - does this seem accurate”
- If any party is interested in helping, they should contact K.Q. and she will provide a copy of the questionnaire.

Fees and Amounts 2024

- In the near future a consultation on the SRWR register fees for 2024 will be circulated. This will take the normal format, however due to changes with the Scottish Governments digital consultation platform, the ‘paper’ option may not have a link to the associated electronic option as in previous years. If this is the case, the link will be circulated separately.

b. Performance Dashboard

The Committee received the reports as follows: -

Dashboard

The SRWR 2023/24 Q1 quarterly dashboard was issued on the 26 July 2023. The Q2 update will be issued on w/c 23 Oct 2023.

Noticing Failures

The Commissioner remains concerned that R.As and S.U.s are failing to meet the target of 4% for noticing failures. In Q1 R.As averaged 6.2% and S.U.s averaged 8.9%. Little improvement has been achieved since Q1 with R.As recording an average of 6.3% for July and August, whilst S.U.s have averaged 7.8%. The Telecoms sector (9.5%) continues to influence the overall high figure and engagement is continuing with a number of Organisations.

Commissioner Improvement Plans

Currently 4 Organisations, Axione, Lothian Broadband, SGN and SPEN are on plans with all continuing to provide positive improvement and engagement.

Note that the next Improvement plan submissions are due on the 13 October 2023.

Policy and Quality

Compliance Officers

Work is ongoing to develop the Compliance Officer Code of Conduct. It is proposed to present this at RAUC(S).

The job outlines are now being finalised and it is anticipated that the posts will be advertised before Christmas.

dashcam trials to capture sites from moving vehicles has now been completed. The trial captured information on works in 5 council areas. It is considered that this approach offers an efficient and effective way to collect information.

c. Management Report

Works on Structures

The Commissioner carried out an investigation into an incident in January, where a structure on Shandon Place, Edinburgh was damaged during CityFibre duct installation works. This found failings in communication between CityFibre (or their representative) and the bridge owner prior to works taking place. It is a requirement of NRSWA Section 147 that undertakers consult the bridge (structure) owner prior to the issue of the Section 114 Notice (notice of starting date of works). This gives bridge owners the opportunity to consider the proposed works, place any necessary conditions and monitor works to ensure safety and maintain the structural integrity of the bridge.

The Commissioner is concerned that failure to consult with bridge owners may be more widespread than this one incident and would like to remind undertakers of their duties in this regard.

The current Coordination CoP does not cover such scenarios in detail, as such the Working Group has been asked to consider drafting this within the next version.

Integrated Impact Assessments:

The Commissioner has been developing an Integrated Impact Assessment process. This considers the impacts that policies and other strategic decisions can have on Equality, Fairer Scotland Duty, Environment, Data Protection, and Child Rights and Wellbeing. It is proposed that an Integrated Impact Assessment will be carried out on any revisions to Codes of Practice, Advice Notes and Commissioner Guidance, prior to these being published on the Commissioner's website.

Safety / Technical Standards

National Coring Programme

The Commissioner has contacted S.U.s with 10 or more cores who achieved less than the 85% pass rate.

Research Project – Service Life of Reinstatements.

The research project on Service Life of Reinstatements is now complete and has been published on the Transport Scotland website. There will be a presentation at the Road Expo on Tuesday 28 November 2023.

J.G. indicated that there had been two errors on the SGN Performance Reports which she had reported. She pointed out that these should have been corrected as the reports were open to public scrutiny. Overruns at 12.2 should have been 5.2 and there were 14 potential FPNs which were recorded in error in the Report.

The errors appeared to be due to R.As not clearing items from the Register which were not correct and had been subsequently notified and agreed with the relevant Authorities.

This was noted by I.R. who suggested that these errors would not be revised but if reported to the Enquiries desk they would be reviewed, and a response given. I.R. suggested that a change request could be submitted to have the issues considered for changes to be made. **Action – J.G.**

J.F. agreed that the Reports should be correct and if they are being skewed by issues not being cleared by the R.As it is unacceptable. Where this is raised by an affected Organisation the wrong figures should be reviewed and corrected.

F.McI. said that Scottish Water had raised issues on figures quoted in the performance reports. She hoped that the data supplied was being checked and corrected where relevant.

Potential FPNs should not be issued in relation to overruns.

ci. Commissioner Review of RAUC(S) Advice Notes

The previously circulated paper was taken as read. Any queries or comments on the content of the paper should be sent to enquiries@roadworks.scot

d. SROR Review

There will be a webinar on 2nd November regarding the changes introduced in the new SROR Ver 5.

Safety at Street Works and Road Works Code of Practice Review

The review has now started with Scottish Representatives from the road works community involved.

Safety bulletins are still being sent out by the RAUC(S) Secretariat as and when they arise.

Management & Operation of SRWR

SRWR Procurement

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

The procurement exercise to replace the contract for the SRWR service has been commenced. The service requirement will be broadly similar to the service tendered in 2016 but will include additions brought in by changes to legislation.

Fiona McInnes is representing Community stakeholders on the Procurement Project Board and the Evaluation Team. A volunteer is required for the Evaluation Team, preferably a R.A. member of the Systems Assurance Team or someone with equivalent knowledge and experience. If you are interested (or know someone who is) please contact Iain Ross.

SRWR Terms of use

The terms of use of the SRWR are being revised, to better describe how Organisations and their contractors can access the SRWR, what data about you and your users is held by the oSRWC, and what this data is used for.

This will include clauses which describe issues relating to account /password sharing. All should note that this is not permitted, and that Administrators are responsible for ensuring only authorised users are granted access to the register.

We plan to roll out the update on 1 October 2023.

An email with a link to the new terms has been circulated to all Primary and Secondary Contacts held by the Commissioner in each Organisation. Any concerns with the proposed changes should be forwarded to the enquiries@roadworks.scot mailbox.

The Commissioner would like to remind all users that their login details should not be shared and each individual user must have their own login to the system. An organisation can have as many unique logins as they need. Logins found to be used by multiple individuals will be deactivated.

Dial before you Dig Service

Following a complaint from a user of the Dial before you Dig service, who didn't receive a single response to a request, the Commissioner intends to undertake a review of the quality of the responses sent by R.As and S.U.s.

It has also been suggested at the SRWR Steering Group that a list of contact numbers be collated that can be shared with users of the service if and when they need to chase a response from a particular Organisation. The Commissioner would like to hear your views on this.

New Organisations on SRWR

There are no new Organisations who have been granted access to the SRWR since the last meeting.

Concept Solutions People has changed its name to Glide Fibre Ltd.

RAUC(S) Website

The RAUC(S) website has been updated to reflect the changes to the constitution. George Borthwick now has access to upload the relevant details and papers for each Area and Local RAUC meetings.

The Commissioner would like to remind all Chairs and Secretaries that details of their meetings, including minutes should be passed to Gorge Borthwick for publishing on this site.

I.D. commented that there had been no consultation on the revision to Advice Note 28.

The revision related to a change of terminology in the DMRB which although correct should have been brought to the attention of the Community. This affected the location and erection of Poles and was already requiring discussion with a R.A.

K.Q. pointed out that the DMRB was a UK document developed and approved as such.

6. **Working Group Reports**

i. National Coring Group

The Group had met last week and agreed a final version to be submitted for final approval. The changes requested at the last RAUC(S) meeting were considered and dealt with

The Report will be circulated to the Community.

ii. Inspections Working Group

The Group continues to meet with the discussion focused on the development of a risk matrix.

When the final version is approved there will be a need for Inspectors to be trained.

A comment was made that some live site failures are being issued wrongly e.g. replacement of road markings where the barriers are still in place is not a failure.

Any suggestions relating to Inspection should be passed to the Group Co-Chairs Julie Greig or Scott Walker.

iii. Coordination Working Group

The Group have been meeting and discussing the list of potential changes to the Code arising from the new Legislation as submitted by K.Q.

Discussion will then be arranged on the list of changes raised by J.H. in his review of the Advice Notes.

iv. SROR Review Group

See notes above in the Commissioner's report.

The final drafting of the Appendix 9 is ongoing and the plan is to have it approved at RAUC(S) to come into use with the New SROR on 1st October.

v. SAT

The work of the Team is ongoing with no issues to be reported to this meeting.

vi. SRWR Steering Group

The work of the Group is ongoing with no issues to be reported to this meeting.

vii. RQP Working Group

The Group is not meeting at present but if there is a problem they will reconvene.

7. Health and Safety

a. Health and Safety Bulletins

The Bulletins continue to be circulated by the RAUCs Secretariat. All were asked to send H & S Bulletins and reports to the Secretary so that they can be circulated to provide potential training and maybe avoid other Organisations having a similar problem.

b. List of Plant Protection Systems

All Organisations were asked to review the Schedule and send any revisions to the Secretary so that he can maintain a current listing.

c. Emergency Contact Details

All Organisations were asked to review the Schedule which was circulated and send any revisions to the Secretary so that he can maintain a current listing on the Web Site.

8. AOCB

a) RAUC(S) / Area RAUC Meeting Dates 2023

The previously circulated draft RAUC(S) and Area Meeting Dates were taken as read. The dates mirrored the 2023 dates so it is likely that they will be finally agreed at the October RAUC(S) meeting.

All LRAUC Chairs were asked to send their meeting dates to the Secretary for posting on the RAUC(S) Diary. The availability of these dates for S.U. Representatives who attend multiple meetings is appreciated. **Action – LRAUC Chairs**

b) 2024 Meeting Arrangements Questionnaire

There is a questionnaire on the web to assess the views on holding meetings online or face to face. All should respond if they have not already done so. The results will be

used to decide if any of the meetings will be held face to face. Any meetings which are to be held face to face should be in accommodation which can facilitate it being hybrid.

c. Auto Decline of Defects

A.MacL. indicated that there appears to be a problem with defects being declined with no comments on why. The concern is that they are on auto decline response. Of all defect notices issued there is some 50 % being declined in this manner.

The S.U.s commented that the Defect Notices received in many cases have little location information and or no photograph to help staff deal with the problem efficiently resulting in wasted visits to sites which could have been initially dealt with by viewing the photograph. A.MacL. agreed that the detail and photograph should be provided and appreciated that the S.U. time was as scarce as R.A. time.

Moray had some problems with declining of Notices and agreed that all must work together to avoid time wasting by both parties.

There is currently no SRWC Performance Indicator for this subject but the Register can provide a report on declined inspections.

Where there is a problem, the data should be collated and discussed at the LRAUC meetings.

Scottish Water endeavour to have the sites inspected and a response given within 24 to 48 hours and any detail which is provided assists this process. Joint Inspections are time consuming so should be avoided wherever possible. Any evidence of malpractice should be passed to F.McI, so that it could be investigated.

Private plant / Small Organisation plant can be difficult to deal with. Hydrant repairs are dealt with the Fire and Rescue service which will add to the time taken to respond. Defects on ironwork in new surfacing will be sent back to the R.A.

J.G. asked R.As to send details of any SGN issues in this category to her for review.

d. Openreach Overground Cables

A.MacL had raised this Item to find out if other R.As were having a problem with Openreach cables being laid overground, in ditches, strung on fences and trees as it was causing a potential hazard for ditch cleaning, verge cutting and other road maintenance. The responsibility for cable damage is also a concern.

Highland are meeting with Openreach tomorrow (20th) when the problems will be discussed.

There is a general lack of information in VAULT about the route of these cables. This may be improved when the Openreach interface is introduced on VAULT in the near future.

The depth of plant in Verges has yet to be specified.

The plant which has been laid overground may have been as a temporary arrangement which should have been dealt with. There may have been an error made by the contractor or their partner.

Progress on discussions with Openreach has been positive but further action on the sites needs to be made.

e. R.A. Representatives at the RAUC(S) Meetings

Reference was made to the RAUC(S) constitution which indicates that there will be 3 R.A. Representatives from each Area to attend the RAUC(S) Meetings. Each Area R.As should consider this matter and agree who will be their appointed Representatives. The final arrangement should be relayed to the RAUC(S) Co-Chairs and the Secretary as soon as possible. **Action – R.As**

f. SGN Telephone Contact System

J.G. informed the meeting that there is one number for telephone contact and it provides a hunt system to connect the caller to a relevant member of staff. This will remove the problem of direct contact not being available because the recipient is on holiday or off ill etc. The Telephone Number for the North Area was given but the contact list will be circulated via the Secretary. **Action – J.G. / Secretary**

g. R.A. Chair for the next 2 Year Period

A.MacL indicated that Highland was on the list to take over in April 24 from Vodafone. As she would possibly not be available for the full term she asked the other R.As if they would be prepared to swap with Highland. S.D. (Angus Council) indicated that as their staffing was only recently in place they may not consider they are ready to take over the Chair but he would discuss the matter with P.M.

The R.A. Representatives from the NAREA would meet to discuss this matter and additionally agree the Representation to RAUC(S). **Action – A.MacL**

9. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The Next Meeting will be held on **Tuesday 23rd January 2024 at 10.30am**

**Subsequent meetings will be held on: - Tuesday 21st May 2024
Tuesday 17th September 2024**

Venue: -

Future Meetings for NAREA RAUC will be held on MS TEAMS or as agreed following the current RAUC(S) questionnaire.

Meeting closed at 12.07