HAUC@ Harrogate 2017

Comments and Observations from the Round Table Sessions

Dear Delegate/Exhibitor

Thank you for attending HAUC@Harrogate 2017 and I hope you found the event informative and of great interest.

For those who attended the roundtable sessions, I have set out below the comments and observations noted during the discussions and I thank the individuals who (were volunteered!) to take notes as these have caught the spirit of the day.

Presentations were given by:

Safety – Tom Lambert (General Manager Streetworks, Balfour Beatty Infrastructure Services)

Inspections – Ian Darbyshire (Street Works Manager, Northern Powergrid)

Materials – Dave Regan (Street Works Strategy Manager, Electricity North West)

A copy of the comments and observations will be sent to the Chairs of the respective HAUC Working Groups for their consideration.

Thank you again.

Roger Culpin

Retiring Chair, HAUC@Harrogate Event Committee

SAFETY

1. We have the equipment to make our sites safer but how do we improve behaviours, perceptions, and attitudes?

- Lack of training (update training).

- Management aware of needs, however, may not be distributed to the people on the ground.

- Operatives are stuck in their ways and need to change their mind-set.

- Consistency in training providers.

- Training + Inspections: Internal + External

  Utilisation of new technology – CCTV etc.

  Onsite training, reinforce training and share best practice/good practice.

- Raise awareness: Safety Alerts; Regular Tool-box Talks; Consequences of Failure/Highlight Consequences; Stand-down Briefs.

- Correct planning: Giving appropriate time for the job/task

  Risk assessment on site + pre-planning.

- Parity: First excuse “Council do not do it”. HA operatives have equipment but don’t know how to use it. Imperative to show parity between utilities and authorities.

- FPNs for SLG, particularly high risk inspections. Potential discount applied if this is rectified in 2 hours (improve behaviour).

- Communication: talking about behaviour and attitude.

- Training so people know how to use equipment.

- More site supervision; audits (more random ones); and inspections (HA and utility).

- Training: re-training and assessments. Warnings and discipline for repeat offenders.

- Planning for sites – correct number of SLG equipment.

- Photograph the site before, during and after (monitoring).

- Relevant Training (First time & Refresher); Communication/Engagement; Compliance Testing; Encouragement; Incentives; Planning & Preparation; Fines/Penalties; Discipline; Improvement Notices; Closure (as a last resort); and Liaison Meetings (HAs and Residents).

- Visible and continued presence.

- Time to give more focus on safety.

- Real time feedback and more communication (behaviour change).

- Use of specialist TM companies for major schemes.

- Better communications with local businesses and residents for bigger schemes.
- Mobility scooter implication training.
- Audits – coach on site to show what's incorrect and how to improve.
- Personalise: Do it to protect.
- Use of common sense.
- Zero Tolerance/Target Zero.
- Supervision/management improvement.
- Culture change.
- Train rather than sack which only moves the problem onto another company.
- Change the attitudes and behaviours of management at high level not just operatives.

SAFETY

2. Since the new code was introduced in 2013, what retraining has been done by HAs and Utilities to address the changes in emphasis to risk assessment?

- Opinion is that people just wait until their existing card runs out.
- Some organisations update straight away.
- Distribution of new book.
- Raise awareness to Management:

  Cascades; all contractors; videos; revisit to check compliance of equipment.
- RASWA training updated; Direct Labour going through RASWA training.
- Chapter 8 followed more closely.
- Utilising an existing Traffic Management Plan that has allowed works to be carried out effectively.
- Site checked regularly.
- Onsite training which is reinforced.
- Traffic Management: always looking at new legislation and adapting and changing.
- Events similar to HAUC@Harrogate.
- Making people aware of any updates.
- Completing Street Works and SLG training for staff.
- Inspections of sites.
- Red Book used in inductions.
- Tool-box talks (bottom up approach).
- Regular safety bulletins/newsletters.
- Risk assess everything.
- Code allows more efficient site inspection.
- [HA] – very limited training – more like self-learning of the code' team meetings provide some update, collaborative learning.
- Standard courses should be 5 days for accreditation.
- Refresher every 2 years (1 day operatives & supervision)
- All should take course to cover 2013 changes.
- HA – advisory – how to put right to avoid defects.

- Project specific TM & understanding constantly briefed to managers who usually miss training courses and updates.
- Upfront planning and operatives understanding.
- Assessments and audits for training.
- Joint utilities and HAs training/inspections.
- [HA] – retraining on new regulations.
- [Utilities] – Advice notes.
- More site specific job packs.

INSPECTIONS

1. Is there anything more in the Inspection Process that can help to improve performance?

- When there are operatives present, inspections should address issues on the ground there and then, not just back at the office.

- Communication – attend agreed meeting or ring up to rearrange.

- Liaise with gangs where appropriate to understand why something is as it is.

- Inspection process does work, however, results may not be communicated to the teams on the ground.

- Within the Code, examples of types of defects and severity for the average person on the ground.

- More monitoring on site.

- Prioritise safety above programme.

- More and better communication (between HA/utilities). For example, can a response be achieved in the time frame?

- Self assessment – internal inspections.

- Personal responsibility – more accountability.

- More incentives for a “pass” inspection. Penalties for non-compliance should be applied.

- Utility taking more responsibility – photograph completed reinstatements. Defective reinstatement identified from photograph on Closed Notice – better technology systems to assist in this process.

- Camera phones to live feed into the office; make photographs compulsory.

- Root cause analysis of non-compliance.

- Consistency of inspections (training/standardised approach across the industry).

- Resources – staff and/or time. Increased HA resource levels to ensure better asset protection.

- Remove returning to same defects (compliance by utility).

- Quality over quantity in reinstatements, SLG.

- Salaried staff as opposed to small basic + bonus pay.

- Paid for abortive inspections.

- Mobile working.

- Sharing inspection results/information, highlight problem groups and ensure that training is increased on common problems found during inspections.

- [HA] – Inspections requiring 2/4 hour defect does not attract a charge.

- Performance management of operatives – incentivise for Good Behaviour – effective?

- Do not open up both sides of the highway if there is not adequate SLG.

- Standardisation of practice to be nationwide.

- Should there be a HA approved contractor list?

- Reduce amount of categories.

- Simplify the process and reduce the fines – stop making money out of the process.

- Utilities could listen to advice given by HA Inspector.

- More site meetings to be carried out before commencement of the works by utilities.

- Increase guarantee period.

- Collaboration and trust utility inspections (let utilities help and use HA data). Swap/share performance data. Consistency within HAs when providing data on performance. Utilities to provide own inspections findings.

- More inspectors.

- Training providers to be of a higher standard.

- Better pre-job planning.

- Collaborative inspections.

- Acceleration of improvement plan process.

- Powers to stop work for unsafe sites.

INSPECTIONS

2. Is a 10% sample inspection rate effective?

- A higher rate might identify more issues but it probably wouldn't be cost effective for either side.

- 10% is ok for larger utility companies. Percentage of actual no of works in an area may need to be adjusted for smaller companies.

- More % of onsite inspections. Safety more important. 10% not effective.

- Less people – invest in staff.

- Independent inspectors (not from HAs or utilities), inspect each other's, share best practice.

- More consistency and more communication.

- No – poor performance not just passed to contractor – more responsibility placed on utility to rectify/monitor.

- Yes – when taking into consideration the cost and amount of actual inspections this equates to it is quite a good sample of works. Also, when taking into account the internal inspections that utilities and service partners also carry out, this instantly increases the 10%.

- One point in relation to coring, this falls outside the 10% inspection rate so this is another element of inspection that has no limit.

- No – already doing more – up to 40% (Cat A, B and C total). Other HAs still at 10%.

- Increase inspection rate on problem groups.

- Only effective if meets requirements. If poor performance increase percentage requirement the following year.

- Minimum number should be applied if only small number of projects being delivered (scaled).

- Potentially, don't fix if it's not broken.

- Is the 10% rate relevant?

- The inspectors are inspecting anyway and internal inspections are adding value into the regime.

- HAs only complete 10% inspection rate but this should be backed up with target inspections.

- Should be higher than 10%.

- Do as many routine inspections as possible.

- Also, report success.

- No.

- 10% is not enough but resources should be given money and supported.

- Utilities should do and provide inspection results.

- Adjustable sample rate – focus category inspection on failure and focus where failures are: increased inspections on failure areas.

MATERIALS

1. Should a revised SROH specify air voids measures?

- How would it be proved?

- No, it's too hard to reach measures. Cores are taken from year's ago.

- Yes, should only be failed if high percentage of air voids.

- Yes, should be comparative analysis with adjacent construction.

- More focus on new flowable materials.

- Already in place (Sector Scheme 16 – Appendix C: Competency Guidelines).

- Yes, although possible increase in footways.

- Yes but at an agreed sample rate or protocol.

- Mindful of costs and apportionment.

- Develop a better way of guaranteeing longevity of the reinstatement; if not, retain air voids.

- No, based on performance.

- The guidance should be in the SROH.

- Yes but:

    - depending on SROH's air void max is usually 13%. If a fail is nearer 13% than 2% - shouldn't be that high anyway but needs further clarification;

    - people who are accredited to a certain standard;

    -utilities can do their own coring so they have their own results.

- No, compaction inspections are sufficient. **NO**

- [HA] – yes if method + standard techniques applied. Will reduce damage & defects beneficial to all parties.

- Discussion around increase 2 year defect period.

- If air void measures improves so can defect period.

- If performance based – no.

- Currently not designed to support size of utility reinstatements.

- They should not be in, should only be measured on depth & material.

MATERIALS

2. How would you simplify SROH approvals for innovative backfill or reinstatement products?

- If the product was of a type already approved, why start the process again on an A9 trial if technology is the same?

- Use existing regional materials groups set up through HAUC to review and authorise.

- Allow for departures of standards for innovative products providing they perform ie Warm Mix Materials.

- Flexibility on trials.

- Better information sharing.

- Simplify the process – easier understood.

- Reduce the 2 year period – 1 year on flexible and time period dependent on location.

- HAPAS/ISO9000 – needs to suit needs across geography ie European v England/Scotland/Wales/N Ireland.

- HAPAS more suited to England/Scotland/Wales/N Ireland.

- Simplifying approach will require potential relaxations which must be guarded against.

- YHAUC A9 appraisal process in place.

- Relax the cube sizes for testing SMR – 6" to 4".

- Make the SROH more able to allow innovative products – encourage rather than have strict regimes – focus on end spec and performance.

- Agreed on local level – if trials are successful then products should be allowed in other HAs: feedback & communication through HAUC.

- HAPAS Approval should be reduced from £30k. What benefit does this figure given to developers & development? £30k restricts innovation. Too many "hoops" to jump through! Review & remove "hoops" & help smaller companies with initial and stage payments.

- Trials over a period of time to assess innovation & products; period to bring to market too long.

- Once approved, all HAs to agree use in their own areas as, even if approved, some HAs won't allow to use in their area.