



HAUC(UK) Response to Questions at Conference on 17th May 2018.

1. Will apprenticeships plug the skill gap fit for future skills?

It HAUC(UK) it's part of several measures which can contribute to providing a workforce with skills for the future and this needs to be part and parcel of any Resource Plan for our industry. Upskilling our workforce to meet the demands is vital to ensure the economy continues to grow.

2. What is the prospect of Mayoral combined authorities with devolved powers setting up permit schemes/lane rental for key route network that conflicts with local existing schemes?

There is certainly a potential for this to happen and we need to be fully aware of this and engaged with combined authorities. The establishment of a Key Route Network within a Combined Authority region is one of the fundamental requirements of most if not all devolution agreements. Officers are engaged in work looking at benchmarking service delivery by the individual authorities within a combined authority to seek consistency. Part of that process could include how an enhanced level can be provided on the KRN. We need to engage with Metro Mayors to see how they would wish to use their powers and how this may be enhanced or affected by a further permit scheme specifically for a KRN. This work is starting now and we need to work together as Highway Authorities and Utilities with devolved regions to ensure we can influence and advise on the most appropriate way forward

3. With projects such as 5G/broadband/electrical charging points/increased housing/growth in infrastructure across UK - how do you compete with the demands of road space with existing access demands to assets?

HAUC(UK) advocates the need for some longer-term planning which includes infrastructure and highway asset plans to make better use of space and indeed timing of subsequent works. There are sensitivities around certain sectors in terms of commercial confidentiality but these need to be got around if the

industry is to move forward and make more strategic decisions. Forward planning is a key component and we all need to work smarter when it comes to planning and delivering schemes. The Street Manager project has the potential to open up the forward planning process and the open data concept may indeed see developments in systems which deliver cross sharing of infrastructure plans set against the economic needs of the UK.

4. Why should we accept differences in interpretation of legislation in this community? Shouldn't we instigate some education to try and ensure we are all on the same page?

HAUC(UK) wholeheartedly supports the notion of a single view of the truth and is working on several initiatives to help deliver consistency. There is a major revamp of the Training and Accreditation process including additional areas on Administration and Inspection as well as the SROH and Safety. Also, we are working with the DfT on the Street Manager project which will drive change in terms of data and the management of the network. This will lead to a more consistent, transparent and connected industry approach and eliminate a lot of wasted resources. This change is built on the fundamental notions of a single view of the street and a single view of the truth about what's happening on the street.

5. How are Statutory Undertakers expected to know when they are working on the Key Route Networks. How does this influence the planning of works?

Currently, even though KRN have been established, there is no difference as in all cases the individual authority continues to have statutory highway powers for the section of KRN within their own authority boundary. So from a Utility perspective nothing has changed at this moment. However this may change in the future. KRN are generally the most strategically important roads within an area so that extra level of planning will already be in place, however, in the case of Manchester, the Metro Mayor has already stated his desire to adopt lane rental powers. It is not clear at this stage how this will work operationally. Will it be delivered by the particular highway authority or by the Metro Mayor taking the statutory highway function for those specific roads?

We need to be aware of these potential changes and engage with colleagues to be transparent as changes are developed. We need to communicate openly and in a timely manner to ensure both JAG(UK) and Street Works UK are included in the debate from the outset.

6. Will there be any guidance or advice for authorities and utilities, particularly electric, regarding dealing with infrastructure requirements for electric vehicle charging points?

HAUC(UK) and indeed JAG(UK) are working with DfT and suppliers to try and facilitate some consistency in approach and delivery across the UK. JAG(UK) and the LGA have met with suppliers and there are some issues around volumes and types of assets proposed to deal with demand, but it is difficult now to understand the likely demand. HAUC(UK) will continue to work with all stakeholders and will communicate back to the industry as the picture unfolds.

7. Are combined authorities working with utilities at spatial planning stages to understand their infrastructure needs (early coordination)

This is a valid point which needs to be addressed. There is so much investment available to both Utilities and Combined Authorities that we absolutely need an enhanced level of coordination.

Whilst we have quarterly coordination meetings, perhaps it would be appropriate to set up additional coordination events specifically for Combined Authority investment so there is an opportunity provided to engage at an early stage

8. Are we over thinking the skilled resource problem? Maybe the workforce are historically non-academics who may not be interested in progression - maybe they just want enough pay for digging a hole that might be their last.

We are in a period of change and there are always issues around ambition and skill, unskilled workforce. The demands from government and from the public has placed the industry under a microscope which in turn has driven not only the need to change but the need to enhance the capabilities of technology, this has driven the desire to upskill. It is as ever about striking the right balance set against the industry demands but HAUC(UK) is acutely aware of the demands being placed on resources and will support the industry through this period of change.

9. Is there an opportunity for a level of standardisation across the different devolved authorities to make sure we get synergies and achieve at a national level?

The devolved process would inevitably mean there will be national differences in terms of demand and delivery. HAUC(UK) has a strategy document which has detailed 6 common themes and principles which will be threaded into all our aims and objectives. This will bring a level of consistency and synergy on subjects such as safety, reinstatement and performance but the industry has to accept there will be differences.

10. What thought is being given to engaging with schools to promote training and apprentice schemes? Working in this sector is likely to be viewed by school leavers as starting and stopping with manual labour.

From a highway authority perspective, major schemes all include elements of social value to monitor the positive and the longer term impacts of the scheme delivery. This includes creation of jobs, apprenticeships, graduate trainees along with local supply chains etc. In addition, contractors engage with local schools both in the school and on site to cover both health and safety but also careers. There are also a wide variety of apprenticeship programmes available in the private utilities and contractor sectors with many companies working hard to raise awareness within schools and colleges. HAUC strongly supports all efforts to increase awareness of, and interest in, apprenticeships and all other skills pathways into the sector.

11. Resources/skills shortages, as an Armed Forces Veteran there are a lot of highly skilled highly motivated guys & girls leaving the forces. How many companies use this skill set? There are a lot of skilled engineers and construction skills taught in the forces.

It is for individual companies to identify and fulfil their skills requirements, but HAUC strongly encourages all efforts to encourage skilled and motivated people into the sector. Former members of the armed forces with engineering and construction skill sets would likely represent valuable assets to organisations operating in the street works sector.

This was answered in the panel session by Melissa Ewbank and Katie Nightingale

12. Question for Katie and Mellisa - have you thought of further training your people specifically looking at professional qualifications. Perhaps a partnership approach with one like the Institute of Highway Engineers or ICE?

As above

13. The work Kier & SQS are doing with operatives and analysts looks great but I do worry that Inspectors are already hard to find & not getting any younger. How can we bring new Inspectors into the industry?

As above

14. How do we eradicate the different interpretations of the legislation by LA's & utilities throughout the country and implement a uniformed approach? Is this something that recent reviews are attempting to tackle.

Like question 4 and the answer is by in large the same HAUC(UK) wholeheartedly supports the notion of a single view of the truth and is working on several initiatives to help deliver consistency. There is a major revamp of the Training and Accreditation process including additional areas on Administration and Inspection as well as the SROH and Safety. Also, we are working with the DfT on the Street Manager project which will drive change in terms of data and the management of the network. This will lead to a more consistent, transparent and connected industry approach and eliminate a lot of wasted resources. This change is built on the fundamental notions of a single view of the street and a single view of the truth about what's happening on the street. If systems are clear, the community engaged, and law structured with flexibility to change as innovation impacts then the industry can only benefit from this and HAUC(UK) has this at the top of the list and is a theme that threads through all its activities.

15. How can interpretation of legislation be made clearer?

Consistency and Transparency are two of the three main themes running through the DfT street manager project and HAUC(UK) have these themes at the forefront of any the current review processes in terms of a base principle. Simplifying the process and making the rules clear but delivering the key aims can be a difficult balance but HAUC(UK) is committed to make things better and any review group will be tasked, when making change, with using this as a fundamental principle. HAUC(UK) is also currently reviewing how it communicates with the industry and how we can improve the knowledge and understanding of the community. The development of its first App, looking at safety and the SROH is underway and HAUC(UK) is hopeful this will make a big impact on knowledge and consistency.

16. Will the increase in Combined Authorities also result an increase in the need for Street works Coordination meetings between HAUC members etc

This is a valid point which needs to be addressed. There is so much investment available to both Utilities and Combined Authorities that we absolutely need an enhanced level of coordination. Engagement as ever remains key. Whilst we have quarterly coordination meetings, perhaps it would be appropriate to set up additional coordination events specifically for Combined Authority investment so there is an opportunity provided to engage at an early stage

17. Is there a risk of more systemisation leading to more conflict between HA's and utilities ie 'computer says no'? We need to encourage more integration

of our teams to understand all stakeholder needs and be ready to concede and accept for the greater community - I applaud Jerry For his RESPECT

You have highlighted the real challenge for the industry and one that is enshrined in the Street Manager project. This project will affect the whole industry but in delivering a single view of the street and a single view of truth about what's happening on the street the industry will be operating from a common standpoint and a common platform. This potentially will have a significant impact and will drive consistency and transparency within the industry. HAUC(UK) is actively looking at communications and how it can deliver more consistency in message and view.

18. If we are serious about improvement should we remove the Street works ticket for repeat offenders rather than moving the problem around?

HAUC(UK) strategy is to concentrate on upgrading and improving the current Training and Accreditation process and to also support Supervisors and Operatives with the HAUC(UK) App. The App is a site assessment/decision making tool designed will support contractors and site operatives out on site. Using these two strategies it is hoped a more punitive approach will not be necessary.

19. Resources seem to be an issue. Would there be a potential for HA's to carry out Utilities works PUSWA style. Local jobs for local people.

This of course was the case prior to the introduction of NRSWA and lead Government and the industry back in the 1990's to push for change as the system was broke. The contractual situation within authorities and indeed utilities, together with the need to maintain corporate responsibility and liability probably makes this almost impossible to achieve. HAUC(UK) is not dismissing this in total but in terms of impact and priority it is probably not the right moment for this to happen on a large scale. Of course, situations change and this may well be relevant in years to come.

20. Could automation of construction processes over time reduce the need for manual Labour? Is that something contractors are looking at?

Innovation is a key aspiration of HAUC(UK) and it is working with the DfT SROH review team to try and push this agenda forward. The legislative structure has not helped the investment in innovation and HAUC(UK) believes we need to put in place a proper process such as ISO 9001 to give some structure to innovation, to give some impetus to investment and to give the industry some confidence.

- 21. Our current problems are more to do with interpretation of legislation. If we took out could and should and made them shall and will then the systems should correspond. Street manager is heading as a duplication as I understand no historic data and no inspections! Correct me if I'm wrong**

Legislation, regulation and Codes of Practice are bound by certain rules and the drafting and final production must stick rigorously to these. Street Manager is built on the fundamental principles of a single view of the street and a single view of the truth about what's happening on the street. With that in mind the playing field changes and the whole community will be operating within a common framework, within a consistent set of rules and within a transparent process. HAUC(UK) believes this will have a significant impact on process and rules understanding. The historical data issue has not been fully bottomed out so watch this space.

- 22. Has DfT considered the impact of major events reducing authority maintenance budgets, stretching already skant resources staffing or for the impact on the utilities budget on defective ironworks? Concentrating on the road is stopping other reported ironworks being responded to!?**

The SROH is under review and I understand Ironwork is an issue to be reviewed. Clearly it's about balance and the need to maintain a safe environment but at the same time reduce disruption. HAUC(UK) is working hard to improve things and it is hoped that the current SROH review will have a positive impact in this area.

- 23. What have we as group of HA's & Utility done well, has performance improved, what do we together achieve, as we attend these events and fully focus on what challenges moving forward. No recognition.**

The performance scorecard process has now got over 100 authorities producing performance data and some regional HAUC's are already using this to undertake benchmarking exercises. The Street Manager project will build on this and we will, once in place in 2020, have a sound data harvesting process which will deliver consistent and accurate data. This will ensure performance will become a standard discussion issue and will allow HAUC(UK) and indeed Government deliver more data driven decisions.

- 24. Generally, most problems within documents occur with grey areas becoming challenges, the use of "should" and "may" need to be changed to "shall" and "must" to avoid misinterpretation.**

This is like Question 21 above. HAUC(UK) is acutely aware of the need to deliver consistency in interpretation, consistency of delivery and consistency in monitoring. Street Manager will lead the industry to be in a better space and

therefore is destined to be the catalyst for the industry to drive performance improvements and improve operational decision making.

25. To enable innovation in the SROH can we move it to performance spec only rather than including a method spec as well.

The SROH is under review and this is a subject that has already engendered lengthy discussion. Aesthetics over performance is always a balance, HAUC(UK) is working with the DfT and industry experts and is looking to strike a more equitable balance.

26. How do we ensure Lane Rental schemes do not act as a deterrent for major utility capital programmes? Especially important when the services the utilities are providing can increase the economy and transform experiences for people.

Following trial schemes in London and Kent and a formal consultation process, DfT has widened the scope of the lane rental process by opening out to other permit authorities and no doubt there will be more debate around this issue. It will be important to examine lessons from the two pilot processes, as well as ensuring key details such as the criteria for establishing individual schemes are carefully considered, as Lane Rental schemes are implemented. The forthcoming guidance from DfT will be important in this regard. HAUC(UK) is committed in supporting any process or method that has a positive affect on reducing disruption and helps deliver infrastructure programmes. HAUC(UK) will also be working with DfT in developing some rules around implementation of lane rental.