

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE – 9 MARCH 2005

NATIONAL CORING EXERCISE OF PUBLIC UTILITY REINSTATEMENTS

Report By Executive Director of Development and Property Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** To inform the Committee of the outcome of the 2003/04 National Coring of Public Utility Reinstatements exercise.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** Whenever a Public Utility (or a contractor employed by them) digs up a public road they have to comply with the rules and regulations as described by the 'New Roads and Street Works Act (NRSWA) 1991. This Act also defines the duties of the Roads Authority with regard to Public Utilities works and sets limits on the Roads Authority's powers to regulate and supervise Public Utilities works in the road.
- 2.2** The last National Coring (investigatory works) exercise to ascertain whether Public Utilities are complying with specification reinstatement standards was in 2001/2002. The 'Roads Authorities & Utilities Committee (Scotland), (RAUCS) agreed to undertake a further exercise. This was programmed for and completed in 2004.
- 2.3** Dumfries and Galloway were the lead Council for the co-ordination and issue of the coring contract in southwest Scotland (the 2001/2002 coring exercise was co-ordinated by Renfrewshire Council). The contract was awarded end June 2004 and the coring works commenced in July 2004.
- 2.4** Reinstatements to be cored were to be only those that were completed between 01 September 2003 and 31 March 2004. Carriageway reinstatements to be considered as priority.
- 2.5** The initial results of the exercise were collated in December 2005. A 'Coring Dispute Panel' consisting of representatives from Transco, Scottish Water, Inverclyde Council and East Ayrshire Council was established to determine the results of any disputed core results. The Panel met in January 2005. The final results of the 2003/2004 coring exercise were collated in February 2005.

3. RESULTS OF 2003/04 CORING EXERCISE

3.1 The results of the coring exercise for the year 2003/04 with a comparison with the 2001/2002 exercise are as follows:

	2001/2002				2003/2004			
	No Cores	F/C	Non/C	% F/C	No Cores	F/C	Non/C	% F/C
BT	5	3	2	60.0%	8	5	3	62.5%
SW	7	3	4	42.9%	23	9	14	39.1%
Transco	11	8	3	72.7%	36	26	10	72.2%
SP	5	1	4	20.0%	0			
Omne	11	8	3	72.7%				
Total	39	23	16	59.0%	67	40	27	59.7%

F/C - Fully Compliant with the Specification for Reinstatement

Non/C - Non Compliant with the Specification for Reinstatement

3.2 There are no Scottish Power results as there were no completed carriageway reinstatements within the timescale window for site selection.

3.3 There are no Omne results as the company ceased trading at this time.

3.4 Although the sample number of reinstatements has increased significantly from the 2001/2002 coring exercise, the percentage of fully compliant cores for British Telecom, Scottish Water and Transco remain almost the same. In addition, the total fully compliant figure for all Utilities is still around 59%. There appears to be little improvement in the performance of Public Utilities to comply with the national specification for reinstatements.

3.5 After the 2001/2002 coring exercise, meetings were held with the Public Utilities at which EAC expressed concern about the poor performance. Since that time, the PU's have experienced various re-organisations resulting in changes in personnel that dealt with road reinstatements.

3.6 EAC will raise the issue about the 2003/2004 results with the Public Utilities at the next Local Rauc meeting which is scheduled for 17 March 2005. As a minimum, EAC will be requesting proposals for improvements from the PU's with progress reports on any implementations.

4 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Roads Division's inspections of Public Utilities are governed by the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA 1991).

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1** The Roads & Transportation Division funded from its Revenue Budget the administration and implementation of the coring programme as it related to EAC, with the Public Utilities paying for the cost of any non-compliant reinstatements in accordance with Section 131 of the NRSWA 1991.

6 RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1** It is recommended that the Committee note:

- (a) The result of the 2003/2004 National Coring of Public Utility Reinstatements exercise.
- (b) That there appears to be little improvement in the performance of the Public Utilities to comply with the National Specification for reinstatements.

James Lavery
Executive Director of Development and Property Services

AW/YK
15 February 2005

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

For further information please contact John McRobert on 01563 576310