



This response has been written by Nicholas Lyes, RAC Public Affairs Manager, on behalf of RAC Motoring Services

About the RAC

With more than eight million members, the RAC is the oldest and one of the UK's most progressive motoring organisations, providing services for both private and business motorists. As such, it is committed to making driving easier, safer, more affordable and more enjoyable for all road users.

The RAC, which employs more than 1,500 patrols, provides roadside assistance across the entire UK road network and as a result has significant insight into how the country's road networks are managed and maintained.

The RAC is separate from the RAC Foundation which is a transport policy and research organisation which explores the economic, mobility, safety and environmental issues relating to roads and their users.

The RAC website can be found at www.rac.co.uk.

In September 2016, the RAC published its latest [Report on Motoring](#).

RAC Response

Question 1 - Should utility companies be required to produce quality plans for proposed road works?

The RAC supports the introduction of quality plans and agrees that more emphasis should be placed on quality assurance procedures before the process begins. However, we believe that inspections should be retained as another form of quality control during works. The quality assurance should also include preventative methods to minimise the likelihood of future defects arising from the carried out works.

Question 2 - Should there be a single guarantee period offered on utility reinstatements of 6 years regardless of the depth of excavation?

The RAC supports a single guarantee period and for this to be 6 years in length. The current system of 2 or 3 years dependent on depth of excavation is unnecessarily complicated. We believe that such a period will reduce the need for repairs on the same stretch of highway, excluding the need for emergency works. While road surface quality tends to be an issue of high concern for motorists, repairs to previously inadequate road repairs by utilities or authorities can be particularly frustrating.

Question 3 - If introduced, should the impact of quality plans be reviewed after a suitable period (perhaps 6 years), and the necessity of the latent defect process be assessed?

The RAC believes that roads authorities and utility companies are better placed to respond to this question of process; however we believe that this should only proceed so long as surface and repair quality are not compromised.

Question 4 - Should we clarify that the scope for a code of practice on reinstatement (currently the SROR) includes all activity relating to the execution of road works e.g. signing lighting guarding, excavation, reinstatement, and guarantee period?

The RAC believes that defining the scope of a code of practice in the manner suggested would be beneficial for all stakeholders.

Question 5 (a) - Should actual starts, works completed, works cleared, and works closed notices be notified within 2 hours, or within 2 hours of the start of the next business day if out with office hours?

The RAC welcomes requirements to provide more accurate information; however the overarching requirement is for information that allows businesses, business drivers and regular users of the road enough time to be able to plan ahead in order to avoid major works. In summary we support an efficient system that allows road users to get the most accurate, up to date information along with enough notice to be able to seek alternative routes.

Question 5 (b) – Should the validity period for notices placed onto the SRWR in relation to planned works be reduced, the proposal being that they be set at 4 days or 2 days depending on the traffic sensitivity of the road?

The RAC would support this as it should provide more accurate and therefore more useful information for inspections, public information and in some cases route planning.

Question 6 - Should the provision of plant information to the Scottish Road Works Register be made mandatory?

The RAC supports the provision of plant information being made mandatory. Such information is essential in the managing of road works, particularly in cases of emergency repairs. We also hope this will have the added benefit of essential works being as short and as well managed as possible.

Question 7(a) – Should the obligation on the Scottish Road Works Commissioner to make the Scottish Road Works Register available for inspection be repealed?

The RAC has no preference; our only concern is that road users are able to access the register to obtain the most accurate journey information both prior and during works.

Question 7(b) – Should the duty to make the Scottish Road Works Register available for inspection be replaced with a duty on the Scottish Road Works Commissioner to actively publish information relating to the location of planned and actual road works?

The RAC has no views on this matter. Our only concern is that road users are able to access the register to obtain the most accurate journey information.

Question 8 - Should "Safety at Street Works and Road Works A Code of Practice" apply equally to roads authority and utility road work sites?

The RAC agrees that it is sensible that a common set of standards be applied at all road works sites. However we note that the nature of some utility works can be inherently more dangerous than some works undertaken by local roads authorities (such as filling in potholes or resurfacing). That said, consistent standards are probably appropriate no matter who is working on site.

Question 9 - Should utility and roads authority workers be required to qualified in the "Signing Lighting and Guarding" of a site, and also in the "Location and Avoidance of Underground Apparatus"?

The RAC agrees that common minimum standards of signing, lighting, guarding and location/avoidance of underground apparatus should apply at all road work sites and this requires a minimum level of training for those responsible for their implementation. This requires that an individual responsible for these activities must be able to demonstrate that they have received training accredited by a 3rd party to the required standard. Ultimately this should lead to safer sites and consistently good standards that Scottish drivers can expect when going through road works.

Question 10 - Should the minimum legal requirement for at least 'one' operative to be qualified be increased to ensure that more operatives at each road work site hold formal qualifications for the particular work they are undertaking?

The RAC does not feel it is reasonable to mandate more than one operative to be qualified at all sites because this would place an unfair burden on contractors in situations where the scope of the works is small and only a handful of operatives are involved. However, contractors should be encouraged to increase the percentages of their operatives that hold formal qualifications by, for example favouring contractors who are investing heavily in training their workforce when awarding contracts.

Question 11 – Do you agree with our policy proposals to revise and improve the enforcement of road works in Scotland by the Scottish Road Works Commissioner?

The RAC agrees with the proposal to strengthen the role of the SRWC.

Question 12 – Do you agree with our policy proposals to reform the use of Fixed Penalty Notices for the enforcement of road works in Scotland?

The RAC believes that any measures that are likely to improve maintenance standards should be encouraged. However we agree with the Scottish Government that advisory warnings should be used in the first instance and that FPNs should be used as a last resort where other enforcement methods have not worked.

Question 13 – Do you agree with our policy proposals to enhance the role of the Scottish Road Works Commissioner?

The RAC has no strong preference. However, if giving the SRWC more powers helps to improve the output quality of road works, then we believe it to be a step in the right direction.

Question 14 - Should there be flexibility to prescribe the restricted period following substantial works through secondary legislation?

The RAC is not best placed to respond to this question. We believe local authorities and utility companies are better placed to give a more informed response.

Question 15 - Should we clarify that a roads authority is included within those to be notified under Section 114 of NRSWA?

The RAC is not best placed to respond to this question. We believe local authorities and utility companies are better placed to give a more informed response.

Question 16 - Should roads authorities be one of the parties that must be notified under statute to help formalise the use of early and late start consents?

The RAC is not best placed to respond to this question. We believe local authorities and utility companies are better placed to give a more informed response.

Question 17 - Should Section 132 of NRSWA be repealed?

The RAC is not best placed to respond to this question. We believe local authorities and utility companies are better placed to give a more informed response.

Question 18 - Should noticing requirements for roads authorities and utility companies be exactly the same in order to facilitate coordination and cooperation?

The RAC believes better co-ordination and cooperation between roads authorities and utility



companies needs to be encouraged and therefore common notice requirements would seem to be sensible step towards this.

Question 19 - Should Section 61 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 be revoked with savings provisions for existing agreements?

The RAC is not best placed to respond to this question.

Please address any comments or further contact to:

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