NJUG

NJUG Welcomes the Publication of the Mayor's Transport Strategy for London

13th October 2009 - NJUG welcomes the publication of the Mayor's transport strategy for London and his commitment to work with local authorities and utility service providers to reduce the impact of road and street works on traffic congestion.

NJUG supports the use of London Works as an aid to better planning and co-ordination of works, which we believe will deliver the greatest benefits in terms of reduced disruption. Indeed, a number of utilities have already provided their forward plans to Transport for London.

NJUG remains keen to work with Transport for London and London Boroughs to develop a workable and robust permit scheme, which delivers tangible benefits in terms of reduced disruption. Additionally, wide scale use of minimum-dig technology is having a positive effect on both the size and duration of works.

NJUG recognises that more needs to be done and is committed to the successful implementation of the London Code of Conduct, which the London utilities recently agreed with the Mayor.

We are therefore disappointed that the Mayor is considering further measures before the effectiveness of all these important initiatives is evaluated, and the benefits realised.

While NJUG and utility service providers regret the disruption essential utility works sometimes cause, the level of work is not going to reduce for some time to come. Street works may even increase in advance of the 2012 Olympic Games, as utilities work with Transport for London and London Boroughs to bring forward works in preparation for the 2012 Olympic Games.

Imposition of a daily 'lane rental' type charge would be an unavoidable cost, which would ultimately increase consumers' bills, whereas daily overstay charges of up to £2500 per day already exist as an incentive to complete works on time.

We strongly believe that the greatest reduction in disruption can be achieved through better co-ordination of works, and that, building on a number of successful Advance Planning Pilots around the country, including in London, everyone should focus on better co-operation, communication and co-ordination of works, which will benefit both the travelling public and surrounding communities.

NJUG will be contacting the Mayor to discuss his proposals including progress on existing initiatives and the results of previous lane rental trials.

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Notes to Editors

For further information about the National Joint Utilities Group please go to www.njug.org.uk. To arrange an interview please contact the NJUG press office at pressoffice@njug.org.uk or telephone 020 7340 8737.

About The National Joint Utility Group (NJUG)

NJUG is the only UK industry association representing utilities and their contractors on street works issues.

Our full members include the Energy Networks Association (representing electricity and gas companies), Water UK (representing water companies), National Grid, Openreach, and Virgin Media. Our Associate Members are Clancy Docwra, Skanska Utiltiies, Balfour Beatty, Morrison Utility Services, Morgan Est, NACAP, PJ Keary, First Intervention, Carillion, Enterprise, Laing O'Rourke and AMEC. Including members through trade associations, NJUG represents thirty-seven utility companies.

NJUG is the utility arm of the Highway Authorities and Utilities Committee representing street works in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales known as HAUC (UK). Please see http://www.hauc-uk.org.uk/ for further information.

NJUG

NJUG's focus is on promoting best practice, safety, quality and co-ordination of works as well as representing utilities in discussions with Government and other stakeholders on street work issues.

Utilities undertake street works for four primary reasons – safety, security of supply, to connect or upgrade customers' supplies, or to divert apparatus to facilitate major transport or urban regeneration projects. Examples include Crossrail, the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics, tram projects, or new urban and housing developments.