NJUG

NJUG COMMENT:
The 14th Annual Local Authority Road Maintenance (ALARM) Survey

Les Guest, Chief Executive of NJUG:

Whilst the National Joint Utilities Group (NJUG), acknowledges the release of this years ALARM survey, we are concerned at its critique of utility street works. We are rightly required to reinstate roads, subject to our streetworks, to agreed standards. Indeed, as the utility-arm of the UK Highway Authorities and Utilities Committee – HAUC(UK) – our members are currently working with Government and highway colleagues to review the specification for the reinstatement of roads, to ensure the agreed standards maintain the necessary quality to avoid defects and reductions in the lifespan of roads.

Utilities are under continued pressure from Government, the general public, and regulators to carry out their essential works as quickly and efficiently as possible. This includes ongoing water replacement programmes, to increase the sustainability and quality of our water and sewage network, as well as gas replacement programmes necessary for safety reasons. Furthermore, the roll out of high-speed broadband networks is important to maintain the UK as a competitive and attractive environment for business, as well as to encourage home working to help reduce congestion.

Having recognised all the competing pressures, NJUG members are working continuously with local authorities to improve good practice and assist in the coordination of works. For example, we have worked very successfully with colleagues at Kent County Council on the development of their permit scheme proposal, and have continuously offered similar assistance to the developers of the London scheme. Our members have also been involved in the development of Advanced Planning Schemes around the UK, which are proving successful at coordinating advanced utility work programmes, and the establishment of a 'Code of Conduct' between the London Mayor and the major utilities operating within the capital.

We have previously had constructive discussions with the Asphalt Industry Alliance (AIA) to discuss their concerns and will continue our efforts with their members to work together on shared issues.

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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

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, BT, and Virgin Media. Our Associate Members are Clancy Docwra, Skanska McNicholas, Balfour Beatty, Morrison, 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'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.

Street works are essential activities carried out by electricity, water, gas and communications utilities to maintain, enhance, extend, renew and repair their networks.

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.