

HAUC (UK) Minutes April 2024



Meeting held in person in Manchester at The Club Suite Emirates Old Trafford and via Teams

15.00 – 17.30 Wed 17th April 2024

Chair – Dave Capon

Minute Taker Julie Payne

In attendance :

(CB) Clive Bairsto CEO SWUK & Joint Chair HAUC (UK)
(DC) David Capon CEO JAG(UK) & Joint Chair HAUC(UK)
(GD) Gail Davies Welsh HAUC
(SB) Samantha Brothwell National Grid
(PC) Phil Cameron JAG(UK), Joint Chair Performance, Comms and Safety WP's
(JE) Jeff Elliott HAUC England Joint Chair
(KQ) Kat Quane Transport Scotland
(KH) Kevin Hamilton Scottish Road Works Commissioner
(AC) Andrea Capel Joint Chair Welsh HAUC
(SG) Sam Guiver Vice Chair JAG
(CP) Chris Powell Communications Joint Chair
(MP) Mark Playforth Training & Accreditation Joint Chair
(FM) Fiona McInnes RAUC Scotland Joint Chair
(AW) Alison Williams Net Zero Joint Chair
(JC) Jan Chapman Performance Joint Chair
(JP) Julie Payne HAUC UK Comms Manager
(RJ) Rhiannon Jones Network Rail

Online attendee – Frank Jamieson National Highways

Apologies

(DH) Dean Howard Joint Chair Welsh HAUC , Tom Lambert Safety Co-Chair, Phillip McKay RAUC Scotland , Ben Beachell Welsh Government, Alan Rainford (SWUK), Peter Loft HAUC England Joint Chair, Sally Kendall (DFT), Barry Rainger (Co Chair SROH) , Colin Rivett Co-Chair SROH) David Latham (JAG)
Sarah Widdows (Chair JAG)

Welcome from DC

1. Apologies

2. Accuracy and matters arising from previous meeting minutes.

- Heat Networks in Scotland – they will now have statutory powers to avoid using S50 licences.
- ARTSM – discussion on recent emails, removal of the pink book from the DFT documents and the release of the new guidance. No notification was received regarding the removal of the “pink book” but as it's not endorsed by the DFT there is no requirement for government guidance on this matter. Issue on ARTSM

document initially free to download and the link was shared by HAUC (UK) but then it appeared there was a cost as ARTSM is a private enterprise company. This cost has now been removed and can be downloaded from the ARTSM website. Arup Aecom have advised DFT are endorsing parts of the new guidance document and the new safety code will refer to sections of the new guidance. In Scotland any new updates go to RAUC to review and then if agreed go to the commissioner. The ARTSM document did not get reviewed and passed on as it wasn't known about at the time. RAUC members have said it's useful guidance and could be accepted but RAUC would want to be part of any future developments. This guidance would not be mandatory, but the copyright should be free for the whole industry to use. MP – some questions had to be removed from the training question bank as document not referenced. KH – the pink book was only used as additional guidance; the red book is statutory and all guidance should involve the reviewing by users.

- Need to make HAUC (UK) less England centric. GD – there is poor representation from many members of HAUC (UK) so it's a vicious circle. FM – a large percentage of the current agenda should be dealt with at HAUC England.

3. Key National Government

- England** – JE (report attached). Excellent NUAR update given by Jerry McConkey and there is a monthly update available on their progress. Discussions on Heat Network schemes taking place. Inspections working group want peoples' thoughts around PBI's (performance based inspections) a comparison document has been released. The co-ordination code is progressing and the lane rental forum is reviewing the operational guidance consultation responses. Interestingly there are different views around England. Good discussion had on the improvement notice process and the PBI's regime and reporting. You need good data for performance monitoring. No one from the DFT attending the last HAUC England meeting. The recent consultations e.g. EV has been poor and believe that there is some nervousness regarding the content of the responses. District and Borough councils are keen to bring in powers of their own e.g. Levi fund BIDS but there are lots of unanswered questions. DC – there are liabilities and risks as not a statutory body. Many refer to England but actually they are a national issue. KQ – In Scotland guidance on EV is being developed but no one has seen anything come out yet. The current plan is not fit for purpose and waiting on consultation responses.
- Northern Ireland** – no report received and no representative attended.

Scotland – KQ – report attached. Vault is now mandatory and a survey to road workers is to be launched to see how they use plans. An understanding of how people use plans (usually on tablet) will be reviewed. RQP (reinstatement quality plans) code is due ministerial approval by the end of the year. Discussion on how Scotland is dealing with excavated waste, Scotland has SEPA (Scottish Environment protection agency) mainly referring to Coal Tar. FM – the plan is any is found then it will be recorded on the gazetteer under engineering difficulty while a procedure for dealing with coal tar is reviewed by the SROR working group. Guidance to be given in the co-ordination code or possibly inspections code and noted on the reinstatement guarantee. Scottish Transport Minister , Fiona Hyslop MSP has meetings with other devolved administrations next month where it is expected that she will reaffirm the standing offer of assistance from Scottish officials (in particular for NI while they undergo their review).

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- c. Guidance to be given in the co-ordination code, inspections code and noted on the reinstatement guarantee. SROR are doing A9 trials and the Scottish Transport Minister , Jim Fairlie has meetings with other divisions next month offering assistance.
- d. **Wales** – There is a new minister Vaughan Gething with Ken Skates taking the role of cabinet secretary for transport. The Welsh Government are signed onto the working groups and are currently reviewing the 3 SROH documents and pulling bits from all 3 versions. Welsh HAUC strategy group have a national coring program and Datamap Wales and NUAR are working closely together. Wales are still using Eton and the challenge is how to implement new schemes which will run with other businesses and enable us to maintain the systems. AC – the times call for us to review Eton in Wales and with an increase in network occupancy this will hopefully be looked at.

4. HAUC (UK) Working Party Updates

a) Communications

JP – update given on website improvement and increase in users on linked in and the HAUC App. Discussion had on support of the group and that we need to get some funding for the improvements to continue. Looking at applying to the existing lane rental funds.

b) Diversionary Works

AW – The group is ready to start releasing some content from the code review. Appendix C will be going out for consultation. Trying to resolve some issues but updates have been completed on appendices A & B and now working on E & F which will be out for review soon. Looking at updating the 2010 HAUC advice note which will become a supporting document for the future.

c) Infrastructure

CB – The current growth has been a concern. We have EV, 5G/6G and the heat networks. The group is building a picture of the current status but its still early days for some areas and there are many implications moving forward, as week as the increase in electricity requirements. The group are looking to better understand the totality of growth.

d) Performance

JC – currently only reporting on England but want to expand to the rest of the UK. Produced and sent out instructions to enable people to arrange their own reports from Street Manager. The DFT are increasing the available data to enable this and will include PBI data. In future the group want to increase performance stats to the rest of the UK and show a commonality in data.

e) Net Zero

DC – this is being funded by successful lane rental BID from TFL and is part of a 2 year process. We need to secure a further £100K for the 2nd year but overall, the project is looking very positive.

f) Safety

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PC – We have 6 groups working across the UK. Arup Aecom are on board and have accepted what has been reviewed so far. They are looking at the pictorial edits and this is going well, and we are moving forward. The time pressure however is unrealistic, the DFT are looking for the end of May to release a draft which can be consulted on later in the year. The pedestrian management and the cycleways are the biggest areas for review and currently we have no DFT representation.

g) Training and Accreditation

DC – the data breach has now been reviewed and have given a conclusion on their findings. All the stats were looked at and it appears the problem was down to maladministration rather than an intent to falsify results. The training centre concerned had the lowest pass rate and the group are satisfied that lessons have been learned.

MP – the failure was due to poor communications regarding online and paper questions. Paper questions had been used for training but didn't realise that the questions also formed part of the actual question bank. Some operatives have been put off using a PC so is the current testing process fit for purpose. An assessment strategy and guidance document are being produced and the group is working on the wording and the terminology. Most questions have now been reviewed apart from about 20.

The new review on the whole process has been really positive and Pye Tait are now on board and have recently issued a consultation to new persons sitting their first NRSWA course and those that have requalified in the past 12 months. There should be more information available towards the end of May. The AO's (awarding organisations) have been helpful and the outcome looks positive.

5. Items for Discussion

- **HAUC (UK) Vision** – CB We are working towards HV30 and have produced some leaflets to distribute at the convention and future meetings to engage new members to produce our next 5 year vision.
- **RPS 298 (211)** – CB the utilities are leading on this initiative and held a joint webinar with JAG colleagues. SEPA and NRW (natural resources Wales) will hopefully join to agree a protocol.
- **Worker Abuse** – CB hoping to fit in with the new red book to provide a safety guide for workers. We have a good group of interested people but are looking for some members to Chair the group.
- **HAUC (UK) funding** – DC we need more funding for Comms and for further HAUC App development as well as Net Zero. How do we take these things forward? We also need a secure server for the T & A question bank as the DFT have advised they do not want to host. **** Action DC / CB to form a Strategy to facilitate this****

6. AOB

- **GD** – need to stop bad press and reduce comments on Linked in. We need to show professionalism and to take on Road Worker Abuse.
- **MP** – a “big-up” to Staffordshire, reported a large pothole and it was repaired the next day. 🙌
- **CB** – Sadley the ENA (energy networks association) have decided to split in half with Gas moving out on its own as the previous strategies no longer align.

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7. Date of Next Meeting

Wed 11th Sept 2024 via Teams

Wed 18th Dec 2024 via teams