

Universal Metering Programme

Contract No: C-03691

ITT December 2020

Delivery

1) The Tenderer shall describe how they will maximise productivity and labour utilisation for the works described in this Contract. Elements the Tenderer is required to cover shall;

- a. Demonstrate the use of efficient planning to maximise metering installations as well as explaining how the Tenderer will take steps to minimise any need for reworks and remedial work. All of which should be in line with best practice in the water/ utilities industry.

Supporting information should be provided to give context to the answer.



Introduction

We know that Affinity Water's target is for 80% meter penetration by the end of this AMP, through industry-leading delivery efficiency. To achieve this aim, we will work closely with you, bringing our experience of delivering major UMP programmes to support your strategy. This will be achieved by clear and precise targeting of postcodes, proactive customer communications and precise management of resources and outputs via MUS systems.

How we will maximise productivity and labour utilisation

We will efficiently plan work and our resources to ensure we meet/exceed programme delivery, using highly skilled teams, targeting geographically postcode locations on a street-by-street installation programme, ensuring a right first time approach and highway authority confidence through restricted noticing. Roads in a postcode will have targeted dates for appointments. This will optimise surveyors, dig teams and plumbers and drive efficiency. Customers can book/self-book against these dates.

Our 'right first time' approach, alongside innovative tools and techniques, will maximise long term optimisation and productivity. For example, crimp technology improves efficiency and ensures long term labour optimisation through mitigating the need to re-work/re-visits. Also, by using innovative equipment such as full or mini vacuum excavation equipment in high risk existing service congested areas, we will reduce the risk of service strikes. These innovations also have the added benefit of supporting our zero harm aim and will contribute to high levels of customer and stakeholder satisfaction.

Key to our approach to maximising productivity and labour utilisation over the UMP are the following:

- ▶ Operational organisation to create a 'production type' delivery, ensuring our operatives always have work tasks to fulfil in the postcode.
- ▶ Robust performance management and quality assurance measures – data capture and audit processes via our apps and OptiMUS
- ▶ Applying best practice and 'right first time' application, exceptional quality, real-time data capture, reducing reworks and remedial work – crimp technology and tarmac temperature management
- ▶ Robust/detailed surveys by well-trained and competent surveyors.
- ▶ Highly skilled staff who receive regular coaching and mentoring to achieve continuous improvement.
- ▶ Increased productivity with skilled resources, efficient utilisation of labour over the geography street by street and target postcode locations.
- ▶ Using an incentive scheme as an effective way to reward (and retain) high performing individuals, such as performance league tables and awards e.g. Star of the Month (voucher prize) and WOW! Awards.
- ▶ Excellent customer communication to avoid/reduce repeat visits
- ▶ Increased meter fitting through dig teams installing meter boxes and then surveyors screwing in meters
- ▶ More focused data collection through Blicker, a tool which takes accurate photographs first time to allow a high level of data accuracy and audit traceability, reducing return visits and potential billing issues. This reduces data cleansing work, increasing productivity.
- ▶ Working with you to get early sight of the programme and jointly optimising the programme

- ▶ Efficient planning – see below.

Efficient planning to maximise metering installations

We understand the importance of planning the UMP efficiently. We have extensive experience through undertaking these programmes for a number of clients, e.g. Thames Water, Yorkshire Water and Welsh Water.

We have strong and trusting existing relationships with highways and other third parties due to upfront sharing and communication of work programmes, detailing any complexed phasing and gaining buy in from all the stakeholders prior to the major works commencing.

We will complete detailed surveys using surveyors who have been through a bespoke training programme, to prove each meter installation. These street surveys will be completed ahead of customer notification and installation dig teams. Our surveyors will screw in any manifold meters into existing boundary boxes at survey stage.

Ensuring a clear customer journey (through our award-winning Every Customer Counts Strategy) on the UMP will help to reduce aborted visits. Our customer service planners will work flexible hours to make booking arrangements with your customers, offering an 08:00 till 20:00 weekly service and 08:00 till 13:00 on a Saturday, also giving preferred internal fits over these hours for our internal plumbers. This flexibility will ensure we can arrange a window to complete the meter installation to customer satisfaction, in turn gaining positive feedback.

Our installation programme will be continuously monitored through jeopardy management RAG status alerts to ensure a 'production line' approach to installs, without any compromise to quality assurance. We will target geographically boroughs and wards by postcode locations on a street by street installation programme.

Any openings within the highway or private land will be closed out and fully reinstated within 48hrs of work start. We will ensure any customer disruption is kept to a minimum, and noticing closed out with sign off complete.

On mobilisation of the contract we will embed key members of our highly experienced existing metering planning and performance team leaders into the contract. Our mobilisation team will include Dan Tonkin (MUS Operations Manager Metering) and Kerry Duke (MUS Deliver Service Manager Metering) – who have achieved great success through the delivery of our industry-leading progressive metering programme for Thames Water.

Our Mobilisation Team will ensure our people are highly trained/competent on MUS/AWL systems and planning /customer procedures - ensuring efficiencies from day one.

Minimising reworks and remedial work

We will invest in training and coaching our teams to ensure the UMP works are undertaken to the highest standards. This will start with a bespoke contract and company induction and introduction to the UMP, where we will conduct a D&A test prior to a full day induction and a written risk assessment questionnaire test. Teams will be given our AW UMP Metering Installation Handbook (**Appendix Delivery Q1A**) in both hard booklet format and electronically uploaded onto their mobile device, providing a guide to correct application and install of a water meter.

We understand that quality failures can have a significant impact, increasing costs due to fault rectification and programme delay. There are also indirect costs from the

resulting disruption to customers and communities and the poor public perception of Affinity Water. We believe that all quality failures are avoidable and therefore, when a quality failure does occur, there must be a significant effort made to understand its root causes and ensure they are not repeated. We adopt a sustainable 3C model to understanding and addressing failures: 1. Cause, 2. Correction, 3. Continuous improvement.

We have learned from past experience that internal compression fittings can easily leak if knocked by a customer, therefore we use copper crimp fittings which have reduced any need for reworks. The deployment of crimping technology, which is reliable and time efficient, has been successful on our Thames Water Metering contract – there have been no leaks since deployment and a high level of customer satisfaction has been achieved as a result. In November 2020, we had over 250 WOW! Award commendations from customers.

We will ensure all reinstatement works are constructed safely and in accordance with the SROH. We have a focus on quality standards of reinstatement – where we identify non-conformity we undertake root-cause analysis, implement continuous improvement and quickly share learning across our business.

We will proactively monitor and record quality assurance areas through a robust audit regime. Compliance with legislative, contractual and our own SHEQW requirements will be monitored and audited in a number of ways. The direct supervision of staff, contractors and subcontractors will help ensure that activities are undertaken in compliance with best practice and our standards and policies. This will be supplemented by documented, weekly inspections by MUS line managers. All audits will be completed using a mobile device with inspection data transmitted directly to our work management system where it will be reviewed, analysed and collated for reporting and trending. Audits will also be shared with Affinity Water and tailored to the meeting the UMP contract requirements. Our team of Group Compliance SHE Auditors will also carry out an annual programme of audits.

Underpinning our approach will be our contract specific SHEQW (Quality) Plan, encompassing quality assurance processes, procedures and measure.

Procedures and methods detailed in this plan will describe recommended best practice techniques (including additional engineering) for excavation, backfill and reinstatement works. These policies and procedures form part of our quality management systems utilised across our business, and are reviewed annually (or as required) as part of our Business Management System.

We use mobile applications to provide near real time photographic in the key stages throughout each of the meter installation fits and the quality of reinstatement, removing repeat site visits and reduces non-conformity.

We perform all quality assurance activities required by the SROH as well as accepted industry good practice, e.g.:

- ▶ **Auditing:** Completion of comprehensive checklist against SROH requirements with pass/fail indicators.
- ▶ **Material condition tests:** Undertaken following the methodology in Appx 1 of the SROH for batch tests, granular material contaminants, moisture content, particle size, frost heave susceptibility tests, etc.
- ▶ **Clegg testing equipment:** To monitor backfill layer lifts and compaction density
- ▶ **Compaction:** Lift thickness and surcharge



allowances are continually monitored using our innovative depth gauge.

- ▶ **Bitumous material temperature:** Checks that our reinstatement operatives take and record temperature readings at the point of delivery, during storage and immediately preceding laying and compaction. Laying temperatures are checked against the specification in Table A2.3 of the SROH.
- ▶ **Recycled materials:** Monitored against the QA plan of the supplier with tests carried out by a UKAS accredited laboratory.

Supporting information

As an experienced metering contractor, we have robust procedures and plans in place to maximise productivity and effectively use labour. This, alongside our drive to continuously develop and use innovations and technology, will support the UMP in achieving exceptionally high standards. Key drivers for efficiency and utilisation will be efficient and collaborative planning, and ensuring every member of our workforce understands their role in delivering a timely and 'right first time' service. This will be achieved through training and coaching to ensure our employees have the knowledge required (e.g. Metering Handbook in **Appendix Delivery Q1A** – specifically created for this AWL UMP contract), robust procedures (through our BMS) and an agreed logic (e.g. Method Statement – example as **Appendix Delivery Q1B**).

Our approach has yielded impressive results on our **Yorkshire Water** framework, where we undertake circa 70,000 domestic meter options and replacements. Through our Every Customer Counts strategy we have effectively targeted communities in order to gain access to properties – which in turn has allowed for better efficiency and labour utilisation. For example – increase to metering works completion rate from average of 81.9% in 2019 to 92.3% in Sept 2020. This has significantly contributed to Yorkshire Water's customer performance – evidenced through the WOW! Award initiative – where over 5,000 customer nominations have been received.

The approach has been similar on our industry-leading **Thames Water Metering** contract. Getting the customer journey right has helped access to properties which aids planning and thus allows for better efficiency and labour utilisation. We set up a bespoke call centre on our main site whose primary aim is to book appointments, answer queries and handle first contact complaints from metering customers. We introduced WOW! Awards in May 2017 and it has been a huge success. We now regularly receive over 120 customer commendations every month, 250 in November 2020 – a measurable indicator of high levels of customer service our frontline individuals are providing.

MUS has efficiently delivered:

- ▶ PMP(UMP) – 331,127 meter installations
- ▶ OMP – installed 93,011 new meters
- ▶ RR – Replaced 170,439 meters
- ▶ Bulk meters – Installed 4,929 bulk meters which saved 39.29 mld of leakage
- ▶ Meter investigations – Investigated and rectified 19,293 meter faults.

Innovations, e.g. crimp technology/internal meter boxes have reduced our 'unmeterable' rate from 40% to 20%.

As **Appendix Delivery Q1C** we have provided a commendation from Thames Water's Head of Programme Delivery, Mark Cooper, thanking MUS Metering Team for their 'phenomenal performance' in AMP6.