

Recommendations

Code of Practice for Maintenance Management for Winter Service - 2009/2010

Recommendation	Description	Adopted by WBC	Comments	Reason for not adopting recommendation
1	Authorities should formally approve and adopt policies and priorities for Winter Service, which are coherent with wider objectives for transport, integration, accessibility and network management, including strategies for public transport, walking and cycling. They should also take into account the wider strategic objectives of the authority.	Yes	Winter Service Plan reviewed in accordance with recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission (OSMC) and COP as amended December 2009. Plan to be approved by Individual Decision 11 November 2010.	
2	Authorities should consider, consult on and formally adopt local service standards for resilience of their winter service in terms of number of days continuous severe conditions salting on a defined Minimum Winter Network for the Overall Winter Period and for the Core Winter Period.	Yes	Revised Contingency Treatment Network.	
3	Authorities should review their approach to climate change and in particular their resilience to prolonged cold weather.	Yes	Emerging Severe Weather Plan covering flooding, severe winter conditions, heatwaves and droughts.	
4	Authorities should consider whether collaborative arrangements such as shared services, lead authority arrangements, collaborative service procurement and sharing depots and salt stock, would prove effective and provide value for money approach to increasing winter service resilience.	Yes	Joint procurement with Berkshire Unitaries for sensor maintenance and forecasting services.	

Recommendations

Code of Practice for Maintenance Management for Winter Service - 2009/2010 (cont'd)

Recommendation	Description	Adopted by WBC	Comments	Reason for not adopting recommendation
5	Authorities should determine critical areas and infrastructure in conjunction with key public services and other stakeholders and seek to ensure that appropriate winter treatment has been considered by the appropriate party.	Yes	Scrutiny by WBC's OSMC involving all interested internal and external parties.	
6	Authorities should ensure effective communication of information for the public before and during normal and severe winter conditions.	Yes	Publication of 'Safer Driving this Winter on West Berkshire Roads' leaflet and Winter Service Plan and associated route plans via the website.	
7	Authorities should ensure that there is appropriate consultation and communication with other highway authorities, key public services and other stakeholders and seek to ensure improved service for the public.	Yes	Comprehensive consultation was carried out by OSMC during their review and during the development of the 2011/12 Winter Service Plan. Consultees included internal stakeholders, Council and Parish/Town Council Members, transport providers, adjoining councils and emergency services.	
8	Authorities should formally approve, adopt and publish, in consultation with users and key stakeholders, a Winter Service Plan based on the principles of this Code	Yes	Winter Service Plan reviewed in accordance with recommendations of the OSMC and COP as amended December 2009. All interested internal and external parties consulted as part of scrutiny and development and approval of Plan.	

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Code of Practice for Maintenance Management for Winter Service - 2009/2010 (cont'd)

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9	Authorities should define treatment route plans for carriageways, cycle routes and footways for pre-treatment and snow conditions, based upon the general maintenance hierarchy, but adapted to take into account the factors identified by this Code.	Yes	Route plans in place.	The Council only salts specified sections of footway network during prolonged hazardous conditions and when snow is forecast.
10	Authorities should prepare contingency Winter Service Plans for severe weather conditions, which include possibilities such as salting a Minimum Winter Network. Authorities should seek agreement on plans in advance with other highway authorities and key public services such as hospitals and public transport providers. There should be a co-ordinated approach to implementing Minimum Winter Networks across adjacent Authorities.	Yes	<p>Comprehensive consultation was carried out by OSMC during their review and during the development of the 2011/12 Winter Service Plan. Consultees included internal stakeholders, Council and Parish/Town Council Members, transport providers, adjoining councils and emergency services.</p> <p>Thames Valley Police 'Salt Cell' working group to develop GIS plans for Thames Valley to assist authorities with cross boundary treatment.</p>	
11	Authorities should explore the potential for mutual aid in salt supply and other aspects of winter service and should make contingency arrangements in advance.	Yes	Alternative salt supply arrangements in place with WBC's Term Maintenance Contractor.	

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Code of Practice for Maintenance Management for Winter Service - 2009/2010 (cont'd)

Recommendation	Description	Adopted by WBC	Comments	Reason for not adopting recommendation
12	Authorities should take full advantage of decision support systems and services to enable timely, efficient and accurate decision making.	Yes	West Berkshire Council makes use of information from roadside sensors and detailed site specific forecasts issued by MeteoGroup UK in it's decision making process.	
13	Authority should continually monitor performance during service delivery and respond effectively to changing conditions or network incidents.	Yes	PI's in Term Maintenance Contract and Winter Service Plan.	
14	To ensure appropriate level of competence, training and development needs of all personnel should be established and reviewed annually, including health and safety and appropriate vocational qualifications. Training should then be provided where appropriate before the Winter Service season.	Yes	Formal training of WBC Staff undertaken with Vaisala 2009. All Duty Officers trained to City and Guilds Supervisor Standard. All Term Contractor WS operatives have City & Guilds 6157 accreditation (superseded by 6159). 2 staff are now accredited City & Guilds Winter Service Supervisors.	
15	Authorities and relevant organisations should provide training and conduct periodic exercising to test plans for responding to severe weather events.	Yes	Ad hoc audits are undertaken to test Winter Service Plan during winter season.	
16	Authorities and salt suppliers should treat the supply of salt as a service rather than a simple commodity purchase.	Yes	Term Contractor/salt Union re-stocking arrangements in place.	

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Code of Practice for Maintenance Management for Winter Service - 2009/2010 (cont'd)

Recommendation	Description	Adopted by WBC	Comments	Reason for not adopting recommendation
17	As a means of enhancing local salt storage capacity, Authority and salt suppliers should jointly consider supplier owned salt stocks held on a short or long term basis in a number of widely distributed locations around the country. A joint approach may include agreements such as purchase of some or all stock by the end of season or provision of land.	Yes	WBC's salt stock for the coming season will be 2500t. Being a predominantly rural district, WBC's winter service requirements do not favourably align with those of the more urban UA's in Berkshire.	
18	Authority should seek a broad approach to salt supply, for example establishing framework contracts with more than one supplier.	Yes	Arrangements in place with Highway Term Contract for alternative salt supplies.	
19	Authorities should consider whether efficiency benefits can be obtained from collaborative salt procurement and should also consider ways to improve the balance of risk between salt suppliers and themselves, e.g. Longer contracts, performance contracts with minimum guaranteed purchase and supply, and contracts that include supply of salt and investment facilities.	Yes	Arrangements in place with salt union to maintain 2500t salt reserve.	
20	All aspects of the Winter Service Plan, including service delivery arrangements, should be reviewed annually in consultation with key stakeholders to take account of changing circumstances.	Yes	The Winter Plan has been comprehensively consulted on and reviewed 2010/11. The next annual review will take place next summer in advance of the 2012/13 winter season.	

Recommendations

The Resilience of England's Transport Systems in Winter - An Independent Review July 2010

No.	Recommendation	Action by:	Comments
1.	<p>That for the forthcoming winter the need for a strategic reserve stock of salt for England's highway authorities be recognised, if the resilience to handle the risk of its being as severe as last winter is to be secured, and given the projected shortfall of UK production against the possible demand; and that the Highways Agency should be tasked, on behalf of the Secretary of State, to acquire by import, store and make available on terms to be agreed an initial reserve stock of some 0.25m tonnes</p> <p>of salt for 'last resort' use by local highway authorities and for itself; and that the DfT at the end of December should formally lead the consideration and review (using information and forecasts then available) of whether further additional reserve stocks should be secured for the remainder of the winter.</p>	DfT/HA	N/A
2.	<p>A systematic year-round process of collecting data, monitoring salt stocks and movements and disseminating the findings should be put in place by DfT, to give advance warning of any issues affecting prospective salt supplies and availability, and to provide the basis for regular strategic overviews of the salt supply chain and any necessary decisions by them or other parties. This should be independent of any need for the operation of Salt Cell in 'allocation' mode.</p>	DfT	N/A

Recommendations

The Resilience of England's Transport Systems in Winter - An Independent Review July 2010 (cont'd)

No.	Recommendation	Action by:	Comments
3.	The vulnerability and lack of resilience of the salt supply chain as currently configured should be recognised; that some targeted intervention needs to be designed which will substantially improve the resilience of the supply chain with minimal impact on the normal functioning of the salt market in the UK; and to note that the development and evaluation of proposals for this is a key part of the Review's stage two work, which will be presented in the Final Report in the autumn.	N/A	N/A
4.	DfT should consult with the Scottish and Welsh authorities about the implications for Scotland and Wales of these short term recommendations for the salt supply chain.	DfT	N/A
5.	Every local highway authority should have a robust winter service plan, and should regularly review the key elements of it, including network coverage, operational procedures and standards and appropriate salt stockholding to meet defined resilience standards, all in line with current best practice.	WBC	West Berkshire has a robust Plan in place that has been reviewed as a result of internal scrutiny and in line with the recommendations of the CoP as amended December 2009.
6.	Consultation on treated networks should be broadly drawn to include business representatives, passenger and freight transport operators and local communities, as well as health and education service providers; and to help manage public expectations should be followed by clear and comprehensive communications of winter service plans, supported by good real-time communications through media and on-line when winter conditions arrive.	WBC	Appropriate stakeholders were consulted as part of the scrutiny review. The 2010/11 Plan has been developed in accordance with the scrutiny panel's recommendations.

Recommendations

The Resilience of England's Transport Systems in Winter - An Independent Review July 2010 (cont'd)

No.	Recommendation	Action by:	Comments
7.	As many local highway authorities already do, authorities should collaborate with and support lower-tier authorities to help ensure that maximum practical winter support can be given in areas and communities beyond the treated networks, including possibly the treatment of key footways and pedestrianised areas.	WBC	Use of internal staff to treat town centre footways identified and included in revised 2010/11 Plan. Consultation ongoing regarding the use of farmers.
8.	While recognising that research and technical information in this area is relatively fragmented and uncoordinated, and that available evidence needs to be presented more authoritatively, local highway authorities should be aware of the opportunities to improve salt utilisation through adopting lower spread rates and alternative treatment methods, both to reduce cost and to reduce demands on a potentially vulnerable salt supply chain.	LHA	Await further research.
9.	Professional bodies and the Local Government Association should encourage the more widespread dissemination and adoption of best practice in the preparation and delivery of winter service plans.	LGA	N/A

Recommendations

The Resilience of England's Transport Systems in Winter - An Independent Review July 2010 (cont'd)

10.	<p>While recognising that the resilience of salt supply is being addressed as a nationwide issue, local highway authorities can support this and should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all participate fully in the year-round systematic information collection and monitoring of salt stocks and movements which we are recommending should be adopted by DfT; • ensure their own planning of salt stocks and supply is sound and carried out in accordance with best practice, and supported by practical measures to improve salt utilisation; • put in place (or confirm where existing) mutual aid with neighbouring authorities to help address localised shortages. 	DfT	3500t of salt purchased to provide additional resilience.
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Recommendations

The Resilience of England's Transport Systems in Winter - An Independent Review July 2010 (cont'd)

No.	Recommendation	Action by:	Comments
11.	Local highway authorities should treat their winter service planning as an integral part of wider general resilience planning for civil contingencies, bringing to the development of winter service plans the benefits of processes and disciplines associated with resilience planning, together with the culture of constructive challenge and validation.	WBC	Winter Service Plan will form part of a larger emerging Adverse Weather Plan.
12.	<p>The Highways Agency should be commended for the research-based measures it has put in place to improve its salt utilisation. It should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue to research and monitor the efficiency of its practices and strive to improve the cost-effectiveness of its winter service operation; • share best practice, research and knowledge with other highway authorities. 	HA	
13.	There should be a comprehensive, authoritative review of technical standards and guidance relating to both the treatment and the spread rates of salt, based on research and evidence as necessary, leading to the production of practical guidance for practitioners as well as at a policy and planning level. This should be led by the UK Roads Liaison Group (see next recommendation).	UKRLG	
14.	The valuable initiative and work of the National Winter Service Research Group should be brought under the wing of the UK Roads Liaison Group, who should take responsibility for and set the strategy for its work programme, including its contribution to the comprehensive review of technical standards and methods.	UKRLG	

Recommendations

The Resilience of England's Transport Systems in Winter - An Independent Review July 2010 (cont'd)

No.	Recommendation	Action by:	Comments
15.	<p>The Department for Transport should develop, in collaboration with local government representatives and appropriate experts, a code setting out good practice for members of the public, including business owners, in clearing snow and ice from footways. This should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be produced by the end of October 2010 in time for the coming winter; • be short, along the lines of Westminster's advice to its residents; • set a standard which, if observed, should guard the public against negligence claims; • be made available to households by local authorities. 	DfT	
16.	<p>We note and commend the generally high quality and accuracy of short term (0–5 days) weather forecasting now available to support the operational decisions of highway authorities and their contractors, and recommend that the weather forecasters continue to develop their capabilities both for 15–30 day forecasting to meet the resource planning needs of highway authorities, and for longer term seasonal forecasting.</p>	Forecast Agencies	
17.	<p>Given that the probability of next winter being severe continues to be relatively small but that severe winters are still possible despite the warming trend, we recommend that winter resilience planning – and the securing of greater resilience in the supply of salt – should continue on the basis of dealing with winters of a severity similar to that of 2009–2010.</p>	WBC	Salt stock 2500t. Alternative sources of salt available through Term Contractor (off site). Further sources being explored.