



Primary Legislation Unit
Roads Service
Clarence Court
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Belfast
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By email to streetworks@drdni.gov.uk

PROPOSAL FOR A DRAFT STREETWORKS (AMENDMENT) (NORHERN IRELAND) ORDER

Quarry Products Association's Response

Thank you for consulting the Quarry Products Association NI (QPANI) on the proposed Street works Amendment Order. The QPA welcomes the opportunity to comment on the proposals within the consultation document.

The QPANI is the principal trade association representing the Northern Ireland aggregates and quarrying industry. Our members produce over 95% of aggregates quarried in Northern Ireland – sand and gravel and crushed rock. They also produce agricultural and industrial lime, silica sand and marine dredged sand and gravel, as well as secondary and recycled aggregates, ready mixed concrete and asphalt products for roads.

The QPA makes the following comments:

The Association welcomes the proposals set out in the amendment order and it is our belief that it will enable the Department to more effectively manage the execution of street works (largely the works of utility companies) on roads.

The Quarry Products Association NI has over the past number of years been working closely with Roads Service and the Northern Ireland Roads and Utilities Committee (NIRAUC) to raise standards and improve communication between Clients, Contractors and Utilities. This work has culminated in the production of a “**Responsibility Protocol for the Management of Underground Services**”. Buried service hazards cannot be left to be identified by chance. Where excavations are being undertaken operatives must have access to clear, and accurate plans, showing the location of any buried services. This protocol details the actions to be taken at

each stage of construction in order to safeguard operatives. It applies to situations where buried services may be found and where work involves penetrating the ground at or below surface level. It is aimed at defining responsibilities and promoting cooperation and co-ordination between duty holders such as; Clients (including their Designers, Planners, and others appointed to act on their behalf), Contractors, Owners/ Operators of services and any others concerned with planning or organising work at or near such services.

Although not under the remit of this amendment order the need to communicate this protocol around all parties involved in work in the vicinity of underground services and ensure its implementation is imperative.

The proposals as set out in the amendment order will in our view ensure that Roads Service will have better control over the work of utility companies. It will ensure better quality of work and better management, monitoring and record keeping of where services are located and at what depth they are to be found.

Requirements as to execution of the works

We are aware that this legislation is commencement legislation and will allow the Department to introduce, at some later stage, **“Codes of Practice”**. The QPANI would strongly recommend that the Department introduce, at the earliest opportunity, the requirement that all contractors working on the public roads or in private streets, that will be adopted by Roads Service, to be third party accredited and working to the National Quality Management Sector Schemes relevant to the work being carried out.

On the matter of qualifications of supervisors and operatives it is essential that anyone working on the road should be competent and meet the requirements of the Northern Ireland Build Safe initiative. That is

“all construction operatives on public construction contracts, whether employed directly or through a sub-contractor, must be able to show evidence of appropriate health and safety training”.

Through the management of the sector schemes this issue is addressed.

Reinstatements and Resurfacing

Materials, workmanship and standard of re-surfacing

We strongly recommend that the Department introduce at the earliest opportunity a Code of Practice requiring all contractors laying bituminous materials on utility reinstatements or resurfacing to be accredited to Sector Scheme 16. The requirement should also be made that the bituminous material used should have been manufactured in a Sector Scheme 14 accredited plant.

Records of locations of apparatus

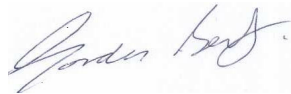
Duties relating to the location of unexpected apparatus

We would refer to the requirements of the Responsibility Protocol as attached.

Enforcement

QPANI would welcome the increase in fines proposed. This will hopefully be an incentive for Utilities to ensure that service locations on line and depth are recorded and made available to others working on the roads.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gordon Best". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line at the end.

Gordon Best

Regional Director QPANI

