

**Introduction by HAUC(UK) Joint Chairs
Nick Morris and Mark Ostheimer**

Welcome to the second HAUC(UK) Newsletter, designed to provide a short and timely news update to members.

This edition includes an update on the last HAUC(UK) meeting, and details on personnel changes and upcoming events. The HAUC(UK) newsletters are now being added to the HAUC(UK) website www.hauc-uk.org.uk for easy access.

It has been almost a year since last summer's HAUC(UK) strategy workshop, and we feel that, not only has the review of HAUC(UK) been productive, but it is proving to be effective. In the forefront of our minds at all times are the six HAUC(UK) objectives:

- To strengthen the relationship and communication between HAUC(UK) and Regional HAUCs, NIRAUC, Welsh HAUC and RAUC(Scotland).
- To drive improved performance of road and street works by promoting good practice and supporting innovation in ways to reduce disruption and improve safety, sustainability and quality of all works.
- To work constructively with governments to create a positive and joined-up industry without the need for onerous regulation.
- However, where necessary, to deliver timely, effective and consistent input to, and interpretation of, legislation, associated regulations, codes of practice and guidance that balances the needs of all.
- To minimise the number of formal disputes through informal mediation, discussion and advice, but where necessary to provide a timely and effective dispute resolution service to deal with disputes that do arise.
- To develop a programme of activities to deliver the above objectives.

It is imperative that we remember these objectives and strive collectively to achieve them. Only together can we make a difference and progress. In the words taken from Aesop's fable *The Four Oxen and the Lion*, "United we stand, divided we fall".

HAUC(UK) meeting – 22 April

HAUC(UK) held its quarterly meeting on 22 April in London. Informative updates were received from the Working Groups, Welsh HAUC, RAUC(S) and NIRAUC – please contact the Secretariat if you would like to be sent the latest updates. These updates were received in a new one-sided format, highlighting 'hot' issues and actions, as well as a brief overview.

For instance, YHAUC representatives informed the Group of their Performance Framework initiative, designed to monitor the performance of each utility, in each highway authority area, against random sample results. These results are then discussed at YHAUC to gain an understanding of trends and to identify potential areas for improvement.

Another informative update came from Scottish Road Works Commissioner John Gooday, who updated attendees on the work of the Scottish Road Works Policy Development Group, formed in conjunction with the Scottish Government to take a strategic view of the Scottish Road Works Register and associated Legislation

The trialling of the new meeting format, with Regional HAUC Joint Chairs invited to attend, continued and, as before, proved effective at increasing the volume of expertise and insight the Committee could produce. A review of this format and the overall process is ongoing under the guidance of the Joint Chairs.

In the way of advice notes, the Committee were informed that the draft Advice Note on the "Suspension of Parking Bays and Lost Revenue From Parking Meters During Street Works" was progressing well, and had been re-drafted in light of the responses received. Many thanks to all those who sent in comments. The re-drafted version is now out for final consultation and is on course for publication late May / early June. Please contact the Secretariat if you have not seen the revamped version and would like the opportunity to comment.

The full minutes from the meeting are under production and will be distributed to members shortly, once approved by the Joint Chairs.

HAUC(UK) meet with DfT – 28 April

HAUC(UK) Joint Chairs Nick Morris and Mark Ostheimer, as well as JAG(UK) Chairman Jerry McConkey and NJUG CEO Les Guest met with Richard Buckley and Ellen Duffy from the Department for Transport (DfT) on 28 April to discuss the HAUC(UK) business plan and strategy review.

It was agreed that going forward, representatives from the Northern Ireland, Scottish and Welsh Governments would also be invited to attend the meetings of the newly formed 'HAUC(UK) Board', with the DfT committing to organise a follow-up prior to the next HAUC(UK) meeting in July.

At the meeting, the DfT highlighted their desire to focus on current work streams and deliver solid outputs before moving on to other areas. Richard Buckley also agreed to publish the street works element of the DfT Business Plan, hopefully in early June, to assist in the production of a HAUC(UK) Business Plan. Other topics discussed included the production of a booklet on the 'Administration of Street Works', which DfT agreed to produce an outline

paper for HAUC(UK) to comment on. It was also agreed to revive the HAUC(UK) Good Practice Working Group. The terms of reference were to be redrafted by Mark Ostheimer for wider consideration.

Finally, Richard and Ellen informed HAUC(UK) representatives that there were likely to be further changes to the processes used across Government to scrutinise secondary legislation, such as regulations. It will, particularly, focus on those that increase costs to industry and the need to justify new regulations.

Updates

At the beginning of April the DfT re-published a revised version of **Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual**, now available on their website at:

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roads/tss/tsmanual/>

On 6 April, the **Street Works (Charges for Unreasonably Prolonged Occupation of the Highway) (England) Regulation 2009** came into force. The new regulations change the prescribed period, charges for certain road categories and introduce a new mitigated charge. A copy of the regulation can be found on the OPSI website:

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2009/pdf/uksi_20090303_en.pdf.

Many of you will already be aware of the launch of the **London Code of Conduct**, on 16 April. This is a new agreement between the Mayor of London and the CEOs of the five largest utilities in London (Thames Water, EDF Energy, National Grid, Virgin Media and BT Openreach) focusing on promoting good practice. Though it may be a localised agreement, it promotes the progress that is being made between utilities and local government aimed at improving standards and driving change forward. For more details, please contact the Secretariat.

On 22 April, the Chancellor of the Exchequer published the Government's **2009 budget**. There were no announcements relating to works in the street, but mention was made of the Government's desire to reduce regulatory burden on business by 25% between 2005 and 2010. The full budget document can be found at the link below (see sections 4.56 to 4.58 for items relating to reducing regulatory burden).

www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/Budget2009/bud09_complereport_2591.pdf

Finally, the draft **London Permit Scheme** is currently out for consultation until 5 June. Details on the scheme and how to respond can be found on the London Street Works site: www.londonstreetworks.net. Many areas of the UK are awaiting the outcome of the London and Kent schemes (the latter of which is with the DfT for consideration), before moving their own plans forward.

Personnel Notices

It was announced at the HAUC(UK) meeting in April that **Stephen Chandler** would be stepping down from the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG). Stephen has been the street works representative at the WAG for many

years, contributing immensely to the industry and regulatory environment. All HAUC(UK) colleagues wish him the very best for his retirement and future ventures.

HAUC(UK) was saddened to learn of the passing of **Irene Elsom** on 2 April, who for many years worked with the Committee in her capacity as NJUG Secretariat manager, retiring in 2004. Many Committee members expressed fond memories of Irene at the recent HAUC(UK) meeting, where a minute's silence was held, and our thoughts are with her husband Christopher and their sons Simon and Alex, at this sad time.

Since the last newsletter, HAUC(UK) is pleased to congratulate **Les Guest** on his appointment as CEO of the National Joint Utilities Group. Les, whose tenure lasts until April 2011, has committed to assisting HAUC(UK) in all its endeavours, and ensuring that representatives strive towards *working together, better*.

Finally, as announced in the last newsletter, after many years service to HAUC(UK) and JAG(UK) (and its predecessor NSWHG), **Graham Eaton** is retiring as JAG(UK) manager. From the end of May, Graham will be cutting back to two days a week until his successor is appointed, the process for which is now well underway.

Events for the Diary

As you will be aware, **HSC09** is taking place in Cardiff on 13 and 14 May, where a HAUC(UK) stand, manned jointly by JAG(UK) and NJUG colleagues, will be present. **Spaces are still available. For further details and to book your place, please visit:**

<http://www.surveyorevents.com/hsc09/>

National Underground Assets Group: Phase Two

22 June 2009, 8.30am - 5.30pm

1 Great George Street, London, SW1P 3AA

<http://www.nuag.co.uk/news/index.php?link=more.php&id=25&coll=1>

South East HAUC Conference

15 July, Sandown Park Racecourse

Contact SEHAUC for further details.

<http://www.sehauc.org.uk/index.html>

West Midlands HAUC Conference

15/16 September, Staffordshire County Showground, Weston Road, Stafford ST18 0BD

<http://www.wmhauc.org/>

Anglian HAUC Conference

7 October, Newmarket Racecourse

Contact HAUC(UK)

If you would like to contact HAUC(UK), publicise a related event or personnel changes, please email the Joint Secretariat at graham.eaton@derbyshire.gov.uk and info@njug.org.uk. For all advice notes, newsletters, etc, please visit www.hauc-uk.org.uk.