

Temporary and Permanent Utility Reinstatement Procedures Report to SEAC Meeting 3rd April 2023

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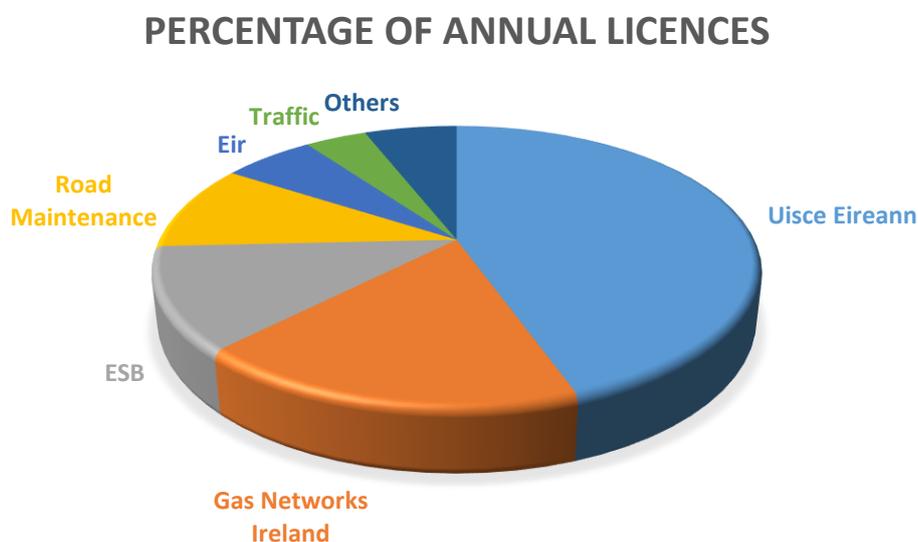
Introduction

At The South East Area Committee meeting on 13th March 2023, a verbal update was delivered to the Elected Representatives on motions relating to tarmacadam patches in the footpaths, in Harold's Cross and other areas. The majority of these patches are temporary utility reinstatements. To clarify the situation, it was agreed that a written report be submitted to clarify the verbal explanation of the reinstatement process and procedures for this meeting.

Section 1 Background

Temporary and Permanent Utility Reinstatement Procedures.

Utility companies are issued with circa 13,000 online permits annually, to open the public road to facilitate the repair and/or upgrade of their services. The main utilities, in terms of quantity of licences, are Irish Water, ESB Networks and Gas Networks Ireland. The Irish Water network and ESB networks of underground services are in need of renewal. Therefore, on an ongoing basis these utilities are repairing their existing services, in parallel with upgrading their overall networks to meet current demand and standards. These works are necessary as without them the citizens of Dublin will experience power and water outages. The telecommunications companies also carry out necessary repairs, upgrades and connections to their networks, without which would result in connectivity outages for homes and businesses. All of the above necessitates roadworks.



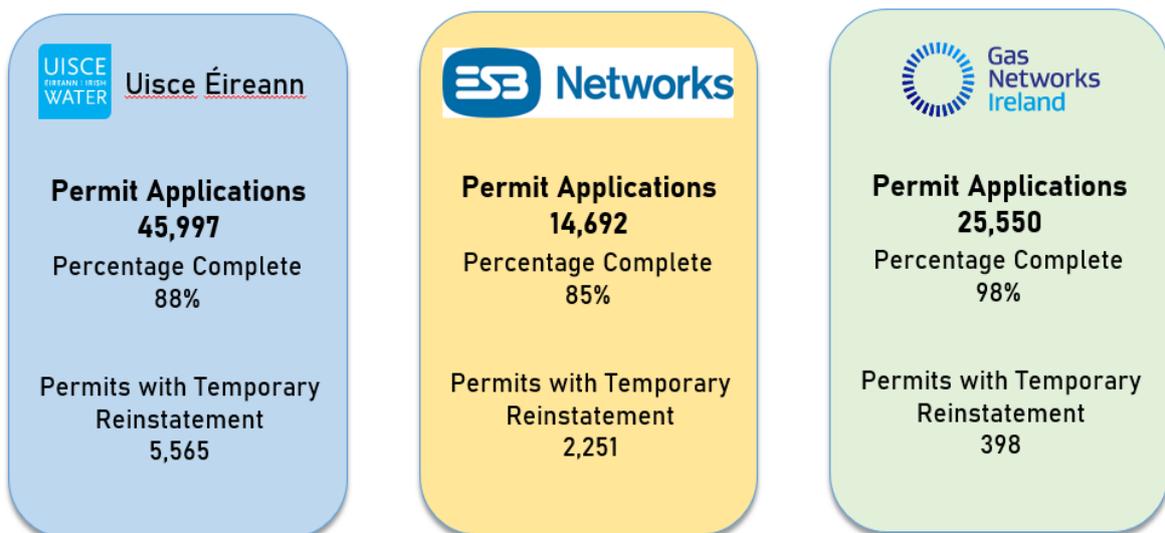
The licencing of roadworks is managed by The Roadworks Control Unit (RCU) In the Environment & Transportation Department. The RCU inspectorate condition licences and monitor the works to ensure that the utilities comply with licence conditions with respect to health & Safety, traffic management and timing of works. In order to enable traffic movement in the city, utility works are conditioned to be carried out at weekends or evenings on high impact roads, which restricts the amount of work completed in a given day. The result is a proliferation of temporary reinstatements with the permanent reinstatement to follow at a subsequent time interval. Temporary reinstatement is stage one of a two part reinstatement process, where permanent reinstatement is the second

stage. Immediate permanent reinstatement is ideal but not always feasible due the factors above.

The quality control of temporary and permanent reinstatements is monitored by The Infrastructure management Unit (IMU). Utilities are required to close out each licence within ninety days of completion of the permanent reinstatement of their works. The IMU inspectorate are notified of these licence closeouts online and circa 20,000 individual inspections of reinstatements are carried out annually. These reinstatements are either accepted and go into the two year guarantee period or are rejected and go back to the utility for remedial action.

Section 2 Utility Compliance

In terms of compliance the of the three main utilities, the statistics are as follows from 2014 to 2023



From the above figures, it should be noted that each of these three utilities has a high percentage of compliance but this goes unnoticed due to the enormous number of licences applied for. Irish Water's high volume of licences is caused the failing network requiring constant repair and upgrade. ESB networks are in a similar situation. Gas Networks, on the other hand, went through a very disruptive renewal programme over a decade ago and are now in an almost fully compliant position with respect to permanent reinstatement.

The processes and standards for utility reinstatements are detailed in the *Directions for Managing Openings in Public Roads 2017*. This is a national mandatory guideline. The IMU monitor utilities daily to ensure they comply with this document. Temporarily reinstated openings and rejected reinstatements remain the responsibility of the utility

company until satisfactory permanent reinstatements are complete and the two year guarantee period has lapsed. This a motivating factor for utilities to complete permanent reinstatement works. Regular meetings take place between DCC and Utility staff to pursue the utilities to meet their obligations with respect to completion and coordination of works.

Section 3 Recommendation

Dublin City Council is in the process of moving all road opening applicant organisations to MapRoad Licencing (MRL), the national online roadworks control system. MRL is managed by The Road Management Office (RMO), as shared service for all Local Authorities. To date Dublin City Council has adopted MRL for the licencing of the Telecommunications utility companies. The main advantage of this national approach is that it allows the RMO and the Local Authorities to collectively pursue utilities if they are non-complaint. The RMO produces a monthly licencing compliance report for each utility on MRL. The approach includes the use of the national deposit scheme. Under the national deposit scheme, each utility is require to have an amount of reinstatement deposit funds lodged with the RMO corresponding to their national quota of open licences. If a utility exceeds their quota of open licences, they are liable for additional funds to be lodged. The Local Authorities meet quarterly with the Utilities and the RMO. At this Joint Utility Local Authority (JULA) forum, compliance reports are presented by the RMO and discussed by the Local Authorities and utilities attending, with the aim of streamlining roadworks licencing and compliance.

The Irish Water (SLA) portion of Irish Water generates the majority of openings for service repairs nationally. A Master Plan has been set in place for the transfer of Irish Water SLA works to Uisce Éireann. Under this master plan, the SLA works will commence licencing on MRL within twelve months of 30 June 2023. This plan is awaiting the approval of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Section 3 Conclusion

The inclusion of Irish Water on MRL should result in a significant reduction in the number of temporary reinstatements on the DCC road network. The IMU will continue to vigorously pursue the utility companies to carry out timely permanent reinstatements.

