

Operational Plan

Part 3 - Operational Procedures

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Outline

The winter of 2009/10 was particularly difficult with the resilience of the winter service in Moray and elsewhere in the UK severely tested. It was therefore appropriate that the Council's Roads Maintenance Section fully review Moray's response to what was widely reported as being the worst winter for nearly 50 years.

The review was presented to the Council's Economic Development & Infrastructure Services Committee on 19th October 2010 who approved the 14 recommendations included in the review and agreed that it should be published on the Council's website at www.moray.gov.uk/winter.

The plan of action is designed to provide a service 06:00 - 21:30, with emergency cover thereafter (viz Part 1, Section 1.2.3). The plan, which is designed to be flexible enough to cover all foreseeable weather conditions normally experienced in this part of the country, will operate in various phases according to the time of day and weather conditions.

The plan consists of an emergency standby service outwith normal working hours, regular routine patrols by specialist treating and snow clearing vehicles commencing 06:00 hrs as necessitated by forecast information. The Council's own resources can be augmented by hired labour, vehicles and plant from local contractors although these may lack the appropriate training and specialist equipment required.

3.1.2 Stages of the Plan

In deploying the Council's resources and resources from other suppliers, Managers and Supervisors will take into account the priorities drawn up for all weather conditions, and will seek to ensure that the road network is dealt with in the sequence, and to the standards set out in Part 1, Section 2 headed "Priorities and Standards".

Supervisors in planning and executing the Winter Service operations, must give consideration to the needs of all employees to have periods of rest between periods of duty and must ensure that the current legislation relating to Drivers' Hours and the Working Time Directive are adhered to.

3.1.3 Delegation of Responsibilities

- a) The Roads Maintenance Manager is responsible for the operations of Roads Maintenance within Moray. In practice, he will concern himself with the policy objectives with regard to Winter Service operations and will ensure that adequate resources are allocated to meet the objectives and standards set out in the Operational Plan. He will also be responsible for ensuring that the Operational Plan is continuously reviewed in the light of experience and changing circumstances (see Section 3.1.1 regarding the 2010 review).

He will convene a pre-winter meeting with his operational staff, Police Scotland, Aberdeenshire Council, Bear Scotland and other bodies whose assistance and co-operation is required for Winter Service operations, in order to make certain that these various parties are conversant with requirements and to ensure that effective communication is maintained between the relevant parties. He may convene a post-winter meeting with the same parties at the end of the Winter Service period to review the previous winter's working and consider whether or not policy changes are required.

The Roads Maintenance Manager and his staff will decide the date upon which Winter Service operations will commence and end as stated in Part 1, Section 1.2.3.

- b) The Roads Maintenance Manager will be responsible for ensuring that Winter Service operations are carried out in accordance with the policy of the Moray Council. He will ensure that his Supervisors and operators are conversant with the Operational Plan, and Managers will ensure that the standard of training etc, of the operatives is sufficiently high to enable them to carry out their allotted tasks. The Managers shall provide the Supervisors with all reasonable physical resources to enable them to carry out the work and shall have the authority to request the use of all the resources of the Council however deployed on normal works in the event of severe adverse weather conditions. They will be responsible, in consultation with the Roads Maintenance Manager, for the preparation of the Winter Service Operational Plan.

He will delegate the day to day responsibility for the organisation and supervision of Winter Service operations to his Duty Officers and Supervisors.

- c) The Duty Officers are responsible for deciding in conjunction with the Roads Maintenance Manager the daily action and any subsequent changes to that action. Daily (including the weekends) at or about 1400 hrs the Duty Officer will contact the Duty Supervisor to discuss and agree the required treatment action for that afternoon and the following morning. The discussion and agreement will be based on the weather forecasts from the Forecasting Authority, information from ice stations, if necessary the radar forecasting information, and any other source, i.e. Police or gritting crews. The agreed action will be recorded within the Vaisala Manager system which can be accessed by the Police in Elgin.

The Duty Officer will collate all winter service records and pass these to Admin for filing.

- d) The Supervisors are wholly responsible for the day to day organisation and execution of the Winter Service operations and will take immediate action to implement the Winter Service Plan on receipt of adverse weather advice or in the event of sudden frost or snowfall. The Supervisors have complete authority to set the plan in action without reference to the Roads Maintenance Manager but shall at all times keep the Roads Maintenance Manager fully advised of the prevailing circumstances with regard to the progress of Winter Service Operations and shall seek the advice and assistance of the Managers in dealing with any augmented working undertaken or conditions outwith the scope of the Winter Service plan.

3.2 Working Arrangements

3.2.1 Standby Service

The Supervisors, in consultation with the Managers, will draw up a weekly duty rota for drivers and plant operators for both the standby service and for the early morning patrols to ensure that all specialist Winter Service vehicles and tractor loading shovels can be manned to execute the Winter Service operations plan.

Specialist Winter Service vehicles will be stationed at various depots for immediate use outwith working hours. Unless otherwise instructed the vehicles will be loaded and drivers will be available to receive instructions from the Supervisor. A duty Supervisor will be on standby to assess road conditions and to receive telephone calls from the Police or Officers of the Moray Council responsible for initiating emergency actions.

On receipt of an emergency call, the Supervisor will assess the situation and will, if necessary, call out standby crews to treat roads as required. Should it appear to the Duty Supervisor that the road conditions warrant treatment, he shall alert the other Duty Supervisor as it may also be necessary to call out additional drivers and vehicles in his area.

Drivers attending a callout will report the road conditions at the location to which they have been dispatched and in the area generally to the Duty Supervisor. The Duty Supervisor will log all telephone or radio calls seeking assistance together with the details of any action taken in response to it and any action by way of treating other locations, so that there is a permanent record for inspection, of the extent of Winter Service operations carried out.

3.2.2 Early Morning Patrols

The specialist Winter Service vehicles will be operated on early morning patrol service during the winter period when required which will entail the duty driver reporting to the Depot at the agreed time to commence the early morning patrol.

Special attention will be given to those locations which are designated as areas of particular hazard and drivers will report the road conditions on their prescribed route to the Supervisor on completion of their patrols.

Additionally, the Supervisors may, at the discretion of the Managers and if exceptional adverse weather conditions are expected, detail additional operatives to make themselves available for standby duties/early action.

3.2.3 Service Within Normal Working Hours (07:45-16:00 hrs Monday to Thursday, 07:45-13.45 hrs Friday)

- a) If, in the opinion of the Supervisors, road or weather conditions warrant it, Winter Service operations utilising the specialist vehicles will continue during the course of the working day. In addition to the specialist vehicles, the Supervisors can instruct the use of the Council's heavy goods vehicles on Winter Service operations. The vehicles will be fitted with snowploughs and/or gritters appropriate to the road conditions

The Supervisors are authorised in the event of prolonged spells of severe weather to call for the assistance of other Council Departments who might have suitable labour, vehicles and plant available, or by hiring labour, vehicles and plant from local contractors.

- b) Ice monitoring software, located in the Moray Council offices at Ashgrove Road, Elgin and Bridge Street, Keith is employed to determine road conditions. When a change of status indicating "alert" or "critical" condition is displayed at a ice monitoring station in his area, the Duty Supervisor will, having taken account of all factors known to him, dispatch a vehicle to inspect and treat conditions at the locations as necessary, and thereafter proceed to such other locations that the Supervisor considers may require treatment. Where faults in the system are either detected or suspected these should be recorded and reported to the Duty Officer.

In the event of roadside sensors malfunctioning, Vaisala should be contacted using the telephone number given in Appendix N.

3.2.4 Evening Pre-treatment (Only when directed)

- a) Where directed by the Duty Officer service will be provided. Specialist Winter Service vehicles will be ready for immediate use.
- b) The vehicles will be loaded as required and drivers will be in attendance at the depot. In addition to the drivers, the depot will be manned to receive telephone calls from the Forecasting authority, Police or officers in the Council responsible for initiating action.

3.2.5 Footways Treatment

The Priority for footway treatment is listed in Appendix D.

The standard practice for treating foot pavements will be to use neat salt although discretion is given to Supervisors to use sand/salt mixtures when weather conditions warrant it, and especially when dealing with ice which has been formed as a result of the refreezing of partially thawed snow.

In clearing a passage for pedestrians, any cleared snow will be left piled at the edge of the foot pavement until resources are available for its removal, where necessary. Special attention will be given at pedestrian crossings, road junctions where large numbers of pedestrians cross, bus stops, etc, and gaps should be left at these locations to allow pedestrians to cross without having to negotiate the heaped snow.

Special care will also be taken to ensure that street gullies are not blocked by piled snow as this may prevent water draining away at the onset of a thaw.

3.2.6 Thawing

During the thaw, the first responsibility of the Supervisors will be to ensure, as far as practicable, the road channels and verges are cleared in the area of street gullies and cross grips to allow melted snow to drain away. Only after the channels and cross grips have been cleared should an attempt be made to clear the stockpiled snow.

3.2.7 Lifting of Snow from Roads, etc

In extreme conditions after heavy snow falls it may be necessary to lift snow from streets. Snow cleared from the road will only be uplifted in exceptional circumstances, e.g., where existing piled snow is preventing further snow clearance from the road.

3.2.8 Arrangements with Third Parties

Treating of bus turning areas only in school premises where conditions warrant it will be carried out by Roads Maintenance staff. All other treatment to be carried out by janitorial staff (as per Appendix J).

a) Liaison with Police Scotland :-

Please refer to Appendix N for contact telephone numbers.

b) Liaison with Other Council Departments :-

Other Council Departments may be required to undertake the gritting/salting, and/or snow clearing of footways and/or roads in designated areas, by arrangement made prior to the onset of winter.

Refer to Appendix N for the relevant contacts and their telephone numbers.

c) Farmers Snow Ploughs :-

Details of Farmers regarding the use of privately owned tractors fitted with Council snowploughs are shown in Appendix U.

3.3 General Information

3.3.1 Communications

During Office Hours - Mondays to Fridays inclusive, telephone messages will be received by the Duty Staff in the Moray Council offices at Ashgrove and passed to the Duty Supervisor.

Outwith Office Hours - Telephone messages to be passed to Duty Supervisor as per rota in Appendix O

All vehicles engaged in Winter Service operations should be fitted with two-way radios. In addition, radio sets are installed in the offices at Ashgrove Depot, and Keith Depot.

The Appendices to the Winter Service Operational Plan also contain a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of all senior staff, supervisors and operatives who will be engaged in Winter Service operations, and a list of emergency telephone numbers of council contacts with adjoining councils, the emergency services, public bodies, the public utilities and weather forecasting bureaux, etc.

3.3.2 Weather Forecasts

The Forecasting Authority, currently MetDesk,, provides information throughout the Winter Service Period on a daily basis as below:-

- General Forecasts for the following 36 hours
- 2 - 5 day outlook forecast
- 36 hr forecast graphs for sites at Cabrach and Laich of Moray

The weather forecasts are computer delivered in text, graphical and radar formats. The forecast is generally provided at around 11:00 hrs and the forecast graphs are normally delivered by 14:00 hrs. If necessary, the Forecasting Authority will update the information thereafter to take account of changes that they consider significant, and this may change the programmed actions.

The forecast information, together with information about current weather conditions which is received from ice sensors, is stored and accessed from a bureau service operated by Vaisala Ltd. If there are any problems in accessing this information the help desk should be contacted on the telephone number given in Appendix N.

Where data is missing from information supplied by MetDesk, they should be contacted on the telephone number given in Appendix N. Where discussion with a forecaster is desired the contact telephone number is also given in Appendix N.

Weekends and Holidays :- The weather forecasts will be available as above on weekends and holidays. The Duty Officer will check the information available on the computer prior to contacting the Duty Supervisor at an agreed time.

Emergency Weather Forecasts :- MetDesk may contact the Duty Officer to advise on changes on forecast information and advise recommendations.

3.3.3 Monitoring and Recording

During the Winter Period road conditions are monitored while the Roads Maintenance offices are staffed. MetDesk, who monitor conditions regularly, are contracted to alert the Duty Officer of deteriorating conditions when the Roads Maintenance offices are not staffed.

a) Vaisala Manager

The Duty Officer will contact the Duty Supervisor at or about 14:00 hrs on weekdays and at a time agreed on weekends and holidays. They will agree the action to be taken based on the following information :-

- Forecasting Authority weather forecast text, graphs and radar
- Information available from the ice stations
- Knowledge of existing situation on roads, i.e. existing weather conditions, previous salting regime, residual salt levels etc.

The agreed action will be recorded within Vaisala Manager by the Duty Officer and this is available to the Police Station, Elgin and BEAR Scotland. The Duty Supervisor will update the Vaisala Manager system on the actual treatment taken, start time and completion time of action and record road condition information and any other relevant information as per duties of Duty Supervisor.

A complete record will be maintained by Vaisala Ltd within their bureau system at their headquarters in Birmingham.

b) Road Conditions Reports

In order that the Roads Maintenance Manager can be kept advised of the road conditions throughout Moray, reports on road conditions in the Council area will be passed to the Duty Officer as follows :-

During Office Hours :- The Duty Officer will keep the Roads Maintenance Manager apprised of conditions.

Outwith Office Hours :- The Duty Supervisor will inform the Duty Officer of any abnormal conditions. The Duty Officer will keep the Roads Maintenance Manager apprised of exceptional conditions.

c) Driver's Road Treatment Log (Form WS2 in Appendix M)

Each driver will complete a treatment log which will include start and finish times, the action taken, the condition of the road treated, the materials used and the vehicle plant number. This log will be returned to the Supervisor weekly along with the driver's time sheet, and be forwarded to the Duty Officer for record keeping purposes.

d) Farmers Weekly Report (Form WS3 in Appendix M)

Farmers who are contracted to undertake winter service actions for the Council are required to notify the Supervisor prior to taking action, but where this is not possible should notify the Supervisor at some time during the day. The Supervisor will complete the Farmers Weekly Report sheet and return this to the Duty Officer for record keeping purposes.

e) Salt/Sand Issues and Stock Returns (Forms WS4 & WS5 in Appendix M)

The Supervisor will keep, and return to the Duty Officer on a weekly basis for record keeping purposes, all salt and sand issued during the week and the quantities of salt still in stock.

f) MetDesk

The MetDesk forecasters are available 24 hours a day and can be contacted at any time by supervisory staff for advice. They are contracted to supply revised weather forecasts when a significant change is forecasted and to give advice over the telephone on all meteorological matters. If you are in any doubt about the weather and/or the forecast, the advice is to contact the MetDesk forecaster. Contact details are available in Appendix N.

3.4 Plant

3.4.1 Availability and Maintenance of Vehicles, Plant, etc

The maintenance and overhauling of all specialist winter service vehicles, plant and footway snowploughs prior to the commencement of Winter Service operations is the responsibility of the Fleet Services Manager. He will ensure that all items of winter service equipment are overhauled and are on station by the 1st October, with the exception of heavy ploughs which are to be on station by the 1st November.

The Fleet Services Manager will ensure that all footway snowploughs are on station by 1st November.

The Managers will check that all vehicles, plant and equipment are fully operational on return to station. The Managers will arrange for calibration of all gritting vehicles to be carried out.

A Duty Mechanic will be available at all times during the winter period to carry out routine maintenance and minor repairs allocated to him (See rota in Appendix Q).

3.4.2 Operation of Vehicles

While it is acknowledged that the drivers of vehicles engaged in Winter Service operations are operating in difficult conditions, it is nevertheless the driver's duty to take every precaution to avoid accidents.

Once the vehicles are on station and Winter Service operations have begun it will be the duty of the driver and/or operator for each vehicle and item of plant to carry out checks daily before starting duty. The inspection shall cover the fuel, oil and water levels and the lights, brakes and tyres, together with all bolts and couplings, plough fixings, spinners and safety rails. Vehicles on station but not on operational duties shall be checked, started and run up for at least half an hour each week.

Any fault revealed by the check shall be immediately reported to the Duty Mechanic. He will report to the Duty Supervisor whether the vehicle is fit to continue with Winter Service operations, or that it should be withdrawn from service for immediate repair at the Depot, or be transported to the Moray Council Vehicle Repair Depot. In the latter case, the Duty Supervisor, in consultation with the Vehicle Repair Depot Supervisor, shall decide if, depending on the length of time that any repair is likely to take, an alternative vehicle should be made available as a replacement for the unserviceable vehicle.

The amber flashing lights fitted to each vehicle must be kept rotating during treatment and snow clearing operations. In poor visibility, the vehicle's horn should be sounded as necessary but its use should be kept to a minimum consistent with safe driving and the need to cause as little inconvenience as is possible to residents, particularly during early morning and late night working.

Any vehicle engaged in Winter Service operations must not be driven at speeds in excess of 25 mph and in urban areas or where traffic is heavy, the speed should be further reduced to ensure that flying salt/sand does not injure pedestrians or damage other vehicles on the road. The rear end of winter service vehicles should be signed so that following vehicles are aware that treatment is under way.

Snow ploughs and scrapers must always be raised above the road surface when passing over sections of road which are clear of snow and ice and drivers should constantly be on the lookout for manhole covers, street tobies or other obstructions which may be standing proud of the road surface.

It is the responsibility of the driver of any vehicle to ensure that the hopper or the platform of his vehicle is not left loaded with salt or sand/salt mixture for more than 48 hours. If the salt or sand/salt mixture has not been used for this period of time, the hopper and/or platform should be emptied and immediately refilled with fresh material.

It is the responsibility of the driver of any vehicle to ensure that all loose materials are removed from ledges, etc. to prevent damage to windscreens, etc. of other road users.

If the vehicle has been driven during heavy rain, the driver should check the salt or sand/salt mixture to ensure that caking has not taken place. If it has, the vehicle should be emptied and immediately refilled with fresh material.

While engaged in Winter Service operations, the vehicle radio must be kept switched on. Correct radio procedure will be observed at all times to ensure that urgent messages can be relayed by the Duty Supervisor without interference. Certain areas are subject to poor radio reception and where a driver suspects that his vehicle has been out of radio communication in an area of poor radio reception, he should immediately upon leaving that area, report his location to his Supervisor.

3.5 Materials and Equipment

3.5.1 Salt and Salt/Sand Stocks

Salt - Stocks of salt will be built up to the predetermined levels indicated in the contract requirements with the approved salt supplier. It will be the responsibility of the Roads Maintenance Manager to maintain the agreed stock levels at all storage points as per the predetermined schedule. It will be the responsibility of the Supervisor to make a weekly return of salt receipts and issues to the Duty Officer for record keeping purposes by 1600 hrs on Thursday of each week.

Salt/Sand - Stocks of salt/sand mix, at a ratio of 1:1, will be established by mid October and will be maintained through the winter.

It will be the responsibility of the Supervisor to continuously monitor the stocks of salt/sand mix in the storage areas within their area and replenish these stocks as required.

Salt/Sand mixtures will be mixed in the storage areas in accordance with the instructions of the Supervisor in that area and will generally consist of 1 part sand to 1 part salt by weight.

3.5.2 Use of Materials

In general neat salt will be used on all roads except when adverse weather conditions as detailed in Table 2.2 (Treatment Matrix Guide) deem necessary. The use of neat salt or of the salt/sand mixture may be varied at the discretion of the Duty Officer or Supervisor depending upon road and weather conditions.

It shall be the responsibility of the Supervisors to ensure that all storage areas within his operational area are allocated a loading facility during the period of early morning patrols or when general Winter Service operations are being carried out.

During the spreading of salt, especially in built-up areas, care must be taken to keep salt clear of trees, hedges, shrubs, lawns, etc.

3.5.3 Snow Fences and Warning Signs, etc

The Roads Maintenance Manager shall consider the erection of semi-permanent snow fences and 'ICE' hazard signs in those areas where drifting snow and/or ice habitually cause hazard. He shall consult the land owner and obtain his approval prior to erection of any snow fencing.

The Supervisor will remove the snow fences and 'ICE' hazard signs when the possibility of adverse weather conditions has passed, but not later than the end of April. Snow fences will also be removed immediately on request of the person on whose land they have been placed.

The Managers will ensure that a number of portable 'ICE' hazard warning signs are distributed to Supervisors and to each depot so that they can be erected in an emergency at any especially hazardous location, where the problem cannot be resolved by normal winter service treatment.

The locations of warning signs are listed in Appendix K.

3.5.4 Grit Boxes

Road Maintenance will provide and maintain grit boxes at locations which have been identified as being potentially hazardous, so that sand/salt mixtures are readily available at these locations to roadmen, other Council employees, or local residents, should they choose to use this facility.

The locations and condition of all grit boxes should be reviewed annually in late summer/autumn.

The location of Grit Boxes are as listed in Appendix G.

3.6 Road Closures and Gates

3.6.1 Road Closures

The closure of a road under severe winter conditions can only be authorised by the Police, but the Police or Roads Maintenance may carry out the appropriate signing. It is absolutely essential that there is consultation and co-operation between both parties in the use of signs. For a closure instigated by the Police during the night, the Duty Supervisors affected must be informed as soon as possible, and where the closure initiative comes from Roads Maintenance the Police should be contacted immediately to obtain authorisation.

Where Roads Maintenance personnel close a section of road that section should be checked to ensure that there are no vehicles stuck within the section.

Whilst snow clearing work is taking place within a blocked section, it is imperative that vehicular traffic is kept out and this shall be done by placing approved type barriers across the road and verge.

Where private/commercial vehicles that have become stuck and/or abandoned in a snowstorm and are preventing snow-clearing operations from proceeding, the Roads Maintenance Supervisor is authorised to move these vehicles clear of the carriageway only after Police authority has been received. Where a driver of a commercial vehicle is in attendance, he will be asked to attach a towing line to get his vehicle clear and he must accept responsibility for any resulting damage.

3.6.2 Snow Gates

Snow gates are located on major roads where experience of the weather conditions has indicated their requirement. These gates are located as detailed in Appendix K.

Opening and closure of gates and associated flap down signs will only take place with authorisation from the Police. (Police contact details are available in Appendix N).

3.7 Health & Safety

3.7.1 General Duty

It is the duty of the Moray Council to comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and accordingly the Council is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for work, safe systems of work, safe equipment and an adequate standard of welfare facilities for all its employees.

The Council recognises the need for training and instruction to enable employees to carry out their tasks competently and safely and undertake to provide such information, instruction and training as will enable them to carry out these tasks without risk to themselves and others.

3.7.2 Roads Maintenance Health & Safety Policy

It is the policy of the Roads Service to ensure that all appropriate action is taken to prevent hazards to the health and safety of its employees and of the general public which may arise from any of the department's work activities.

To this end the service has in place a Health & Safety Policy and has produced a safety manual containing the following :-

- Safety Policy
- Organisation
- Risk assessment
- Safe Systems of Work

3.7.3 Winter Service - Health & Safety

Although the Roads Maintenance Manual for Health & Safety contains advice which is relevant to all of the activities involving roads employees it is considered appropriate to include in the Winter Service Operational Plan, some guidance which relates particularly to winter operations, some of which is included in the general policy document, but it is thought useful to highlight here.

3.7.4 Remote Snow Clearing Operations

In the event of a breakdown or a prolonged stoppage :-

- Maintain radio contact
- Describe your location
- Unless shelter is close at hand, remain in your vehicle
- Check the position of any other vehicle in the vicinity

Should assistance be unavailable and it is necessary to use the survival kit the following points should be observed :-

- Remove any wet clothing
- Make use of the survival bag or metallic blanket
- Candles provide heat and light but should only be used if there is a through-flow of air
- Maintain a supply of fresh air in the cab if the engine is left running. **Exhaust fumes can kill.**
- Do not go to sleep. Sleep lowers your resistance.

3.7.5 Risk assessments

A risk assessment exercise has been undertaken for some of the gritting routes, in order to identify particular hazards that drivers need to be aware of. The evaluation and recommendations will be made available to all drivers, who will be expected to familiarise themselves with the assessment and to act in accordance with the recommended controls. Assessments have been carried out in order of priority in terms of risk; remote and high routes have been considered first, to be followed by assessment of all other routes.

3.8 Training

3.8.1 Pre-winter Training / Briefing

Agents or Supervisors will meet with all winter operatives before the middle of October and deliver a pre-winter briefing discussing matters of procedure and Health and Safety for the operation of the winter service. The following issues will be Covered :-

1. Driving Safely Policy (ref Section 5.6 of Moray Councils Safety Management System) – Drivers to be briefed on the main points in the policy.

2. Safe use of Radios – Operatives are encouraged to use the radio system which was installed into vehicles in 2011. The system has similar functionality to mobile phones: radio to radio private calls, selected group calls, radio to land line or land line to radio calls and call forwarding and has better coverage than had the previous system. The new radios are able to track the position of vehicles in which they are fitted, an important safety feature for lone workers especially when combined with a 'panic' button. Tracking will also allow the Council to more easily defend itself against any claims of negligence (providing evidence of road treatment, timing of treatment, speed of vehicle etc).

As noted in the policy for Driving Safely it is specifically an offence to use a mobile phone whilst driving, however the use of press to talk radio systems is not specifically illegal (although in some circumstances it may be considered as careless driving). Therefore you are still advised to stop, where it is safe to do so, before using the radio. Operatives should talk to their Supervisor should they require any further guidance on the use of radios.

3. Outline Drivers Duties – Refer to Winter Service Operational Plan (App. V) and drivers blue route books.

4. Drivers who are assigned to vehicles with which they are unfamiliar should request familiarisation training before taking the vehicle out on the road.

5. Drivers who encounter conditions significantly different to those expected when driving their route should advise the Supervisor of these changed conditions as soon as practical. In emergency situations Supervisors should be notified as soon as possible.

6. Tachos – Tachos must be used in all Council vehicles including pickups. If no Tacho is fitted then a logbook must be used. If the train weight is over 3.5 tonne and a Tacho is not being used you are at risk of a fine of up to £2000. If there is a digital tacho in the vehicle, put "out of scope" for winter operations.

7. When on standby no haulage work to be carried out unless covered by domestic rules. Please advise your Supervisor of any concerns or queries.

8. Treatment Log – This is our main record of treatment and our defence if we are challenged by insurers or in court therefore be accurate. For all priority routes, secondary routes and footway treatments (with Kubotos) you should clearly indicate actual start / finish times of treatment, the route or area treated, the conditions encountered and treatment applied. Treatment logs should be completed and returned to Supervisors weekly or daily as appropriate.

9. Timesheets – Make sure all plant used is recorded on the sheet and state the route or area treated and start and finish times of your shift.

10. Routes – Blue routes book should be available in each vehicle or in your depot, they include details of priority and secondary routes, a list of public roads and streets to be treated and risk assessments for priority routes.
11. Route changes / priorities in snow conditions – Discuss ploughing routes and specific priorities in snow conditions etc.
12. Changes to routes – highlight any changes from previous years.
13. Footway – Footway tractor operators should consider the possible impact of leaving piles of snow at doors and gates and be aware of stability risk to tractors when crossing areas of compacted snow e.g. snowfall from roofs. Where resources allow footway support crews should attend to areas inaccessible to tractors, particularly well used footways such as outside public buildings, pedestrian crossings, main crossing points, bus stops etc.
14. Report time of route completion, tonnages of salt/sand used and road/weather conditions to Supervisor on completion of route.
15. Standby changes – If you want to swap your standby for a reason, arrange cover yourself, notify your Supervisor in advance, and remind him again nearer the time.
16. Driver CPC – 5 days training to be carried out over 5 years which must be completed by September 2014. Also issue reminder to contractor drivers.
17. Lone workers – Report every couple of hours to say where you've been and where you're going – that way we know where to start looking if something happens. Drivers are also reminded of the 'panic button' on the radio system should they get into difficulties and are unable to communicate with their Supervisor.
18. Level Crossings – Stop gritting at "Stop" line, start again on other side. Phone signalman before ploughing over crossing and call after. See Section 2.4 within Part 2 of this document.
19. Drivers to sign attendance list to confirm participation in this Pre-Winter Training/Briefing.

3.8.2 Training of LGV Drivers for operation of Winter Service Vehicles.

It was previously Council policy to train Winter Service LGV drivers to City & Guilds standards but from 2012 onwards drivers will now be trained and assessed for a Scottish Vocational Qualification.

For those drivers who have not yet attained a C&G or SVQ, the following policy will be applied :-

Each driver will be required to have a minimum of 5 hours operational experience as second man in a vehicle, and approximately 20 hours operational experience as a driver under supervision. This training must be recorded on the trainee's time sheet. The operational experience should include the mounting and de-mounting of gritter boxes, ploughs etc, the use of a gritter in both part-loaded and fully loaded states, and a plough also in both part-loaded and fully loaded states. Having satisfactorily fulfilled those requirements the driver will be assessed by his Supervisor and must be deemed competent before being allowed to operate the equipment without supervision. When considered suitably experienced by his Supervisor, the driver will undertake assessment for the Winter Service SVQ by an approved internal assessor (assessment period approx. 5hrs)

3.8.3 Training of staff in the Interpretation of Weather Forecasting Information and in the Decision Making Process for Winter Treatments.

Training is carried out on a regular basis for those who are involved in the interpretation of weather forecasts and the use of ice prediction systems. This training is carried out by the providers, Vaisala and the MetDesk.

All staff training records are maintained by the Roads Maintenance Manager.

