

# Safety at Street Works and Road Works Code of Practice

October 2013

## Summary of Changes to the Safety Code

### Changes to scope

The new Code applies to all single carriageway roads as before, but coverage of dual carriageways is limited to those with a speed limit of 40 mph or less. For safe operation on higher speed dual carriageways, readers are directed to the more detailed advice contained in Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual.

For works for road purposes, the old Code was only compulsory for the road authority in Northern Ireland. The new Code is also compulsory for highway authorities in England and Wales. (It remains non-compulsory for Scottish roads authorities.)

### Changes to make the code easier to use

The contents page now appears at the beginning of the document

To make information easier to find, the new Code is divided into three parts - Basic Principles, Operations, and Equipment and Vehicles.

Information related to Operations is set out in the order that an operative would be expected to consider various aspects of the site, and the Equipment and Vehicles section pulls together information that was previously in different parts of the Code

Site layout diagrams have been redrawn (in plan instead of 3-D) to make them easier to understand.

A glossary has been added.

The Setting Out reference table at the rear of the document has been redesigned to make it easier to read, the information is set out in a more logical order, and some additional information has been included.

### More focus on designing for specific sites rather than simply following guidance

The Basic Principles section places an emphasis on roles and responsibilities rather than on simply following guidance without considering site specific characteristics.

There is more emphasis on using risk assessment together with guidance on what to consider in risk assessments.

## **General changes**

The legislative background is updated to reflect the introduction of the Equality Act 2010.

Advice on variable message signs has been added.

Information board guidance has been amended to allow for information to be displayed on mobile and short duration works vehicles where appropriate.

Guidance is included for temporarily closing a footpath (i.e. a pedestrian route not adjacent to the carriageway).

Consistency with Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual has been improved.

Some of the Chapter 8 based guidance has been updated before inclusion (these updates will feed into future revisions of Chapter 8).

A new recommendation for record keeping is included to help identify what changes to the code should be made in the future.

## **Changes to improve conditions for pedestrians**

The Code encourages the use of information boards for pedestrians at sites where they are not compulsory.

Guidance on providing for pedestrians has been strengthened with an emphasis on the need for operatives to look out for and help pedestrians who are having difficulty negotiating their way past the works.

Stronger emphasis has been placed on maintaining a footway route past the works as this is safer for pedestrians than diverting them into a walkway in the carriageway.

The use of temporary footway boards to cover excavations is encouraged to minimise disruption for pedestrians.

Advice on protecting pedestrians from hazards in the work site itself has been added

New advice on temporary footway closures is included to help ensure minimise inconvenience to pedestrians.

## **Changes to improve conditions for cyclists**

The guidance has been strengthened to encourage operatives to think carefully about the needs of cyclists.

Inappropriate use of “cyclists dismount and use footway” signs is discouraged

New advice is included on maintaining access for cyclists past the works when the road has to be closed to motor vehicles.

Guidance on the width of general traffic lanes past the works has been amended to reduce the likelihood of unsafe overtaking of cyclists by cars or lorries.

## **Section added to improve conditions for equestrians**

The guidance encourages operatives to consider the safety of people riding or leading horses.

Operatives are advised to consider suspending operations when horses are passing the works.

### **Changes to guidance on traffic management**

Guidance has been added to cover works that affect bus lanes.

Advice on when temporary traffic regulation orders or notices are required is spread throughout the document.

The need for prior approval of the use of all temporary traffic light installations has been clarified.

Guidance on traffic control methods now covers road closures, one-way working and temporary obstruction of the road.

Guidance on temporary obstruction of the carriageway has been included so that full closures might be less likely.

### **Changes to guidance on works near tramways and railways**

Additional guidance is given on managing the risks associated with works near tramways and railways, particularly where they cross a road.

There is more information on managing the risk of electrocution near tramways and advice on exclusion zones has been added for works near live overhead cables.

Guidance on working near railway crossings has been extended to include information from other relevant guidance documents.

The Code now covers the precautionary area around a level crossing and the need to obtain prior approval from the relevant transport authority for any works within that area.

Advice on positioning portable traffic signals near railways has been added to highlight the risk of their being mistaken for railway signals.

An example layout for works at a level crossing has been introduced.

### **Changes to guidance on mobile and short duration works**

Guidance on mobile works and short duration works carried out from a vehicle has been enhanced.

Diagrams for mobile works, short duration stops have been added.

The Code advises on the need to carry out a risk assessment for all mobile and short duration works before starting.

### **Changes to guidance on site maintenance**

Guidance on site maintenance has been enhanced considerably.

The Code includes advice on periodic checks at attended and unattended sites of signing, lighting and guarding installations.

## **Changes to guidance on equipment and vehicles**

The advice on high visibility clothing has been updated and enhanced, and it includes national variations.

The requirement for barriers to withstand a particular wind loading has been introduced.

In Scotland, an additional requirement for barriers at unattended sites to withstand a higher wind loading has been introduced.

Guidance on signing and conspicuity requirements for works vehicles, including impact protection vehicles, has been added and includes national variations.