

UTLC Paper No. 5/2009
Trial on Instant Notification to Utility Undertakings (UUs)
on Non-compliance (NC) Items for Immediate Rectification

Purpose of the Paper

This paper aims to inform members of the proposed trial on providing instant notifications to UUs right after identification of NC items by Highways Department (HyD)'s Audit Inspection Team (AIT) on road opening sites for UUs' immediate rectification.

Background

2. In recent years, there are increasing concerns and complaints from the general public on road opening works. While road excavation is necessary for the development of the society, the works will inevitably cause inconvenience to the public. To strike the balance, it is important that road opening works are implemented in a coordinated manner and with proper precautionary measures to safeguard the safety and convenience of road users. In this regard, the excavation permit (XP) mechanism together with the audit inspection conducted by HyD play an utmost important role.

3. In 2008, HyD commissioned the Efficiency Unit (EU) to review, amongst others, the administration and monitoring mechanism of XPs on road works. One of the EU's concern is that the results of the existing audit inspections under the current practice do not trigger immediate rectification of NCs.

4. In order to minimise potential dangers and public complaints induced by the NCs in road opening works, EU recommends that the AIT should consider providing instant notification to the UUs on the NC items revealed on site after the audit inspection so that the UUs can immediately rectify the NCs.

Action Required for the Trial

Identification of Immediately Rectifiable NC Items on Checklist

5. The AIT conducts audit inspections mainly on the basis of the "Permit Site Audit Inspection Checklist". Based on the on-site observations by AIT, most of the NC items on the checklist are readily rectifiable, particularly those NC items most frequently revealed from the inspections, such as inadequate taper length, incorrect placement of temporary measures and improper provision of publicity board etc.

6. In order to implement instant notification for immediate rectification of those readily rectifiable NC items, AIT will identify those items in the "Permit Site Audit Inspection Checklist" which can be rectified immediately. The list of identified "immediately rectifiable NC items" will be circulated to UUs for comment. Only such NC items, which are agreed as immediately rectifiable, will be included in the proposed trial.

Notification to UU and Report of Rectification

7. Right after the audit inspection, the AIT will send an instant notification to the Permittee (P) and Nominated Permittee (NP) on the “immediately rectifiable NC items” revealed on site for their immediate rectification. The instant notification will contain the basic information, such as the date/time of the audit inspection, XP plan number, the numbers and descriptions of the NC items revealed accompanied with photographs showing the NCs, to facilitate P/NPs’ immediate rectification works. P/NP will receive the notification by mobile phone. The AIT will approach the P/NP to collect their mobile phone numbers and email addresses for receipt of notification.

8. P/NP shall take immediate action to rectify the NCs revealed on their XP sites whenever AIT’s instant notification is received. After rectifying the NCs, the P shall report to AIT through AIMS as soon as possible, but no later than **48 hours** after receipt of the notification, that their rectification works are completed. All the immediately rectifiable NCs revealed on site have to be properly rectified to the required standard and reported to the AIT within 48 hours, otherwise it will not be regarded as immediately rectified.

Implementation of Trial

9. Tsim Sha Tsui, Jordan and Yau Ma Tei are chosen for the trial on instant notification. The trial is scheduled to take place from January 2010 to April 2010 for a period of 3 months.

10. The trial will be reviewed afterwards and the operational procedures may be fine tuned subject to the comments received and/or shortcomings revealed during the trial period.

11. UUs will be informed of the relevant details of the proposed trial before its commencement.

November 2009

Research and Development Division, Highways Department

Unanimous endorsement by UTLC members on 3 November 2009.
The instant notification to UUs on non-compliance items for immediate rectification was implemented 1 June 2010.