

**APPENDIX 1**  
**WINTER MAINTENANCE POLICY**  
**2011-2012**

1. Comhairle nan Eilean Siar through its Technical Services Department aims to provide a winter maintenance service which allows the safe movement of traffic and keeps to a minimum the delays caused by adverse winter conditions.
2. The Comhairle, as Roads Authority will set the standards and level of service and make adequate budgetary provision to achieve the standards and approve a carriageway and footway hierarchy.
3. The Technical Services Department will prepare a winter maintenance policy statement and a carriageway and footway hierarchy for carriageway and footway precautionary gritting, post gritting, and snow clearing. The Policy Statement will be reviewed periodically following any significant changes in the available budget or the Comhairle's delivery of services.
4. The winter maintenance service will be delivered by the winter maintenance contractors and sub-contractors together with, where appropriate, the Comhairle's own in-house staff.

For operational purposes, the Western Isles has been divided into fourteen geographically determined areas (Lots).

5. The Director of Technical Services will monitor the winter maintenance plan and report to the Comhairle on the budgetary provision for the execution of the plan and on any improvements which may be required to the plan.
6. The Director of Technical Services may in certain circumstances, for example, adverse weather conditions, amend or suspend part of the winter maintenance plan to achieve the best service the prevailing conditions will allow.
7. The Director of Technical Services may carry out trials whenever necessary on proposals to improve the service prior to the review.

## **SALTING, GRITTING AND SNOW CLEARING**

### **1. Statement of Service**

The winter maintenance operation shall be delivered in accordance with the Comhairle's winter maintenance policy.

### **2. Response Time**

The target response time from the time a specified request from the Technical Services Officers is made to the commencement of gritting is one hour.

### **3. Period of Cover**

The winter maintenance service will be delivered during the period 1 October - 31 March the following year and may be extended as necessary.

Routine treatment and snow clearing will be delivered throughout the winter season with the exception of Sundays, Local Public Holidays and core school holidays when only a limited service will be provided.

On Sundays and Local Public Holidays when limited service is being provided gritting will commence no earlier than 8.00 a.m. and shall be limited to Priority 1 and Priority 2 routes.

On core school holidays commencement of gritting and snow clearing will be restricted to Priority 1 and Priority 2 routes. The target treatment times for these routes will be in accordance with the normal policy.

In the event of an emergency, salting, gritting and snow clearing operations will be undertaken at any time as directed by the Director of Technical Services . The Police will be involved in the assessment of emergency situations.

### **4. Target Treatment Times**

#### *i Roads*

Normally routine salting and gritting treatment to commence no earlier than 6.00 a.m. Target gritting times for the priorities are now set as follows

Priority 1 completed by 7:30am

Priority 2 completed by 8:30am

Priority 3 completed by 9:30am

Priority 4 completed by 10:30am

Priority 5 are gritted on request only

In the event of evening gritting being deemed appropriate gritting will be restricted to Priority one routes only, with a gritting decision normally made by 5pm and no gritting runs commenced after 6pm., apart from high risk areas such as the Clisham.

*ii Footpaths*

A limited service will be provided Monday to Saturday following completion of the treatment of the road network and up till 1.00 p.m. except for recognised public holidays.

Footpath gritting on Sunday shall only be undertaken in the case of an emergency, and shall be restricted to footways around open public facilities

**5. Target Standards**

*i Salting and Gritting Roads*

Priority 1 routes - routes to be gritted prior to 7.30 a.m.

Priority 2 routes - routes to be gritted prior to 8.30 a.m.

Priority 3 routes - routes to be gritted prior to 9.30 a.m.

Priority 4 routes - routes to be gritted prior to 10.30 a.m.

Priority 5 routes - routes to be gritted only on the Duty Officer's request.

On Sundays and Local Public Holidays the target treatment times will be delayed by 2 hours.

*ii Snow Clearance Roads*

Under adverse conditions when snow is drifting resources may be withdrawn from the lower priority routes to focus resources on the high priority routes.

*iii Salting and Gritting - Footpaths and Pedestrian Areas*

Salting and gritting of footpaths and pedestrian areas shall be carried out on lengths as deemed appropriate and in accordance with the priority indicated on the footway gritting plan.

This service will only be carried out in times of hard continuous ice conditions where the footway state is not expected to improve naturally prior to treatment and shall be instructed by the Director of Technical Services.

*iv Snow Clearing - Footpaths and Pedestrian Areas*

Snow clearing of footpaths and pedestrian areas shall be carried out on lengths of footways as required in accordance with the priority indicated on the footway gritting plan.

This service will be the forming of gaps in snow piled by the roadside, at bus stops and crossing points.

Other areas shall not normally be cleared except in the case of an emergency.

## 6. Roads and Footpath Procedures

### *i Salting, Gritting and Snow Clearing Roads*

- Priority 1 - inter island and main distribution roads (Strategic Route)
- Priority 2 - important principal roads (Main Distributor)
- Priority 3 - selected bus routes (Secondary Distributor)
- Priority 4 - minor village roads (Link Road)
- Priority 5 - cemetery access roads and farm access roads (Local Access Road) and other roads to be gritted by specific request only.

### *ii Salting, Gritting and Snow Clearing Footpaths and Pedestrian Areas*

A limited service shall be provided on Monday to Saturday following completion of the treatment of the road network and up until 1.00 p.m. except on recognised local public holidays when a reduced service will be provided

- a Salting and Gritting - the over spread from salting and gritting the roads is usually adequate in most situations to cover footways. However, some footpaths in Stornoway town centre are not covered by this and should receive priority action in the event of hard continuous ice conditions. These are set out in the footway gritting plan.
- b Snow Clearing - this should commence in Stornoway town centre progressing through the priority list as appropriate.
- c General - although this service can not be extended to housing developments, industrial areas etc., residents should be encouraged to apply for self-help schemes.

### *iii Salting and Gritting Car Parks*

The service for salting, gritting and snow clearing of car parks shall be extended to the main town car parks and bus parks in Stornoway, Tarbert, Lochmaddy, Balivanich, Lochboisdale and Castlebay.

The service shall be provided Monday to Saturday except on public holidays with the same target treatment times of Priority 4 roads.

### *iv Salting, Gritting and Snow Clearing of Unadopted Roads*

Two categories exist, private roads and Comhairle maintained roads.

For private roads only the intersection with public roads will be treated.

For Comhairle maintained, non-adopted, roads the treatment will be as agreed with the responsible Department.

## **7. WEATHER FORECASTS**

Met Office weather forecasts will be obtained daily from the operations Centre at Exeter.

Met Office forecast together with road sensor information, micro radar information and road inspections will form the objective basis on which operational decisions will be made.

A copy of the 24 hour forecast will be forwarded to all contractors by no later than 15.00 hours on each day.

## **8 SUPERVISION AND OPERATIONAL PERSONNEL**

Duty staff will be trained in the interpretation of forecast information. The Duty Officer will make the decision on any treatment required. The operational personnel shall be engaged by and trained by the contractors. Quality checks will be carried out on all contractors' work during the gritting season. The information will be used in subsequent reviews of the policy. Duty schedules and rotas will be put in place by the Duty Staff at the commencement of the gritting season.

## **9. PLANT AND VEHICLES**

The provision, maintenance and replacement of all winter maintenance plant and vehicles will be carried out by the contractor or Technical Services.

All plant and vehicles shall conform to the Comhairle's specification and shall be inspected by the Comhairle's nominated inspector prior to commencing work.

## **10. OPERATIONAL COMMUNICATION SYSTEM**

- (i) The Comhairle will supply and fit mobile radios in most operational vehicles employed on snow clearing operations.
- (ii) The contractor will ensure the correct procedures for use and maintenance for these radios.
- (iii) The radios will be removed during the summer months.
- (iv) The contractor will ensure a mobile telephone is installed and maintained in all operational vehicles.
- (v) The contractors will be required to confirm start and finish times of requested gritting runs.
- (vi) Telephone answering and facsimile machines will be provided at all contractors' depots

## **11. ICE DETECTION SYSTEM**

The Comhairle will manage ten ice detection stations throughout the Western Isles. The system will be used in the determination of treatment. The system will be maintained by Vaisala TMI.

**12. BULK SALT**

Bulk salt purchased through the national procurement contract will be supplied by the Comhairle to the contractors from nominated stockpiles. The Director of Technical Services will manage the Comhairle's own stockpiles. Contractors may hold small quantities of salt to enable quicker responses.

**13. SALT HEAP AND GRIT BINS**

Salt heaps may be deposited and maintained in locations such as known trouble spots, steep hills, troublesome bends etc.

Grit bins may be situated and maintained at accessible locations for self-help use.

**14. INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY**

All Press communication shall be agreed with the Director of Technical Services