Transport for Greater Manchester

GMCA
GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

AGMA
ASSOCIATION OF GREATER MANCHESTER AUTHORITIES

Greater Manchester Road Activities Permit Scheme

Annual Report 2013/14

STOCKPORT
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Bolton Council

MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Tameside Metropolitan Borough

Salford City Council

Bury COUNCIL

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

ROCHDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Wigan Council

Oldham Council

Measuring the Success of the Greater Manchester Road Activities Scheme

Annual Report

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1 FOREWORD

The purpose and aspiration of the scheme is for all Greater Manchester Local Authorities to deliver consistency and parity when coordinating works on the highway and to deliver positive improvements for all road users.

The first year has been challenging as we implemented the Scheme and the changes for the 10 Local Authorities, and the utility companies. However there have been some real successes in terms of:

- an 11% reduction in the number of trips that were subject to delay due to roadworks on the GM Key Route Network,
- sharing of best practice amongst Local Authorities,
- improved engagement with all Promoters, and
- increased registration of highway authorities' own works.

All of these have led to us developing a platform from which GMRAPS can help Greater Manchester fulfil its economic potential in the coming years.

A major culture change in the willingness of all parties to work together to deliver real improvements to works on the highway has been a major positive. The outcome has been a 25% reduction in the number of permit applications being submitted since the scheme was introduced, significantly reducing the associated congestion and inconvenience.

There is more work to be done but the future looks bright and the foundations have been established to sustain and enhance the permit scheme for many years to come.

Cllr Andrew Fender, Chair of the Transport for Greater Manchester Committee

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Greater Manchester Road Activities Permit Scheme (GMRAPS) was the first Joint Permit Scheme to be implemented in England.

GMRAPS commenced operation on the 29 April 2013. The scheme is operated by the 10 Greater Manchester Local Authorities, Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan.

This is the first annual evaluation of the GMRAPS covering the period from the commencement of the Scheme, 29 April 2013 until the end of April 2014.

The report evaluates the progress of the permit scheme in meeting both the stated objectives and parity of treatment of all works for highway purposes and utility street works. In both respects the Scheme is already demonstrating successful outcomes.

There are almost 7 billion vehicle kilometres travelled on the Greater Manchester Highways per year, around 25 million passenger journeys on the Metrolink and around 220 million passenger journeys by Bus every year.

Overall, more than 80% of journeys in Greater Manchester depend entirely on the smooth operation of its Highway Network.

There are 10 Local Highway Authorities in Greater Manchester, managing 1373km of road with 39 different Promoters (2013/14) carrying out activities on the Highway Network.

GMRAPS was implemented smoothly and successfully through close working between Transport for Greater Manchester (Project Delivery), the 10 Greater Manchester Local Authorities and the Utility Companies.

GMRAPS was introduced to give greater control over activities (Roadworks) taking place on the Greater Manchester Highway Network which in the past have been seen to cause unnecessary disruption. Greater Manchester Local Authorities previously coordinated their own utility road works via a notice system operated under the New Roads and Street Works Act (NRSWA). These processes and arrangements varied considerably across Greater Manchester.

Permit Schemes enable local authorities to:

- manage and coordinate street works more effectively;
- minimise disruption to users; and

- recharge the allowable coordination costs to the Utility Companies.

The new powers afforded to the 10 Greater Manchester Highway Authorities has allowed them to agree conditions with Promoters, carrying out works to ensure that these works are carried out in a safe, efficient and cost effective manner.

- Over 138,900 permit applications and variations were checked and co-ordinated, with 84% being granted and 10% refused for different reasons
- Of the 109,565 initial permit applications, 83% were granted first time.
- There has been a reduction in the average number of days of occupation of works from 4.63 days to 3.81 days. This has significantly reduced delay costs to the GM economy.
- Accuracy of information supplied by works promoters has improved, with more accurate dates, plotting of works and traffic management information now being available to coordinators and road users.
- One Public Register (www.gmroadworks.org) is available online, showing all activities across Greater Manchester Network.

Moving forward the Greater Manchester Authorities are committed to improving the Scheme, working more closely with Promoters to amend and develop the current processes to make sure that the Permit Scheme is more consistent and reliable across the whole of Greater Manchester for all stakeholders.

This first annual report has highlighted some areas where further developments of the scheme and improved reporting capabilities are required to evaluate and to maximise the scheme benefits. Work will continue with all stakeholders to achieve these goals and continue the successes achieved in the first evaluation period.

It must be noted that the success of GMRAPS is due to the responsibility taken by all stakeholders to deliver a successful Permit Scheme. Without the commitment of the Local Authorities, TfGM, Utility and Highway Promoters the Scheme would not have been implemented as smoothly or successfully.

3 INTRODUCTION

3.1 Background Information

Part 3 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA) allowed the introduction of permit schemes to enable the better management of work activities on the highway. In particular, it aimed to improve the ability of local authorities to control and coordinate utility companies' street works, and its own highway works, in order to minimise disruption and delay arising from works.

The development of GMRAPS began in 2009 when the Local Authorities in Greater Manchester reviewed the information and guidance, and began to draft a Scheme Document that would eventually be submitted to Department for Transport (DfT).

In order to develop the Permit Scheme a Focus Group was established with Manchester City Council leading on developing the Scheme. The Focus Group had representation from all 10 Greater Manchester Local Authorities:

- Bury Council
- Bolton Council
- Manchester City Council
- Oldham Council
- Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council
- Salford City Council
- Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council
- Tameside Council
- Trafford Council
- Wigan Council

3.2 Purpose of the Annual Report

The aim of the report is to review, analyse, reflect and comment on the successes, challenges and future of the Greater Manchester Permit Scheme. It provides an ideal opportunity to identify those aspects of the permit scheme where improvements in performance are needed in order to bring about more successes in the years to come.

Whilst updates in the form of monitoring reports have been issued on a regular basis, this Annual Report represents the inaugural amalgamation of monthly data.

The intended audience include the Department for Transport, utility companies and other promoters, other stakeholders and other local authorities, particularly those interested in adopting a Joint Permit Scheme, and all road users.

3.3 Progress to date

The aim of GMRAPS has been to improve the strategic and operational management of the highway network through better planning, scheduling and management of activities to minimise disruption and delays to any road user.

Prior to the implementation of GMRAPS the 10 Greater Manchester Highway Authorities carried out their Network Management duties in isolation.

In order to implement GMRAPS across Greater Manchester it was decided that it would be more beneficial to the Local Authorities and also all Promoters if the Scheme was established as a Joint Permit Scheme.

The establishment of a shared service centre (Administration Team) for GMRAPS has provided an opportunity for all the 10 Permit Authorities to utilise smart ways of using technology to boost internal efficiencies, deliver better services to citizens, partners, local and national businesses and to realise genuine changes in the ways of working.

GMRAPS will continue to balance the needs of both cost effectiveness and customer service delivery. The SLAs and KPIs will identify these combined outputs.

The further benefits of a joint scheme are:

- Reduced costs compared to 10 separate schemes
- A single joint scheme coordinated centrally will better support the delivery of an efficient and reliable highway network
- Provision of a consistent service for utility companies and the public throughout Greater Manchester

4 SCHEME OBJECTIVES

The objectives of GMRAPS were laid out within the Permit Scheme Document (www.gmraps.org). These are set out below along with information of how they have been met within the first year of Operation.

Contribute towards the ten Greater Manchester Highway Authorities in meeting their Network Management Duty (NMD)

The GMRAPS Administration Team, through its relationship with the Joint Operational Group has provided, support, guidance, training and advice notes to all stakeholders (Permit Authorities, Highway Authorities and Utilities) in order to enable them to deliver the Permit Scheme and meet their Network Management Duty.

Minimise congestion and delay to Traffic across Greater Manchester

GMRAPS has delivered a reduction of 113,898 days of disruption. All Permit Authorities have been more proactive in engaging with Promoters to identify future activity. The GMRAPS Administration Team is also working closely with Permit Authorities and Promoters to establish a forward plan of estimated activity (by permit type for the next 12 months.

Manage and maintain the local highway network to maximise the safe and efficient use of road space and provide reliable journey times

Across Greater Manchester the inspection regimes of Permit Authorities varied remarkably. However since the introduction of GMRAPS works have been carried out to make the Inspection and FPN Process more consistent with Salford City Council leading as champions in this area. Further work is needed in 2014/15 but changes have been noted.

Encourage the optimal use of the network by giving people information about their travel choices

As part of GMRAPS one Public Register, for all activities across Greater Manchester, was created. This is available via www.gmroadworks.org and shows all activity across the Highway Network in real time. This therefore allows all stakeholders including the general public to view Roadworks that may impact on their journeys and plan their route(s) accordingly.

Minimise the impact of road traffic on residential areas and to improve the environment for pedestrians and cyclists on lightly trafficked streets

GMRAPS has seen a 50% reduction in the number of Roadworks across Greater Manchester compared to 2011, with a 25% reduction on 2012/13. Therefore through this reduction in works, which feedback from works Promoters says can be attributed to better planning, has had a significant impact on reducing delays for pedestrians, cyclists and the environment.

Treat all activities and Promoters covered by the Scheme with Parity

GMRAPS places significant value on ensuring parity amongst all Promoters. This is achieved through consistent training, guidance and processes as well as relationships built up through the Joint Operational Group. GMRAPS Members will continue to work with Promoters to further develop the benefits of the Scheme.

5 PERFORMANCE OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER SCHEME (KPIs)

5.1 Introduction

This section of the report looks at the performance of GMRAPS using the first 12 months data since the Scheme was implemented.

In applying for the Authorities of Greater Manchester to operate a Permit Scheme a number of Key Performance Indicators had to be selected from a set developed by the Department for Transport (DfT) and set out in the Permit Code of Practice.

GMRAPS applied the 2 mandatory KPIs (1 and 2), plus the optional KPIs 3 and 7 from the Code of Practice.

KP1 - The number of applications for Permits and variations received, the number granted and the number refused.

KPI2 - The number of conditions applied by condition type

KPI3 - The number of approved extensions

KPI7 - Number of inspections carried out to monitor conditions

In addition to the Statutory KPIs, a number of additional Objective Measures (Internal KPIs) were created prior to the implementation of GMRAPS. Below is a summary of these measures.

- Total Permit Applications received/ Permit Applications Accepted
- Total Permit applications refused
- Applications for permit extension granted
- Average Duration of works by Type
- Overall potential FPNS
- Number of Permits deemed
- Number of conditions applied by Permit Type

Further analysis of these Performance Measures is provided below in section 6.3.

5.2 Journey times across Greater Manchester (2012 -2014)

The Greater Manchester Road Activity Permit Scheme (GMRAPS) was introduced to facilitate the effective management and co-ordination of road works with the objective of reducing disruption to the road network and users. One of the key

benefits identified in the GMRAPS business case was improved journey time reliability.

Analysis

One of TfGM's key performance indicators (KPI4d) is a measure of journey time reliability on the Greater Manchester Key Route Network. This measure of journey time reliability estimates the level of unexpected delay experienced by road users by comparing the journey time on a day with "high delays" to the journey time under "typical conditions" where high delays are defined as the 95th percentile journey time and typical conditions are defined as the median journey time.

Using this method of identifying high delays and measuring the performance of the road network it is possible to assess the impact GMRAPS may have had on journey time reliability. In order to limit the influence of external factors all Motorway routes have been excluded from this analysis.

In this analysis data from a period before GMRAPS was implemented (April 2012 to August 2012) has been compared to data from a period after GMRAPS was implemented (April 2013 to August 2013). These periods were selected as they are the longest periods for which journey time and permit data are currently available.

In order to isolate the impact road works had on the measure of journey time reliability, permit details were mapped to the key route network. The mapped road works data was then combined with journey time data to identify where there was a correlation between road works on a route and days with high delays on the route. In the period before GMRAPS was implemented, road works were identified on 46% of the days classified as having high delays. In the period after GMRAPS was implemented, road works were identified on 39% of days that were classified as having high delays.

By making the assumption that where there is a correlation between road works and high delays i.e. that road works are the primary cause of those delays, it is possible to estimate the number of trips that have experienced high delays as a result of road works. By applying an estimate of flow for each route where high delays coincided with road works, and multiplying by average car occupancy, **the number of trips made under high delays as a result of road works can be estimated to be 11% lower in the period after GMRAPS was implemented.**

A breakdown of the results can be found in Table 1.

Table 1: Analysis of correlation between road works on a route and days with high delays

Group	2012		2013		Percentage Change in number of trips
	Number of days with high delays associated with road works	Number of trips under high delay conditions associated with road works	Number of days with high delays associated with road works	Number of trips under high delay conditions associated with road works	
Airport	4	3532	6	12163	244%
Altrincham	7	19279	8	20023	4%
Ashton	19	32233	9	15552	-52%
Bolton TC	14	24679	21	39136	59%
Bury TC	11	20069	7	12632	-37%
Manchester CC	49	124341	42	139891	13%
Oldham TC	9	15466	10	20744	34%
Orbital/ring roads	18	50567	15	37624	-26%
Other town centres	21	32670	21	31401	-4%
Rochdale TC	19	46608	14	34064	-27%
Salford Central	18	54923	10	34044	-38%
Stockport TC	22	43124	17	30680	-29%
towards GM Boundary	39	79363	31	59217	-25%
Trafford Centre/Trafford Park	3	4639	1	1556	-66%
Wigan	26	48345	26	46029	-5%
Total	279	599840	238	534756	-11%

The change in trips will depend greatly on the route the road works effect. For example the Airport group shows 244% increase in the number of trips affected by road works however only a 50% increase in the number of days road works effected this group. In 2012 all the road works which affected the Airport group were on the route which runs along the Wilmslow Road/Palatine Road where in 2013 a number of the works were on the Princess Road/Princess Parkway route which carries a substantially higher volume of traffic.

5.3 Monitoring Data

The table below provides details of number of permits applications received from each Promoters in the first 12 months of operation

Promoter	Number of Permit applications	Promoter	Number of Permit applications
Openreach (BT)	13,186	Instalcom	111
Cable and Wireless	5	KCom	11
COLT	30	National Grid Elec	7
Electricity North West (ENW)	11,250	National Grid Gas	15,834
Energetics Electricity	188	Network Rail	500
Energetics Gas	10	O2	113
ES Pipelines	213	Orange	47
Fibre Span	7	Romec	50
Fulcrum	243	Scottish Power	23
Gas Transportation Co	57	SSE Datacom	25
Geo	17	T-Mobile	183
Global Crossing	9	TfGM	2,033
GM Local Authorities	42,652	United Utilities	37,147
Highways Agency*	0	Virgin	14,994
InFocus	4	Vodafone	818

*The HA have experienced difficulties in processing their own permit applications due to internal software issues. In order to ensure they were able to continue undertaking works, TfGM have submitted the limited number of applications received on their behlaf

5.3.1 KPI 1 Permits Received

The table below shows the total number of Permit Applications received, granted and refused in the first 12 months of Operation.

Permits (Received/Grant/Refuse)	**Total**
Total Permits and permit variations received by GMRAPS	138,904
Total Permits granted or refused	130,736
Total Granted	116,979 (84.2%)
Total Refused	13,757 (9.9%)

Please note that a % of permits are unaccounted for, this is due to either no further action being taken by a Promoter following the refusal of a Permit Application, or that Permit Applications have been cancelled once submitted but prior to grant or refusal.

The table below shows the number of permit applications submitted by Statutory Undertakers (Utilities) and Highway Authorities

Permits	**Total**
Total Permits and variations received from Utilities	96,252
Total Permits and variations received from Highway Authorities	42,652

It should be noted that a total of 73, 764 permit invoices have been successfully completed for chargeable works undertaken.

The average refusal rate for permit applications across the Scheme stands at almost 10% and the refusal rate for Highway Authority works across the 10 Authorities stands at an average of 12.2%.

Therefore we can clearly show that there parity across all Promoters as refusal rates are higher for Highway Authority Permits than Utilities.

The CSC perform a vital role in providing parity for all Promoters as they provide a neutral position not being employed by the GM Local Authorities. Therefore they treat each permit on its merits rather than looking at who the Promoter is.

The Joint Operational Group, which comprises the Highway Authorities and the Statutory Undertakers, has been tasked with challenging the individual permit Authorities on reducing the refusal rates for Highway Authority Works.

Actions moving forward:

- More detailed and accurate applications to be submitted by Highway Authorities as they receive on-going training on the requirements of a Permit Scheme.
- Close liaison between Internal Works Promoters and the Permit Authority.

Whilst the reasons above do go some way to explaining the higher refusal rates what must be noted is that this does not apply as a consistent rule across all 10 Local Authorities. Therefore it is proposed that;

- Further work is carried to explain the difference;

- A Task and Finish Group be set up to do this investigation and to then deliver further training to all Internal Works Promoters; and
- Monthly Reports on this issue will be published to highlight the differences and those Authorities that need to improve.

5.3.2 **KPI3 - The number of approved extensions**

The following KPI looks at the number of approved extensions per Promoter in each Local Authority.

	HA (Own Works)	BT (Openreach)	ENW	National Grid**	TfGM	United Utilities	Virgin	Others
Bolton	106	46	128	329	0	162	7	7
Bury	210	14	46	260	0	92	1	1
Manchester	58	38	224	635	31	346	15	72
Oldham	796	24	115	335	0	191	3	26
Rochdale	48	35	122	291	1	149	2	4
Salford	444	22	97	327	2	105	7	20
Stockport	50	31	104	399	1	224	7	10
Tameside	19	17	97	275	1	80	0	12
Trafford	3	11	41	335	1	155	2	17
Wigan	122	39	186	481	0	105	8	5
Total (%)	**4.4%**	**2.1%**	**10.3%**	**23.1%**	**1.8%**	**4.3%**	**0.3%**	**9.7%**

**Please note that the figures for National Grid are inaccurate due to the fact that they have certain software issues which mean in order to submit conditions to immediate activity applications they submit a revised duration application after the original application is received.

The table indicates that all Promoters are planning their works appropriately as the number of extension requests is limited. Better planning of works brings benefits to all users of the Greater Manchester Highway Network as over 90% of all works are finished in the dates stated on original applications. Whilst this figure is high, it is considered that efforts should be made to ensure even higher compliance levels.

5.3.3 **KPI7 - Number of inspections carried out to monitor conditions**

Whilst GMRAPS has one Central Street Works System some of the Permit Authorities are still maintaining a local Street Works System as this benefits their internal procedures.

Therefore monitoring this KPI is difficult as comparable data is not available for all ten districts, for illustrative purposes we have used Bolton Council's figures. . The table below shows Bolton's permits and inpsections for April 14.

Total Monthly Permits	Number Inspected for Conditions	HA Permits Inspected	Pass	Non-Compliant
901	143	0	117	26

The table shows that Bolton inspected 15.9% of all Permits for compliance with conditions. It also indicated that 18.2% of permit applications inspected were non-compliant which highlights an area for further improvement.

5.3.4 Additional Performance Measures

Refusal Reasons

GMRAPS developed a standard set of Refusal Reasons (available at www.gmraps.org) that are used by all Permit Authorities and the CSC. Refusal Reasons 1 -3 which focus on quality, standard conditions and works location are used by the CSC. They cannot use any other refusal reasons when they look at the quality of the application. All other factors are determined by the Highway Authorities.

The table below shows the % of refusals per reason for all Promoters, Utilities and Highway Authorities.

Refusal Reason	All Promoters	Utilities	HA
No Standard Conditions	20%	18.30%	24.40%
Incorrect Works Category	0.70%	0.80%	1%
Location	21.00%	19.10%	25.10%
Conflict of Works	3.90%	4.20%	3%
Timing	6.25%	4.20%	10.70%
Section 58	0.70%	0.80%	0.03%
Incorrect Traffic Management	10%	10.60%	10%
No Early Start Agreement	2.80%	2.70%	3%
Quality of Application	8.90%	10.60%	5.00%
Consultation	0.30%	0.08%	0.01%
Duration	3%	4%	0.36%
Other	22.40%	24.50%	18.1%

Permits Deemed

Deemed permits are ones which have not been processed (approved/ refused) within specified timescales. GMRAPS has a deemed permit level of less than 0.5% across all categories. In comparison, the London Scheme Year One figures for deemed permits were 1% of Utility Permits and 1.4% of Highway Authority Permits. Further work will be undertaken to reduce this further where possible.

6 FEEDBACK FROM USERS.

Detailed feedback was requested from all scheme users i.e. both Highway Authorities and Utilities. The feedback indicated general satisfaction with the scheme and has identified areas for improvement to further enhance the scheme.

7 CONCLUSION

GMRAPS was the first, and is currently the only, joint permit scheme in England. Its introduction has been successful with significant benefits being delivered against all initial objectives, most visibly in terms of reduced delay and disruption for people using the highway network. GMRAPS is being consistently implemented across the whole of GM, although it is recognised further improvements could be achieved especially around the permitting of districts 'own' works. There has been a significant reduction, from pre scheme levels, in the number of excavations being undertaken by Statutory Undertakers. This is partly as a result of improved planning being undertaken to reduce costs. Significant cost savings have been achieved by the CSC with staffing numbers being significantly reduced from those initially planned which reflects the reduced permit volumes being submitted. Staff numbers within the districts are also significantly below those initially projected so that they also match permit volume numbers.

There are areas which could be improved and the scheme will always be seeking to challenge itself to improve its operations. This will ensure the permit scheme operates in a cost effective and economic manner.
Areas for improvement include:

- Cross boundary co-ordination and works planning.
- Forward planning and communications around the extent, nature and disruption resulting from works.
- Highway Authority permitting their own works to ensure consistency across GM.
- The potential to increase and improve collaborative working between districts.
- Further work also needs to be undertaken to develop and improve the operational reporting of the central permitting system to ensure accurate and effective management information is provided to all parties to drive further improvements.