

# APSE Meeting Llandrindod Wells, Wales

Severe Weather  
Lessons Learnt

30 April 2010



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Second Vice President of ADEPT  
Director of Environment & Transport  
Leicestershire County Council



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## Topics Covered

- The national perspective  
- UKRLG Review
- Leicestershire's winter maintenance service
- What should we plan and prepare for in 2010/11?



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## UKRLG Review

### Terms of Reference:

- Salt supply chain
- Salt stocks
- Mutual aid
- Salt Cell
- Operational practices and Codes of Practice
- Communications

Review applies to England, hopes to benefit devolved administrations

### Focus on:

- Salt and carriageways  
ie, snowploughing, footways, spreaders, etc, out of scope



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## Findings – Salt Market

- Poorly understood
- Ample salt in UK and abroad
- UK appears to be a net exporter
- No shortage of supply with sufficient notice
- Continuous production v. seasonal demand
- Short term spikes in demand hard to meet



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## Findings – Salt Suppliers

- Gave insufficient advance warning of possible shortage
- Producers increased supply significantly
- Unable to cope with high short term demand
- Too late for new imports



### Future:

- Keen to engage in commercially viable new practices



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## Findings – Highway Authorities

- Some maintained normal service
- Slow salt stock replenishment from earlier in winter but alarm not raised
- Many reduced service, eg major roads only
- Mutual aid
- Unusual salts and mixes
- Saved by the Salt Cell and by timely arrival of mild weather



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## Findings – Highway Authorities

- Single salt supplier
- Short term call-off contracts
- Reduced salt storage capacity:
  - series of mild winters
  - property rationalisations
  - move to covered storage
  - expectations of systemised restocking systems



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## Recommendations

Package of 19 recommendations in four themes:

1. Winter Service Resilience
2. Preparation for and Operation of Winter Service
3. Communications
4. Procurement



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# 1. Winter Service Resilience

Adopt a local service standard based on a number of days severe conditions salting resilience.

Consider:

- number of days - 6 as a starting point
- overall and core winter period
- minimum winter treatment network



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# 2. Preparation and Operations

- Approach to climate change
- Co-ordination and collaboration
- Sharing depots and stocks
- Supplier owned salt stocks
- HA salt stocks
- Contingency planning, including future Salt Cell, drivers' hours, exercising
- Review *Well-maintained highways*
- DfT Information leaflet for LAs



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# 3. Communications

- Public information, before and during severe weather
- Salt user groups



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## 4. Procurement

- Collaborative Winter Service arrangements
- Salt supply service
- Broader approach to salt supply
- Innovation, eg performance contracts with minimum supply
- Purchase guarantees, longer contracts, salt supply and storage



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## What has happened so far

- Report to Secretary of State for Transport on 30 July
- Report published [www.ukroadsliaisongroup.org](http://www.ukroadsliaisongroup.org)
- Revisions to *Well-maintained Highways* Chapter 13 and Appendix H (Winter Service)



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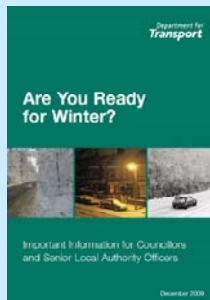
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## Government Response to UKRLG Review

- Minister of State for Transport (Rt Hon Sadiq Khan) Statement on 15 December
- Accepted all 19 recommendations
- Letter sent out to all Chief Executives of Local Highway Authorities
- Accompanying leaflet sent out "Are you Ready for Winter"
- Code of Practice Well-maintained Highways - Section on Winter Service updated



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## Winter 2009/10

- Worse than last year
- Affecting all the UK, particularly Scotland
- Most Authorities purchased more salt and already taken on many of the recommendations of the UKRLG report
- But prolonged cold snap from December to January has again depleted salt stocks



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## Leicestershire County Council

### Winter Maintenance Statistics

- Winter service budget £1.6m (cost of 2009/10 £2.35m)
- Define treatment routes – Priority 1 and 2
- 17 gritters 1100 of 2445 miles (45% of the network)
- Pre-winter stock 1600 tonnes stored in barns at 5 depots
- 54 snow ploughs available on construction vehicles
- 50 farmers available to assist with snow clearing
- Operate night shift (November – March) average 4 hours treatment time



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## Leicestershire County Council's Winter Service Policy

### Priority P1

- Main Distribution roads
- Commuter routes (rural roads carrying more than 2,000 vehicles per day)
- Major bus routes (urban areas 8 or more service buses an hour, road area 2 more service buses per hour)



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## Leicestershire County Council's Winter Service Policy

### Priority P2

- Secondary distributor and local service roads
- At least one route to all villages

### Priority P3

- Less important local village and estate roads

### Priority P4

- All other adopted roads
- Minor, lightly trafficked roads




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## Leicestershire County Council's Winter Maintenance Statistics

Winter Full Season Total	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	08/09
Precautionary Gritting Runs	46	34	42	70	72
Total salt usage (tonnes)	12,512	7,516	7,901	16,423	16,600




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## Leicestershire's Experience 09/10 winter

- Increased pre-season salt stock by 100% 6,000 to 12,000 tonnes
- Purchased extra 1,000 tonnes of "pad salt" in December
- Contracted through ESPO in December to purchase 1,300 tonnes imported salt from southern Europe delivered in early February
- Maintained a minimum of 1,000 tonnes throughout




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## Leicestershire's Experience 09/10 winter

- Reduced usage by 25% but not 40%
- Provided mutual aid to Derbyshire and East Midlands Airport
- Number of runs to date 65 - almost double the number undertaken in previous winters
- Predicted increase in Winter Service budget - £750,000



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## The Opinions Column of the Leicester Mercury 18<sup>th</sup> Jan 2010

"The city and county gritting teams are to be congratulated on doing an **exceptional job** in keeping the roads clear of snow and ice.

Their policy has been to grit and keep clear all major roads, bus routes and heavily-used pavements in the major shopping centres. Of course, this has meant that minor and estate roads have been untouched.

However, the policy has **been successful** and kept the county on the move, with remarkably few problems in the circumstances

This **well-run and professionally executed gritting operation** has helped to keep public transport operating and meant that teachers had few problems getting to work, and most of our schools were kept open."



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## David Parsons, Leader of LCC thanks the Winter Operatives



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### What are the lessons learnt from 2009/10?

- Authorities who haven't should act on the recommendations from 2008/09 report
- There is a need to further review some aspects
- More salt should be purchased pre-season, as we can't rely on UK salt suppliers re-stocking during the winter
- Consider benefits of strategic regional/sub-regional stockpiles




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### What are the lessons learnt from 2009/10?

- Lot of issues raised about usage, we need to provide better technical best practice guidance on
  - Appropriate spread rates
  - Equipment
  - Types of salt
  - Storage
- Lot of criticism about footways and minor roads
  - Authorities need to review priorities and plans
- Consider what level of resilience we should plan for or can afford




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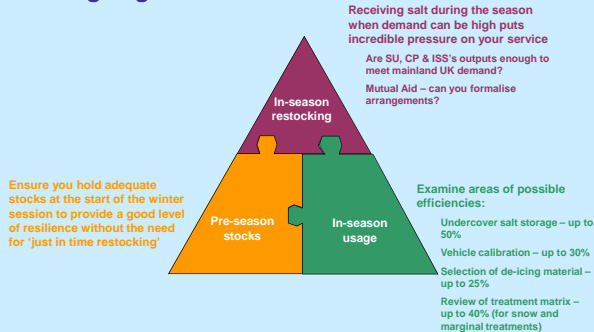
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### Piecing Together a Solution




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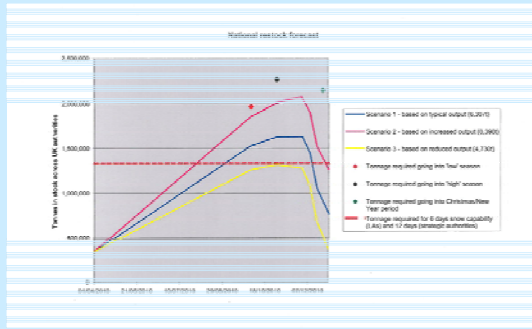
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## Considerations



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UK ROADS BOARD

**Leicestershire**  
County Council

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