

Roads and Infrastructure

Roads Factsheet

Works Instructions: FAQs

January 2024

For information on pothole defects, please refer to the specific pothole factsheet.

Works Instructions

The data provided in Table A, below, is taken from The Highland Council's road asset management database. It does not reflect the number of defect reports from the Council's customer management system.

The number of outstanding works instructions in the asset management database does not reflect the number of safety defects that we have for the road asset. The Roads Service undertakes its own inspections and the defects listed are for various assets contained within the road boundary. These include, but are not limited to, carriageways, footways, structures and street lighting.

For various assets, a work instruction can relate to anything – it can be for a single outage of a street light or for a whole street. Similarly, the pothole related works instructions can be for single or multiple ones. This is explained more in the pothole factsheet available on the Council's website.

We may also raise works instructions in the system for maintenance activities such as vegetation clearance, drainage works or renewal of road markings. However, not all works that we undertake will be included in the system, for example, if they are major capital works.

Operational Area	Number of Outstanding Work Instructions (as at 19/01/2024)
Badenoch and Strathspey	2,500
Caithness	6,545
Inverness	3,014
Lochaber	2,092
Nairn	254
Ross & Cromarty	6,736
Sutherland	4,662
Skye	2,046
Total	27,849

Table A: Number of Outstanding Work Instructions per Operational Area

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Why are there so many works instructions?

Works instructions are created for various reasons. They may be from inspections of various assets such as bridges, where an instruction can be raised for clearing vegetation or repointing, to a blocked gully or dark streetlight. We may also create instructions for works that will be undertaken in a future programme. The Council maintains a road network of over 6,779km and all of the asset types that are associated with it (bridges, culverts, retaining walls, footways, gullies, streetlights, signs, etc.). The works associated with all of these assets is significant and can accumulate over time. There will also be instructions which have been completed but not yet closed off in the system.

Why can't all of the works instructions be completed as soon as they are registered?

Not all works instructions are safety defects or of an urgent nature and therefore don't need immediate attention. Indeed, some may require design work and be put out to tender in contracts. They vary in scope and complexity depending on what asset and reason they were raised for. In addition, not all works that we undertake are registered in the asset management system. Urgent defects, when found, may be repaired temporarily the same day, until a permanent repair can be completed. Budgetary constraints also mean that we need to prioritise works for the various asset types.

How much does it cost to fix a defect?

This again depends on the nature and complexity of the defect or works. Unless a defect is rectified as part of a contract, we do not keep records of the cost for fixing individual ones as this would be too much of an administration burden.

Updates

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