

# Department for **Transport**

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29 November 2012

Dear Mr Silverman,

Thank you for your email dated 11th October, and please accept my apologies for this late response.

The content and operation of road maintenance contracts are the responsibility of the Highways Agency (HA). Graham Dalton, the Chief Executive of the Highways Agency (HA), as the Agency Accounting Officer is accountable to Parliament, and may answer for the Secretary of State at hearings of the Transport Select Committee and other Parliamentary committees when operational matters are discussed. He may also be invited to appear before the Public Accounts Committee. Assurance is published in a Governance Statement which is reviewed by the National Audit Office.

To provide you with an informed response to your questions, I have of necessity referred your correspondence to the HA, and I have received the following response which I am forwarding to you. Any further correspondence on this will be for the HA.

Strategic road network maintenance requirements are set out in the HA's Asset Maintenance and Operational Requirements (AMOR). This covers items such as the Provider's programme of inspections, details of sources of information about condition data, risk based Processes and Procedures for Inspection, and details of planned preventative maintenance, as well as who is to undertake the work, frequency of operations, and timescales. Sweeping and Cleaning Requirements are set out in Part 15 of AMOR and refer to "an Area Network predominantly free from litter, refuse and detritus".

A Maintenance Requirement Plan (MRP) sets out how AMOR will be delivered to achieve stipulated outcomes, and is required to cover Sweeping and Cleaning. It is a contractual document produced before the start the contract by the Provider to the satisfaction of the HA, and is subject to updating during the contract.

Compliance, as monitored by the HA, is focussed on the MRP and associated procedures and is predominantly carried out via internal reviews, which include site visits, and auditing of the Provider's processes throughout the contract. The process reviews and audits are performed across a different asset type or part of the Provider's contractual duties by the HA's Contract and Performance Teams and also by the HA's Audit and Assurance Team.

The reviews are an evidence based inspection of the processes, through the checking of documentation required within the MRP and AMOR, such as completed inspection logs and timesheets. Site visits are also carried out as part of the reviews, in accordance with

criteria such as the asset type being audited and as deemed appropriate by the HA rather than at fixed time intervals. These actions combine with feedback from road users and HA Network Inspections to form the basis for monitoring compliance.

Should the Provider fail to meet the Sweeping and Cleaning Requirements contractual performance measures are evoked which can carry significant financial and reputational ramifications.

I hope this covers your concerns.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Philip Rutnam". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

**Philip Rutnam**  
**Permanent Secretary, Department for Transport**