

RSMA – GOING FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

Working for and with members underwrites success

The Road Safety Markings Association continues to go from strength to strength as it seeks to ensure that it reflects both the needs and aspirations of its member companies.

With a wide portfolio of activities ranging from European Standards to operative training, from safety publications to state of the art specification documents and from lobbying to health & safety initiatives, the Association is active in all areas that impact upon its members.

RSMA has been closely involved in the development of material standards at a European level, whilst at home it works closely with the DfT and the Highways Agency in the development of UK marking specifications and policy. Evidence of this work can be seen by the co-operation with the Highways Agency in the development of the soon to be published TD 26 maintenance document for road markings, which is likely to radically change the way in which all specifiers monitor and maintain their marking network. TD 26 will also form the core element of this year's Industry Conference '*On Your Marks*'

RSMA is member owned, professionally run and whilst many of our services are accessible by non-members (at additional cost) these services are designed to meet the needs of our members and to save our members money and time. Our contracting members lay over 90% of road markings in the UK, whilst our manufacturing members produce over 95% of materials laid, therefore the demand for our services, like our membership continues to grow.

MEMBERS' SERVICES AT THE HEART OF ON GOING GROWTH OF RSMA

An expansion in the range of services accessible by member companies is at the heart of continued growth for the Road Safety Markings Association as it enters its 27th year of representing the UK road marking industry.

Association Chairman, Jack Coupe outlining the impetus behind the on going development of the Association said:

“It is now seven years since the Association identified its wish to become a modern, forward thinking trade body that would add value to membership through the provision of an expanding range of competitively priced services”

In that time the Association has recruited a full time professional team to support its membership and has introduced a range of services that now includes:

- NVQ Assessment and related activities
- A comprehensive range of training services covering everything from management training to ADR, First Aid and more industry specific courses; all sourced at discounted rates through the Association's unique Training Brokerage
- A full range of insurance services designed to help members reduce the impact of the premium rises that have hit the construction sector hard over the last few years
- Quality Assurance Certification and Consultancy Services
- Discounted Industrial & Safety Clothing
- A range of industry publications including: RSMA Update Your roadmarkings, RSMA Safety Code of Practice and StanSpec the standard specification for road marking clients
- Industry Conferences and Seminars

All of these services are designed to provide members a degree of competitive advantage, at prices that should help repay their subscription charges to the Association.

New services that will shortly become available include a full range of Health & Safety and Employment Law services provided directly to members byPLC who have been appointed RSMA preferred suppliers following detailed negotiations.

Linked to this service is the establishment of an industry Health & Safety Forum that is set to have its' inaugural meeting as part of the RSMA Industry Conference in November. The H&S Forum will be open to all members and is designed to brief members on new developments, regulations and requirements in the ever more complex Health and Safety field, in addition to providing an opportunity for member companies to share best practice and their concerns over health and safety issues.

ON YOU MARKS

Maintenance, Performance and the Safety of Road markings

The publication of the new Highways Agency Directive TD26 in early 2004 is likely to radically alter the approach of many responsible authorities to the monitoring and maintenance of their marking and road stud network. In this article a very brief summary of some of the changes contained in TD 26 and their impact are placed in the context of the still relatively new performance environment for road markings. TD26 and its impact are the subject of the 2004 RSMA Conference 'On Your Marks' where the content of this crucial new document and its full impact for maintenance, road safety and on all road marking specifiers, maintenance agents and contractors will be discussed.

Now that performance standards are being implemented for road markings, the challenge for industry and client is the maintenance and monitoring of what is actually on the road. The imminent publication of the Highway's Agency requirements and guidance on maintenance, TD26, means that everyone from managing agents, term maintenance contractors, DBFOs, MACs and local authorities through to white liners will have to have regard to best practice in monitoring and maintaining the road marking network.

Since the introduction of the European Standards in the year 2000 and the performance criteria they require, all of those involved in road markings have focused on the creation of suitable performance specifications that identify the level of performance required across their part of the network and also when and where to use enhanced performance values for wet night retro-reflectivity and skid resistance.

By and large the majority of specifiers have now gone down this route and only a minority have yet to comply with the requirement of the Public Procurement Directive, that they use European Standards, where they are available*, however, the next major area that has still to be addressed is the maintenance cycle for performance markings and the methodology to be adopted in monitoring road marking performance. Despite the presence of procedures contained within the standards, many specifiers have been waiting for more formal national guidance in the shape of an update to the Highways Agency Technical Directive TD26/86 (originally published in 1986).

The wait for this update will shortly be over, as work on the new TD nears completion and, following some additional research into measurement techniques, is likely to be published early in 2004. With its publication we are likely to see a transformation in the reality of performance specifications and the responsibilities this type of specification places on the client, their agents and contractors.

TD 26 will radically alter the approach to road marking monitoring and maintenance

The introduction of TD26 will provide a best practice guide to all maintenance agents and specifiers and will bring with it an expectation that all of those involved, at whatever level, will actually use the document and as a result it will require a more consistent and comprehensive approach, especially from local authorities, as to how they monitor the effectiveness and operational quality of their road marking network.

Whilst it could be maintained that the elements and procedures TD 26 will promote are normal practice, realists may identify that it is an area where client activity has reduced over

the years. However, by requiring performance characteristics, clients necessarily increase their obligations in ensuring not only that they receive their contractual outputs but that they are monitoring those requirements for maintenance purposes also, to ensure safety for the road user.

TD26 will represent an auditable benchmark for how monitoring and maintenance procedures should be established and operated and, along with the likely development over the next 12 to 18 months of performance indicators for road markings, will leave responsible authorities open to inspection on how they evaluate, monitor and maintain their markings. This especially as the new TD will make abundantly clear that whilst there are a number of reasons for inspecting road markings, “the overriding objective is safety”

It is this clear connection between maintenance and safety that will, without question, cause the greatest ‘focussing of minds’ as it will bring with it the issues of liability and responsibility that will always be a significant part of any performance contract regime, however, more of that later, for the moment there is a need to focus on the practicalities of monitoring and the characteristics to be measured.

TD26 in its new format will continue to identify a range of inspection requirements, namely:

- Erosion owing to normal wear or tear or damage
- Spread due to movement of the road surface
- Reduction in Retro reflective properties
- Reduction of Skid Resistance
- Discolouration

And in addition to those previously required

- Reduction in Luminance

Measurement methodologies will be updated to reflect those identified in the European Standards BSEN1824 and BSEN1436.

More significant changes within the new document will be the inspection frequency and the maintenance response, both of which see a tightening up from the old TD26 and will act as a firm reminder of the responsibilities of overseeing organisations to ensure that monitoring and any resultant maintenance actually takes place.

In terms of frequency what was a once every two years monitoring requirement for all thermoplastic markings will see a significant improvement, with the two year timeframe applying only to newly laid markings after which the frequency will be an annual inspection requirement. In short this means that all markings, other than those less than two years old will require inspection every year for the performance characteristics outlined above. The frequency of inspection may also be increased in response to perceived additional levels of incidents or accidents.

The maintenance response to markings that are adjudged to be failing is also tightened up for Category 1 defects with the introduction of a 24 hour time period for re-instatement that did not previously exist in TD26, although the final repair period remains at “within 28 days” where earlier repair is not possible. On category 2 (Lower Priority) defects the tightening up of definitions means that repairs must be effected by the six-month deadline and are no longer categorised as in TD26/86 where they could be left for at least six months.

Another critical addition in the new TD26 will be the requirement for the production of an annual report that will include a summary of the inspections undertaken, routine maintenance operations – for Highways Agency contracts this report will be supplied to the overseeing organisation at the end of the financial year with relevant parts included in the Agent’s Business Plan. This will of course mean that the requirement to actually undertake inspections will be reinforced.

With performance comes responsibility

One of the fundamental challenges of performance driven specifications, such as those that have been comprehensively introduced in the roadmarking sector over the last three years, following the introduction of the European Standards, is that of maintaining the output requirements of markings. In some respects this has only really been the case for those specifiers and contractors that have actually monitored outputs, however, the advent of the new TD26 is likely to require this challenge to become common place, as all authorities will be pressed to monitor their network.

In fairness the network monitoring strictly required by TD26 is for markings over 2 years old and therefore predominately those outside of a contract period, however, by requiring a clearer and more auditable monitoring regime it is clear that overseeing organisations or responsible authorities will quickly spread this activity to cover ‘new markings’ as well as old and as a consequence the full monitoring of the road marking network predicted at the time of the introduction of the European Standards is likely to come a step closer.

This is of course wrapped up in the liability issues touched upon above and covers a number of areas. Public sector specifiers requiring certain performance characteristics from their marking network will be expected, from a fiscal point of view, to audit that stock and therefore monitor newly laid markings, whilst from a perspective where they are deemed to be responsible for safety of the network they will be required to audit and monitor their overall stock of markings. For contractors of course the impact of closer monitoring should be felt in a need to improve quality control and to ensure operatives are suitably qualified for the work they are expected to do.

In short with performance comes responsibility and with the new TD26 will come the structure and regime by which performance and ultimately acceptance of responsibility will be measured.

*If your authority is still using old British Standard BS3262 and you need some guidance on what you should (by law) be specifying, please feel free to contact RSMA for help.

ON YOUR MARKS

On Your Marks is the 6th RSMA Conference and will be held on Thursday 13th November 2003 at the Hanover International Hotel, Daventry. The focus of the Conference is on the new TD26 document, scheduled for publication in early 2004, its content and its impact on specifiers and contractors.

The Conference is designed to act as an advanced briefing by senior Highways Agency officials and industry experts for agents, term maintenance contractors and road marking contractors. Because of the status of the document as the benchmark for all public specifiers, in terms of road marking maintenance and monitoring, it is also an opportunity for local authority specifiers to obtain advance knowledge of imminent requirements.

The highlights of the conference are shown below

Keynote address: Ginny Clarke, Director Safety, Standards and Research at the Highways Agency on the importance of maintenance to road safety

TD26 Overview: Brian Barton, the Group Manager of the Safety Management Group, Highways Agency.

Sessions outlining the detail and consequent impact for clients and contractors will also be held, as will presentations by affected groups on their response to the requirements of TD26.

A booking form for the Conference is included in copies of Top Marks circulated prior to November 2003.

TIME TO UPDATE YOUR ROAD MARKINGS

Major revisions to the Regulations and Directions Governing roadmarkings mean it is time for all those involved in the sector to update their knowledge of statutory requirements. The 2004 edition Update Your Roadmarkings now available from RSMA means that there is now no excuse for not knowing what marking means what and what it should look like.

The presentation of Statutory Instrument 3113 in January of 2003 may well have gone unnoticed by many, however it was of major significance to all those involved in road marking and especially the in excess of 2 500 purchaser of the previous editions of the RSMA *Update Your Roadmarkings* publication.

SI3113 or to give it its formal title The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002 (TSRGD) had been long awaited, being the update of the 1994 Regulations and some five years in preparation and it has brought with it a number changes that impact on the highways environment in general and the lining environment in particular.

The range of changes is substantial as is the impact on specifiers and contractors, as the dimensions of some markings are altered and the need for new markings and or combinations of markings and vertical signs is expanded.

In order to clearly identify the changes that impact upon road markings and to define the requirements of the new TSRGD for all involved in road marking the RSMA has fully revised and republished its *Update Your Roadmarkings* publication.

The range of the publication has been expanded and whilst the focus of the publication remains upon Schedules 6a, 6b and those parts of Schedule 13 relevant to road marking, there has been an expansion on the sections outlining the changes introduced by the new TSRGD. Whilst retaining the detail on each of the 72 diagram changes in the new TSRGD, the new *Update Your Roadmarkings* provides a new section with greater detail and explanation than that previously included for changes of particular significance.

Of most importance to users of 'Update' is of course the inclusion of Schedules 6a, 6b and 13, providing drawings of each approved road marking with details of dimensions and permitted. Also included in the RSMA document for the first time are the relevant sections of the Zebra, Pelican and Puffin Pedestrian Crossing Regulations & General Directions 1997, which standardised the treatment of road markings across these crossing types for the first time.

Amongst the range of changes identified in the publication are those on the use of give way markings at roundabouts, clarification on the use of advanced stop lines; whilst changes in respect to Parking & Waiting Restrictions and Bus Stop Clearways will require a change in the approach to these matters by specifiers, especially in relation the changing in the layout of existing bus stop bays by 31st December 2006.

Significant changes in respect to the authorisation of road studs that can be used on UK roads have also been introduced. With the implementation of European Standards EN 1463-1:1997 and 1463-2:2000, the old Direction 50 that provided statutory type approval by the Secretary of State has been replaced with two new directions, namely 57 and 58. Direction 57 specifies the minimum performance requirements from the European Standard for studs, whilst Direction 58 specifies the Secretary of States approval functions in respect to studs.

The RSMA publication has also sought to respond to increasing concerns from the Department for Transport that local authorities continue to place incorrect speed roundel markings on the road and as a consequence for the first time the Update your Road markings booklet contains a series of working diagrams to help contractors ensure that they fulfil the statutory requirement, even when the client is unaware of the requirements.

Update your Roadmarkings is only available only through the RSMA in a CD-Format priced at £60 to members and £75 to members for a licensed copy that allows the licence holder to produce unlimited copies for their organisations sole use. The accessibility of the CD-Rom format also means that clients and contractors alike can ensure that they reproduce the diagram as it appears in the TSRGD, thereby ensuring they know exactly what they want and what they should get!

GETTING ON MESSAGE

RSMA works with Road Safety charity to promote better driver education and understanding of markings.

Following the success of its 'Black & White' safety campaign aimed at improving the quality of markings nationwide, the RSMA will once again be playing its part in trying to promote road safety through the launch of a new education initiative in partnership with leading UK road safety charity BRAKE.

The joint RSMA/BRAKE initiative involves publication of a leaflet highlighting the importance of markings to driver safety and also tests drivers on their knowledge of the message transmitted by various markings.

The leaflet, in the first instance available to members of BRAKE'S Fleet Safety Forum, is directed primarily at drivers and companies involved in fleet operations whether in commercial vehicles or cars and comprise a series of questions related to some of the most common markings used on UK roads.

RSMA Chairman, Jack Coupe said:

“RSMA have been involved with Brake for over five years now, as promotion of road safety is one our principle aims, however, this year we decided to allocate increased resources to extend that involvement beyond mere membership of the charity.

The output is a six sided leaflet that highlights the importance of the role played by markings in driver safety along with a quick quiz to test driver knowledge of the meanings of various road markings – in short in encourages drivers to get on message with road markings”

Mary Williams OBE, Chief Executive of BRAKE added,

“Road markings are integral to road safety, as they provide the only continuous message to drivers of all vehicles; if read properly they, amongst other things, indicate speed limits, advise on road position, instruct on vehicle priorities and provide guidance on the distance between vehicles on motorways. Consequently the driver that understands road markings will clearly be a safer driver than the driver that fails to recognise the message provided by the markings.

The questions included in the leaflet are designed to allow fleet operators to make a quick appraisal of what their drivers know and whether any remedial training is needed, similarly individual drivers will be able to test their own knowledge and identify any additional areas they need to revisit”

Readers of Top Marks can sample the test below where some of the questions have been specially reproduced, whilst the full leaflet will be issued in the Autumn and will be available from either RSMA or BRAKE on 01484 559909. Additional leaflets of use to fleet managers and details on how to join the Fleet Safety Forum are also available from BRAKE.

For those that prove dramatically unsuccessful in getting the questions correct we would respectfully suggest that they purchase a copy of the Highway Code and consider some refresher driving lessons!

ROAD MARKING ROUND UP

CONSTRUCTION SKILLS CERTIFICATION SCHEME

The Construction Skills Certification Scheme or CSCS comes formally on line for the road-marking sector from December 2003. The scheme, which is designed to standardise health & safety requirements and qualifications structures in the construction sector, obliges operatives to be registered for a Level 2 NVQ and to have sat and passed the Health & Safety touch screen test by December 2003. Operatives will be required to have obtained their full NVQ by December 2006.

Initially the scheme will only be stipulated as a requirement for Highways Agency (and related) work, whilst it will be open to local authorities to voluntarily require it. The Certified Operatives Scheme, as currently required by local authorities, will remain the local authority standard until December 2006 after which full compliance with CSCS will be required.

NEW OPERATIVES BASIC TRAINING

With all the changes involving CSCS requirements there are also imminent changes to the basic training requirements for operatives. The third edition of Sector Scheme No 7 is now available and within it are the new basic training requirements for operatives that are either new to the sector or broadly inexperienced. These new training requirements represent the new benchmark by which all basic training for road marking operatives will be measured, therefore it is important that all road marking companies are aware of the requirements. Training Manuals for the new requirements are available from RSMA along with details of trainers and how to become a trainer.

STANSPEC 2004

A new 2004 edition of StanSpec will become available in late autumn. As with the 2003 edition the updated version will be available in paper and CD-Rom formats, the latter containing Excel spreadsheet pricing schedules that make rendering significantly easier for client and contractor alike. Purchaser of the 2003 CD Edition will receive free updates of the new document as soon as it is issued, in line with their licence agreement with RSMA.

ROAD TRIALS COMPARISON

The detailed comparison work between UK and French methods of data collection at road marking road trials, initially reported in last year's Top Marks has now been completed and work on analysis of the data will commence shortly. It is hoped that this research will define the best possible system to identify traffic flows over road trialled lines and in due course produce recommendations that will be incorporated in revised European Standards.

TOLERANCE

Discussions RSMA and the Highways Agency to introduce a greater dimensional tolerance into the laying of lane lines on motorways and dual carriageways are soon to bear fruit, with a new HA Guidance Note likely to be published this winter. The existing tolerances are narrower than a piece of guide rope and as reported in Top Marks last year have been causing problems for contractors and site engineers alike.

SAFETY FIRST

Work is underway to totally revise and revamp the RSMA Safety Code of Practice. The Safety Code, a required text for all Quality Assured road-marking companies, was last revised for its 'millennium edition' and will now be subject to a radical overhaul. RSMA National Director George Lee said, "We would like to place road marking at the fore of safe working practices, after all the activity is inherently dangerous. As a consequence we will be looking

at best practice from other sectors and investigating various new initiatives to see how working practices can be made safer.

(Nearly) 90% AND RISING

After another surge in membership in 2002/03, RSMA now has in excess of 73 members responsible for laying just under 90% of all the road markings applied annually in the UK? With contracting membership rising at a steady rate this figure is expected to reach our target of 90% by 2005, making RSMA one of the most representative trade associations in the country.

ROAD MARKING FORUM SEEKS NEW MEMBERS

The Road Marking Forum (RMF) the Specifiers members section of RSMA is actively looking for new members as it seeks to consolidate the partnership approach to activities such as drawing up StanSpec, developing quality and building a better understanding of safety requirements between client and industry. Open to local authority specifiers and consultancies, please contact RSMA Offices on 0161 763 7711 or fill in the fax back, if you would like additional information on joining.