Report on the Performance of the

National Code of Practice

for

Utility Operators' Access to Transport Corridors

2020/21

NZUAG

March 2022

Introduction

Under the provisions of the *National Code of Practice for Utility Operator's Access to Transport Corridors,* (the **Code**), the New Zealand Utilities Advisory Group (**NZUAG**) is required to report to the Minister for Infrastructure on the performance of the Code on an annual basis. NZUAG is required to analyse the Code's performance, and to identify whether "Code compliance, operational understanding or quality control processes need attention and whether any amendments to the Code are necessary" (Code 8.2.3)

This report provides an analysis and interpretation of the 2020/2021 Key Performance Data (Code 8.2.2) collected from industry in the latter half of 2021.

Summary

As reported in previous years, despite the mandatory reporting requirement in the Code, the survey return rate is not at an acceptable level. This year is a drop on last years with 33 Corridor Managers (49% of corridor managers requested to provide data), and 44 Utility Operators (41% of utility operators requested to provide data) responding. This is a decrease of 13% on last year's return rate.).

The variability of responses makes cross-yearly comparisons and trend analysis extremely difficult. This is a matter that requires further attention from NZUAG, and we will be continuing our efforts in raising the data return rates with the aim of providing the industry with useful data on the Code's effectiveness.

The number of reported CARs by utility operators in 2019/20 has risen from 201,800 (see below) to 212,321 in 2020/21. The number of estimated activities utilising global CARs has further cemented that the amendments made to the Code in 2015 allowing for Global CARs has been a success.

The level of third party strikes on utility assets continues to be of concern, with 41 of the 44 utility operator respondents reporting strikes with a total of 7265 strikes against utility assets located within transport corridors. This is significantly lower than the 12,645 reported number of strikes in the previous year however the lower return rate makes a direct comparison difficult.

BACKGROUND

The *National Code of Practice for Utility Operator's Access to Transport Corridors* is a mandatory Code of Practice established under the provisions of the Utilities Access Act 2010. All corridor managers, and utility operators seeking to access transport corridors, are governed by its provisions. NZUAG is the industry-approved guardian of the Code, and is responsible for its oversight, implementation and review. To assist in monitoring the Code's effectiveness, a set of key performance measures are specified in the Code, against which all corridor managers and utility operators are required to report annually.

The list of required measures is contained in section 8.2.2 of The Code:

- **Corridor Managers** are required to report on:
    - The number of Corridor Access Requests (CARs) submitted each year;
    - The number of completed Works Completion Notices (WCN's) received each year;
    - The number of non-conformance notices (NCN's) issued each year;
- **Utility Operators** are required to report the number of known third party damages incidents during that year.

The 2020/21 report on Code performance represents the fifth year of formal reporting.

Methodology

All corridor managers and utility operators were asked to provide data relating to the mandatory reporting requirements, as well as a Voluntary section based on some of the Code Effectiveness Working Group recommendations. The questions used to collect the data are set out in Appendix 1.

Corridor Access Requests (CARs): In addition to the request for CARs, Local Government Corridor Managers were also asked to identify the size of the population in their respective areas. This information was used as a way of identifying the extent of the coverage of the corridor managers who provided returns. Corridor managers are required to report the length of their transport corridors, but this measurement does not necessarily indicate the level of infrastructure investment in more densely populated urban areas.

In order to allow a comparative analysis between Territorial Local Authorities (TLA's), and to account for variability between respondents and the fact that the number and identity of responses vary between years, a derived measure of *Total individual utility operator CAR equivalents per 1000 network km's* has been introduced. This is an amalgamation of:

a) the reported number of single utility operator CARS submitted;
b) respondent estimates of the number of individual CARs that would have been required had utility operator global cars not been available; and
c) respondent estimates of the number of individual CARs that would have been required for the number of Multiple Street utility operator CARS issued.

These numbers were then divided by the centre-line length of each TLA's road network to allow comparability between different TLA's.

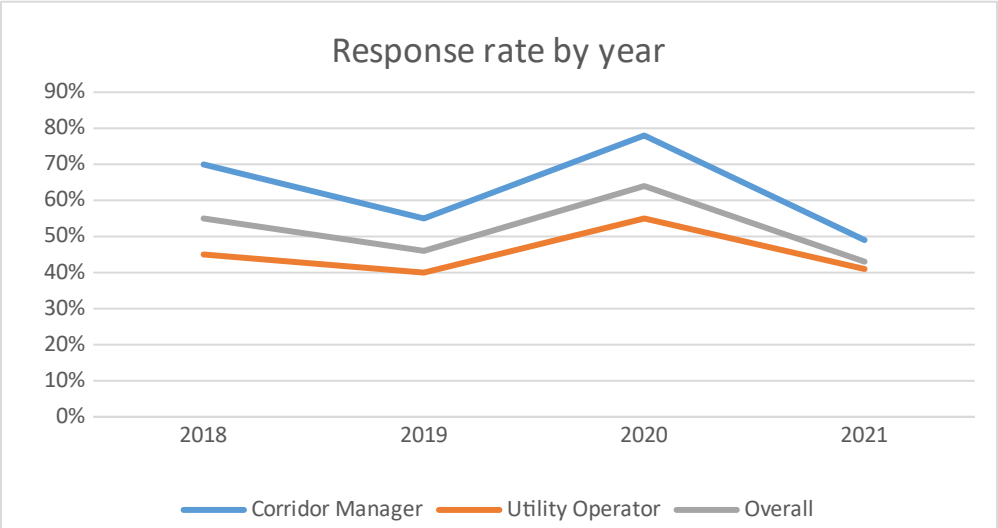
Works Completion Notices (WCN's): While the analysis of CARs used a measure of total equivalent CARS, (including allowances for Global CARs and Multiple Street CARs), reported WCNs that relate to individual CARs have been used as there is a 1:1 correspondence between CARs and WCNs. This comparability is difficult if Global CARs and multiple street CARs are included in the analysis

Strikes: Utility Operators of water, electricity, gas and telecommunications assets were asked to provide the total number of strikes on their assets for 2019/20. These numbers are normalised by dividing total strikes by the total network length for each utility sector, allowing cross-utility sector comparisons.

Survey Results and Analysis

Response Rate

The following graph highlights the response rate for the past four years.



Graph 1

Corridor Manager CAR numbers

The following table shows the total number of CARs reported by respondents for 2018-2021 years

	2018	2019	2020	2021
Single CARs submitted	38,661	46,314	38,924	71355
Equivalent individual Global CARs	86,793	59,221	103,599	134660
Equivalent individual Multiple Street CARs	25,572	19,165	59,288	70014
Total:	151,026	124,700	201,811	276029
Total per 1,000km of centreline roading	3896	3209	2925	3695

Table 1

Works Completion Notices (WCN's)

The following table provides a comparison of WCN to UO CARs submitted for 2018-2021 years.

Total utility operator CAR WCNs: individually submitted CAR's				
	2018	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**
Utility operator CAR WCN's/ utility operator CARs	0.644	0.440	0.431	0.46

Table 2

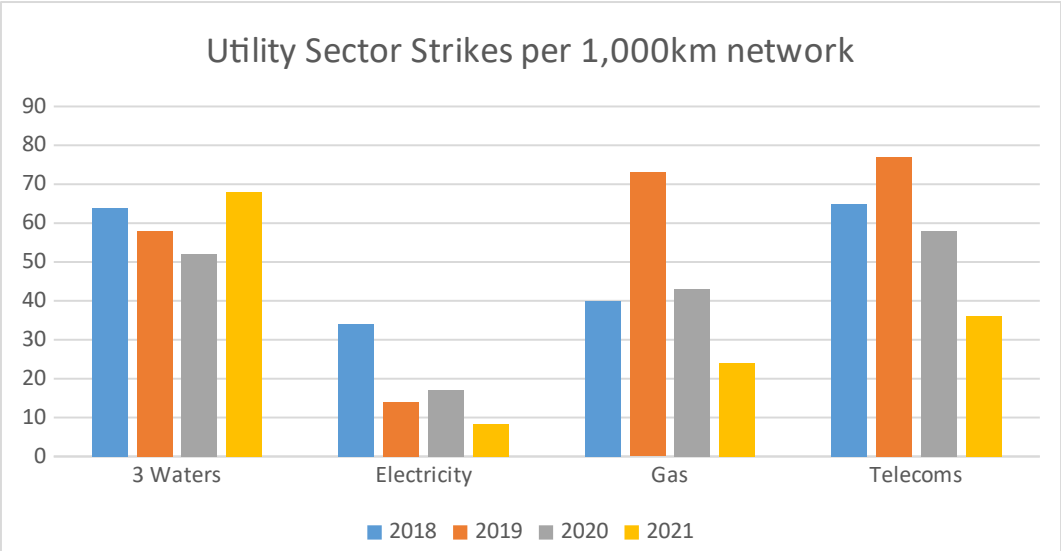
Strikes on Utility Operator Assets

The following table shows the comparative response numbers by sector and the total number of strikes, while the graph shows the total number of strikes against assets divided by the total network km's for each utility sector, for the last 3 years.

Utilities Strike Reporting 2018 - 2021

	Responses				**Strikes Reported**				**Strikes per 1000km network**			
Sector	2018	2019	2020	2021	2018	2019	2020	2021	2018	2019	2020	2021
3 Waters	16	21	26	19	779	2084	2435	1102	64	58	52	68
Electricity	20	10	15	15	1221	375	1151	456	34	14	17	8.3
Gas	5	5	4	5	712	970	558	325	40	73	43	24
Telecoms	2	2	4	4	9076	10133	8501	7265	65	77	58	36

Table 3



Graph 2

Voluntary Section (Section B)

Voluntary questions were again included as part of the survey this year. The aim of the questions was to test some of the recommendations made by the Code Effectiveness Working Group in their report tabled in May 2020.Net Promotor Score (NPS) is a common way to measure customer experience and can be used to predict business growth. Respondents are grouped in the following manner;

- Promoters (score 9-10) are loyal enthusiasts who will keep buying and refer others, fuelling growth.
- Passives (score 7-8) are satisfied but unenthusiastic customers who are vulnerable to competitive offerings.
- Detractors (score 0-6) are unhappy customers who can damage your brand and impede growth through negative word-of-mouth.

Subtracting the percentage of Detractors from the percentage of Promoters yields the NPS score, which was 53 up from 44 last year.

Two new questions were added this year in this section, one to test whether consistency of Local Conditions was a significant concern and, the second, the level of work occurring without Valid WAPs. The average number of Corridor Managers that Utility Operators dealt with was over 3 (after removing Chorus and First Gas due to their national footprints) indicating differing Conditions is a valid concern, while the number of Utility Operators audited without valid WAP indicated a non-compliance level that requires further work.

Conclusion

The collection and reporting of the Key Performance Data is to measure the performance of the Code, however the low return rate (Graph 1) and the subjectiveness of the returns has made any detailed analysis difficult and thus making any conclusions on the effectiveness of the Code.

There are indications that in some areas the Code is very effective, as highlighted above with the success of Global CARs, yet in other areas, such as the mandatory return rates and Utility Operators working without WAPs, there are performance issues.

On this basis the NZUAG will be engaging with industry, as part of the triennial Code Review (Code 8.1.1), to discuss the Key Performance Data with the purpose of making industry aligned changes to enable a better understanding of the Code Performance.

Appendix 1 – Data Collection Questions

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Web: www.nzuag.org.nz

NZUAG Code Performance Annual Data Return 2020/21

Section A (mandatory)

Respondent Name	
Organisation Name	
Job title/ Organisation role	
Email address	
Contact name and details for further clarification (if different to above)	

I confirm that the data submitted is correct to the best of my organisations ability

For Corridor Managers

Number of Corridor Access Requests (CARs)

- How many Utility-Operator-submitted-CARs were submitted for the period 1 July 2020 - 30 June 2021?
- What percentage of these were submitted as Global CARs under the provisions of the National Code of Practice (s4.3.1.3)?
- Please estimate how many individual site CARs would have had to have been submitted instead of these Global CARs
- Have you received any CARs for multiple streets?
- Please estimate how many individual CARs would have been required if they were submitted for each individual street

Number of Works Completion Notices (WCNs)

- How many of these WCN's were related to Utility-Operator-submitted-CARs for the period 1 July 2020 - 30 June 2021?

Number of non-Conformance Notices

- How many non-Conformance notices were issued for the period 1 July 2020 - 30 June 2021?
- How many Utility-Operator-submitted-CAR inspections required remedial actions?
- How many liaison meetings did you facilitate for the period 1 July 2020 - 30 June 2021, in accord with the provisions of the National Code of Practice (s2.7.2)?
- What is the total centre-line km length of your transport corridors?

For Utility Operators

What utility type are you responding for? (1 only per return)

Electricity
Gas
Telecommunications
3 Waters

- How many Utility Strikes did you record against your own assets within transport corridors for the period 1 July 2020 - 30 June 2021?
- In how many of these incidents had plans been requested?
- How many liaison meetings did you attend for the period 1 July 2020 - 30 June 2021 in accord with the provisions of the National Code of Practice?
- How long is your distribution network within transport corridors (total km)?

Section B (voluntary)

For Corridor Managers

- Does your organisation own or operate a Utility Service - eg 3 Waters or electricity provision?
  If yes, does it maintain a Conflicts of Interest Policy consistent with the requirements of s2.6.3 of the National Code of Practice?
- How likely are you to recommend the *National Code of Practice for Utility Operator's Access to Transport Corridors* to fellow Corridor Managers as a means of managing access to the road or rail corridor? *(0 = not at all; 10 = definitely)*
- Are you aware of staff or contractors attending a course on the Code in the last calendar year?
- Do you record attendance at these types of training courses?
- Did you review your Local Conditions in the last year?
- If no, are you planning to do this within the next year?
- Do you capture the number of Utility Operator works without a valid WAP?
  If yes then how many were there in the current reporting period?

For Utility Operators

- Does your organisation own or operate more than one a Utility Service?
  If yes, does it maintain a Conflicts of Interest Policy consistent with the requirements of s2.6.3 of the National Code of Practice?
- How likely are you to recommend the *National Code of Practice for Utility Operator's Access to Transport Corridors* to fellow Corridor Managers as a means of managing access to the road or rail corridor? (0 = not at all; 10 = definitely)
- Are you aware of staff or contractors attending a course on the Code in the last calendar year?
- Do you record attendance at these types of training courses?
- Would you like to see on-line training courses on The Code?
- How many different Road Corridor Managers do you deal with within your coverage area?

Any other explanatory comments?

Please complete and return this form via email to our Administrator, Colin Lewis at info@nzuag.org.nz by 5pm October 8th 2021