

Winter 2021 / 2022



RHONDDA • CYNON • TAF

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Winter Service Operational Plan



STRONG HERITAGE | STRONG FUTURE
RHONDDA CYNON TAF
TREFTADAETH GADARN | DYFODOL SICR

Winter 2021 / 2022

CONTENTS

1	Introduction
2	Aims
3	Application
4	Winter Maintenance Period
5	Levels of Service
5.1	Road Weather Forecasting
5.2	Road Weather Stations / Ice Sensors
5.3	Level of Precautionary Arrangements
5.3.1	Precautionary Salting Action
5.3.2	Presalting Mobilisation and Route Target Times
5.4	Post Treatment
5.4.1	Post Treatment of Ice / Frost
5.4.2	Snow Clearance
5.4.3	Carriageways
5.4.4	Footways and Cycle Routes
5.4.5	Salt Bins
5.5	Action When Thaw Comes
6	Roles and Responsibilities
6.1	Service Director Highways Transportation
6.1.1	Highways Infrastructure Staff
6.1.2	Notification of Proposed Action
6.2	Highways Construction Manager
6.2.1	Standby Officer
6.3	Other Authorities and Organisations
6.3.1	Adjacent Highways Authorities
6.3.2	Emergency Services
6.3.3	Other Authorities / Bodies
7	Special Sites or Features
7.1	Level Crossings
7.2	Traffic Calming Sites

8	Organisational Arrangements and Personnel
8.1	Duty Schedules, Rotas and Standby Arrangements
8.2	Training and Development
9	Facilities, Plant, Vehicles, Equipment and Compounds
9.1	Fleet
9.2	Salt
9.2.1	Supply of Salt to Others
10	Information and Publicity
10.1	Public Information
10.2	Local Press and Broadcast Information
11	Operational Procedures
11.1	General
11.2	Precautionary Salting
11.3	Post Treatment
11.4	Snow Conditions
11.4.1	Treatment of Snow
11.5	Organisation of Emergency Works
11.5.1	Additional Labour
11.6	Closure of Mountain Roads
11.7	Closure of Other Roads
11.8	Deployment of Equipment
11.8.1	Hired Equipment
11.9	Traffic Calmed Streets
11.10	Operational Monitoring
11.11	Operational Record Keeping and Recording

APPENDICES

- I Precautionary salting routes
- II COVID – 19 Winter Maintenance Provision

1 INTRODUCTION

This document explains the Council's, responsibilities and operational procedures in respect of the management and maintenance of the Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough highway network during the winter period, covering precautionary salting operations, network resilience and clearance of ice and snow.

2. AIM

With due regard to resource and financial allocations it is the Council's objective to maintain or reinstate as quickly as possible, the free and safe use of the highways network to vehicles and pedestrians during the winter period. The network is prioritised as follows.

- Major and strategic roads (as detailed in the precautionary salting network).
- Local interconnecting and other Class III roads linking villages to the above.
- Accesses to sources of fuel and food.
- Bus routes.
- Through routes in built up areas.
- Industrial estate roads.
- "Short cut" routes.
- Lanes to isolated farms.
- Any other routes not listed.

In order to achieve these objectives the Council's "Winter Service Operational Plan" is divided into three distinct areas. These areas are:

- a) Precautionary salting prior to the formation of ice or accumulation of snow.
- b) Post-treatment following the formation of ice or accumulation of snow.
- c) Provision of salt bins at strategic locations on the network.

3. APPLICATION

This "Winter Service Operational Plan" provides a guide to the Council's staff and workforce who may be involved in any winter maintenance operations.

4. WINTER MAINTENANCE PERIOD

The specific winter services described in this plan are provided over the period from 1 October to 30 April to take in those months where the likelihood of ice formation or snowfall is at its greatest. Outside of this period any incidence of snow or ice formation would be treated on a reactive basis in accordance with the general principles set out in this document.

5. LEVELS OF SERVICE

During normal working hours The Service Director, Highways & Engineering or designated members of his team will on receipt of a daily weather forecast during the winter period determine what precautionary action shall be undertaken on the highway network. Outside normal working hours the decision is delegated to the Standby Officer (SO).

5.1 ROAD WEATHER FORECASTING

The Weather Forecast Contractor “Metdesk” provides daily weather forecasts via e-mail to a designated e-mail address, which is monitored by the Highways Infrastructure Manager (HIM) during normal working hours and to a designated Standby officer e-mail address at all other times, (an example of the forecast format is given in Appendix I). The forecaster provides three text forecasts a day at 0600, 1200 and 1800 hours reflecting ongoing developments in the weather. It is the responsibility of the HIM (SO outside normal working hours) to contact the forecast provider in the event of non-receipt of the forecast.

The forecast gives a prediction of minimum road surface temperatures and road conditions, including the times between which the conditions can be expected to prevail.

An alert state is given as a first indication of likely conditions. The alert states are described as follows:

- GREEN** No road surface hazards are expected and in most cases road surface temperatures will be above +1°C. Road surface temperatures may fall to zero or slightly below in exceptionally dry conditions with low humidity
- AMBER** Road surface temperatures are expected to be close to zero and there is a possibility of damp or wet road surfaces or slight falls of snow. In the majority of cases there will be a degree of uncertainty about the lowest temperature or road wetness. It will usually be advisable to obtain an updated forecast later in the day before determining a course of action.

RED Road surface temperatures are expected to fall to or below zero and hazards will exist on untreated roads.

The weather forecast provider is informed of the winter maintenance action and is required to notify the Council if the forecast substantively changes and the forecaster considers the Council may wish to reconsider its indicated action.

5.2 Road Weather Stations / Ice Sensors

There are three weather sensor sites located within the County boundary, these sites and others in nearby authorities which are available to the forecast provider to assist in making and monitoring forecasts.

<u>Route</u>	<u>Location</u>
	Clydach Vale
A473	Talbot Green
B4275	Godreaman.

Throughout the winter period these weather sensor sites are remotely contacted by the forecaster to determine the local weather conditions. The parameters measured by the system are the deep temperature, air temperature, humidity, road surface temperature, salt concentration and the surface condition which can be wet, dry, or icy. The weather forecast provider monitors the actual conditions reported by the sensors and will amend the forecast and inform the Council if they consider that changes may be required to the planned action.

5.3 LEVEL OF PRECAUTIONARY ARRANGEMENTS

Precautionary salting is carried out to a defined portion of the highway network (Route Plans and Route Cards detailing the sequence of salting routes are included in Appendix v), known as the Precautionary Salting Network (PSN).

The objective is to complete a precautionary application of salt to the PSN prior to the predicted time for the onset of snow, frost or ice forming conditions. It must be noted, however, that in some cases the existence of residual salt from previous salting actions will allow a delay in salting for operational efficiency purposes.

The PSN within the County Borough has been developed with due regard to route classification, use and risk to the general public. All A and B classified roads are salted,

alongside other roads classified as 3b highways in the Council's Street Inspection Procedures and a small number of through and historically salted roads. Additionally, when appropriate, the Council salts an additional route consisting of the priority Car Parks, Council Principal Offices and Secondary School transport drop points.

5.3.1 PRECAUTIONARY SALTING ACTION

On receipt of the weather forecast, using experience and local knowledge the designated officer will determine what precautionary action will be undertaken and these decisions will generally fall into one of the following forms of weather service responses.

- No action.
- Crews to attend depot and await instructions.
- Patrol / Update – the HIM or SO will maintain regular contact with the forecaster and will organise patrols of the network to determine the actual conditions as necessary.
- Precautionary Salting with or without ploughs fitted as described below :-
 - Full Network – The whole PSN is salted, including additional route.
 - High Routes – The portion of the PSN where roads are in excess of 200m A.O.D. For continuity of treatment where distinct lengths of routes cross this nominal height boundary the whole of that distinct length is treated.
 - Seepage Areas – at a number of locations water seeps onto the PSN from the adjoining land but the locations of such seepage vary. When road temperatures are expected to fall below freezing but moisture is not expected to be present elsewhere on the network the whole route that may be affected by subzero temperatures will be travelled with any wet spots identified by the driver treated at 30g/m².
 - Mountain tops – Rhigos, Maerdy and Bwlch
- A Critical Salting Network is also defined. This network is brought into operation of times of salt shortage emergencies or the most severe widespread conditions. It comprises the minimum vital links required to keep a basic network available in order to accommodate inter-town travel and keep the emergency services operational, food deliveries arriving, etc. This reduced level of service is only introduced alongside a widespread publicity campaign to inform road users.

It is important to note that precautionary salting will not always prevent snow accumulating on the highway but will minimise the chance of a layer of ice forming below the snow and will greatly assist the snow clearance operation.

The decision will be recorded on the winter action sheet contained in Appendix II which will detail the type of action, salt spread and timing of the action.

5.3.2 PRESALTING MOBILISATION AND ROUTE TARGET TIMES

It is aimed to mobilise vehicles undertaking precautionary salting within an hour of an instruction to salt being issued if necessary.

As actions are carried out at different times of day, in differing traffic conditions and at various spread rates, the time taken from the vehicles leaving the depot to completion of the salting treatment will vary. At off peak traffic times whilst spreading at 20g/m² the treatment time is approximately 3 ½ hours, however at peak traffic times or when spreading at 30g/m² the treatment time may rise to five hours.

Precautionary salting in advance of frost or ice will be undertaken at 20g/m², higher applications may be needed if conditions are particularly severe or if there is the likelihood of salt being washed off the road by precipitation. In these circumstances precautionary salting will be carried out at 30g/m²

A spread rate of 30g/m² will be required in advance of snow in order to delay settlement for as long as possible and to make subsequent ploughing easier.

The Chart detailed in Appendix XIII provides a guideline as to the type of treatment required for various road surface temperatures and conditions. It should be used as a general guide as professional judgement can vary the action based on prevailing conditions and location characteristics.

5.4 POST TREATMENT

Every effort is made to keep the PSN free of ice and snow but under certain conditions such as heavy snow or snow preceded by rain that prevents timely treatment, accumulations of snow may be unavoidable.

Wherever frost, ice or snow has developed or accumulated on the highway the Council will prioritise and appropriately treat the affected areas as detailed in 5.4.3.

5.4.1 POST TREATMENT OF ICE / FROST

Post treatment of ice and / or frost is prioritised and treated in accordance with the guidance table below, where ice has already formed it will be treated at a spread rate of 40g/m².

Item	Surface Condition	Treatment
1	Localised Sheet Ice (water leak etc.)	Hand or machine salt depending on the scale of the incident
2	Widespread or Localised Black Ice or Hoar Frost present	Salt at 40 g/m ²

5.4.2 SNOW CLEARANCE

It is often the case that snow affects only certain geographic locations, the higher routes or drifts across roads in exposed areas. Under these circumstances a targeted response is required.

In a widespread snow scenario, clearance will generally follow the pre-salting priorities but consideration will be given by the designated officer to the onset of drifting snow, the blocking of roads by accidents or other special circumstances that can only be judged by the supervisor on the spot. In order to best utilise available resources, Mountain roads may be closed in advance of snow and action targeted elsewhere on the network when significant accumulations are forecast.

5.4.3 CARRIAGEWAYS

In times of persistent ice or snow the A and B classified roads are generally cleared first, followed by the rest of the PSN.

Other carriageways and footways are treated as resources become available having regard to the likely duration of the conditions.

Apart from the reservations identified above the general order of priority should be as follows:

- Strategic routes and distributor roads carrying industrial traffic, access to hospitals, fire stations and emergency centres.
- Local interconnecting and other Class III roads linking villages to the above.
- Accesses to sources of fuel and food.
- Bus routes
- Industrial estate roads.

- Through routes in built up areas
- “Short cut” routes.
- Lanes to isolated farms.
- Any other routes not listed.

While it is the intention to keep all highways, open to traffic at all times it may be necessary to assess whether the deployed resources are achieving their aims. Under the most severe conditions it may be necessary to instruct a cessation of the operation and withdraw resources until weather conditions improve. Liaison with neighbouring highway authorities is essential when cessation of operations is being considered.

Where requests from members of the public for clearance of snow and ice are received they will be prioritised by the designated officer using the above hierarchy and with regard to the availability and location of resources, the predicted weather conditions and any special circumstances such as the need for emergency services to attend a site.

5.4.4 FOOTWAYS AND CYCLE ROUTES

Salt is not spread on footways / cycle routes on a precautionary basis. However, where snow or persistent ice affects footways, and having due regard to conditions, forecast and available resources, footways and cycle routes will be generally cleared in accordance with following priorities:

- Pedestrianised areas and main town centres
- Other main shopping areas
- Main pedestrian routes, including routes to schools, access to hospitals, footways near sheltered housing and residential homes, links to main urban bus routes, footbridges on main routes
- Access to other public buildings, surgeries and clinics, cemeteries etc.
- Steep sections of footway, residential underpasses and associated steps.
- Other busy pedestrian routes
- Other residential areas
- Industrial estates
- Low use rural footways, surfaced footpaths, off road cycleways

Unsurfaced footpaths, public rights of way and private footways will not be treated.

Availability of resources is likely to mean that only in the most severe conditions will footways in the lower categories receive treatment.

5.4.5 SALT BINS

A network of salt bins will be maintained to facilitate local self-help. Salt Bins will be filled at the start of the winter season and following prolonged periods of winter activity. Open salt heaps are not utilised due to environmental considerations.

Salt levels in the bins are monitored throughout the winter period and bins are refilled as necessary.

A list of locations where salt bins are provided is maintained by the HIM and is available on request.

On an annual basis, requests for salt bins at new locations are assessed and prioritised by the HIM using a point scoring system and additional bins placed subject to available resources, see appendix XII.

5.4.6 ACTION WHEN THAW COMES

To reduce instances of flooding, road gullies and water outlets should be opened to permit free flow of water and all main culverts to be checked for operation.

Salt bins should be refilled as soon as practicable.

6.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Council's own staff and workforce carry out all Winter Service activities. The Service Director, Frontline Services, is responsible for all aspects of the Winter Service and has assigned roles and responsibilities to:

6.1 SERVICE DIRECTOR, HIGHWAYS & ENGINEERING

The Service Director, Highways & Engineering, assisted by the HIM and the Highways Infrastructure team deals with the Winter Service on a day to day basis and is responsible for

- Precautionary weather forecasting services.
- Receiving daily weather forecasts during the winter period and determining the precautionary action to be taken. During normal working hours this responsibility is delegated to the HIM and outside normal working hours delegated to the SO.
- Liaising when necessary with the weather forecasting provider.

- Monitoring ice prediction information received from the weather forecasting provider.
- In the event of deteriorating conditions, particularly major blockages of the primary route network due to severe or drifting snow liaising with various emergency services, neighbouring Councils etc.
- Liaison with adjacent highway authorities regarding the closure of mountain roads in anticipation of heavy snow falls.
- Liaison with Emergency Services.
- Passing of factual information on road conditions to the Council's Press Officer, local media, or general public as and when required.
- Providing accurate and timely information to the Council's Call Centre.
- Monitoring the levels of salt stockpiles and replenishing when necessary.
- Defining the Presalting Network.
- Defining salt bin locations.
- Maintenance of ice stations.
- Records of weather forecasts and actions

6.1.1 HIGHWAYS INFRASTRUCTURE STAFF

All Highways Infrastructure Staff associated with decision making of Winter Service operations are suitably trained and experienced refer Appendix VI.

6.1.2 NOTIFICATION OF PROPOSED ACTION

Notification of proposed Winter Service action including "no action" decisions will be clear and precise and in the format detailed in Appendix III, transmitted via email as soon as practicable to the various interested parties as identified in Appendix II.

6.2 HIGHWAYS CONSTRUCTION MANAGER – OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

The Highways Construction Manager assisted by his teams based at Dinas and Abercynon Depots (defined in Appendix VII) is responsible for:

- Receiving and implementing action instructions and weather forecasts from Highways Infrastructure Manager or his designated staff.
- Arranging for specialist vehicles and equipment to be available throughout the winter period.

- Directing all salting and snow clearing resources.
- Monitoring actual road conditions.
- Arranging for the work to be carried out, monitoring treatments and amending instructions when necessary due to changing road or weather conditions.
- Assessing the need to carry out post salting or snow clearance and ensuring the works are carried out when necessary.
- Assessing the priorities for snow clearing operations, allocating and directing available resources accordingly.
- Prioritising planned and reactive treatments during prolonged periods of wintry conditions.
- Maintaining a list of contractors with plant suitable for snow clearing purposes and hiring such plant when necessary.
- Maintaining comprehensive records of all Highway Winter Service activities.
- Ensuring that the service is delivered in the most economic, efficient and effective way.
- Maintaining the salt stockpiles and taking reasonable precautions to minimise damage to structures, vegetation etc during storage and loading.
- Ensuring that arrangements are in place for a vehicle fitter to be available on 24 hour call to deal with any serious mechanical breakdowns.
- Ensuring that salt spreading equipment is checked and calibrated.
- Ensuring all operatives receive adequate and appropriate training in Winter Service activities and that drivers are issued with “route cards”.
- Ensuring all operatives complete the shift report form on completion of their duties.
- Maintenance and filling of salt bins.

6.2.1 STANDBY OFFICER

To manage issues in relation to the highway network, which arise outside normal office hours Highways and Streetcare Services provide standby cover, which at any time includes a SO supported by two Call Out Officers and two Workforce Supervisors and a team of operatives. The SO is responsible for the co-ordination all Winter Service activities outside normal working hours. He will liaise with Highway Infrastructure or other Streetcare staff as necessary.

6.3 OTHER AUTHORITIES AND ORGANISATIONS

Liaison with other authorities and organisations (refer to Appendix VIII) will be undertaken by Highway Infrastructure staff during normal working hours and by the SO outside of normal working hours.

6.3.1 ADJACENT HIGHWAY AUTHORITIES

The following highway authorities share boundaries with Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council:

- Welsh Assembly Government
- Bridgend County Borough Council
- Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
- Cardiff County Council
- Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
- Caerphilly County Borough Council
- Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council
- Powys County Council

In the interests of route efficiency Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council treats the following lengths of road on behalf of an adjacent authority:

- Route A473 from the County boundary to Penprysg roundabout and Brynna Road from the Penprysg roundabout the County boundary. (On behalf of Bridgend County Borough Council)
- Route A4054 from the County boundary to Fiddlers Elbow roundabout; Route A472 from Fiddlers Elbow roundabout to the County boundary (east and west bound). (On behalf of Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council)
- Route A4119 from the County Boundary to the Junc 34 Roundabout of the M4. (On behalf of The Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council)
- Route C239 North West from the County Boundary approx 700m to layby. (On behalf of Neath & Port Talbot County Borough Council)

An adjacent authority on behalf of Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council treats the following length of road:

- The Bridgend County Borough Council treats Felindre Road, Pencoed between the Bridgend County Borough Council and Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council boundaries.

6.3.2 EMERGENCY SERVICES

The following emergency services operate within the County Borough refer to Appendix IX.

- South Wales Police
- South Wales Fire & Rescue Service
- Ambulance Service
- Cwm Taf NHS Trust
- National Blood Transfusion Service

6.3.3 OTHER AUTHORITIES / BODIES

In addition to the above contact details of the following bodies are found in Appendix X

- Network Rail / Transport for Wales
- Metdesk
- Natural Resources Wales
- ERH Communications
- Welsh Assembly Government

7.0 SPECIAL SITES OR FEATURES

7.1 LEVEL CROSSINGS

Salt must not be spread across level crossings as they may have equipment prone to signal failure when solutions high in salt are applied.

There are no active level crossings on the precautionary salting network.

A full schedule of railway crossings is included in Appendix XI.

7.2 TRAFFIC CALMING SITES

Traffic calming features such as road humps, build outs etc may not be immediately apparent in snow conditions and damage may be caused to the traffic-calming feature, winter maintenance plant or operatives if collision occurs. Operatives will remain vigilant at all times to identify any such obstructions in the carriageway.

8 ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND PERSONNEL

8.1 DUTY SCHEDULES, ROTAS AND STANDBY ARRANGEMENTS

A Standby Officer is on call at all times outside of normal working hours and assisted by 2 Call Out Officers. The Standby Officer is issued with a mobile telephone (the number of which is contained in Appendix VII) and laptop computer with internet and e-mail access. The Highways Construction Manager oversees both the SO and Call Out Officer rotas.

Winter operations staff rotas are managed by The Highways Construction Manger.

The operations staff on standby consists of:

- 2 supervisors
- 10 Salter drivers
- 4 mates
- 2 loader operators

In addition to these operatives the all year call out staff are available to carry out winter duties as necessary,

8.2 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

All winter maintenance operations staff are suitably trained and qualified personnel. All Salter drivers are qualified to City & Guilds 6159

9 FACILITIES, PLANT, VEHICLES, EQUIPMENT AND COMPOUNDS

The Winter Service operation is conducted from depots at Abercynon and Dinas, both are adequately provided with welfare and communication facilities.

9.1 FLEET

A schedule of all winter service plant including, capacity and its operating depot is shown in Appendix XIV

In addition to the winter service plant, all other plant available to the Highways Construction Manager can be made available for winter service activities as required

The day-to-day maintenance of the fleet is carried out in house by Streetcare's Fleet Team. Annual servicing, calibration and major maintenance of salters is carried out by Econ Engineering Ltd (calibration certificates are held by the Highways Construction Manager).

9.2 SALT

10mm coarse grade ground rock salt complying with BS3247 is used in all precautionary and reactive salting operations.

Stocks of de-icing salt for machine spreading are held at operational depots at Abercynon and Dinas. Additional salt stocks are held at Pontcynon compound in sheeted piles, and within a salt barn. This salt will be transported to the operational depots at Dinas and Abercynon as necessary through the winter season. Use of these additional stockpiles will be monitored by the HIM to ensure good rotation of stock and may be used for summer restocking of the operational depots if necessary for stock rotation purposes.

All salt at Dinas and Abercynon is stored in the open though under weatherproof sheets to minimise water ingress. Stockpiles are brought to maximum capacity during the summer to take advantage of off-season prices.

The pre-winter stock holding is:

- Dinas Depot 1,000 te
- Abercynon 1,000 te
- Pontcynon 7,500 te

Purchase and monitoring of salt stock levels throughout the winter period is carried out by the HIM. A schedule of salt suppliers is contained in Appendix XV

9.2.1 SUPPLY OF SALT TO OTHERS

Salt and salt bins are supplied to other Council departments and limited partner companies (such as home to school transport providers) on a rechargeable ad hoc basis. Other than the above, exception salt is not normally supplied to non-Council bodies or individuals, however, in emergency situations every effort will be made to accommodate requests for salt from emergency services, hospitals etc.

10 INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY

10.1 PUBLIC INFORMATION

Copies of this document will be available online, and on request. All appendices except salting routes will be omitted from public release as they contain contact details or information intended for internal operational use only.

This document will be issued to external organisations as listed in Appendix XIX.

10.2 LOCAL PRESS AND BROADCAST INFORMATION

In the event of significant snow or ice events, the Councils Press Office will be supplied with information as required to provide the local media with updates on conditions, details of any specific problems and guidance for the public.

11 OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

11.1 GENERAL

Winter maintenance operations must be undertaken in a realistic and practical manner, having due regard to the basic requirements.

Simplicity	Concise instructions must be issued at all levels.
Labour	Only trained operatives will be engaged on routine winter maintenance operations. Operatives must receive pre-winter training and be familiar with the routes they will be asked to treat.
Plant	Sufficient first and second line equipment should be available to meet the demands of the operation. Plant shall be fully serviced and calibrated prior to the onset of the winter season.
Material	Maximum stocks of de-icing salt must be available at Abercynon and Dinas depots and Pontcynon compound by the start of the winter.

11.2 PRECAUTIONARY SALTING

Precautionary salting means the application of salt to the predefined precautionary salting network prior to the onset of freezing conditions in order to lower the freezing point of water. Operatives carry out salting of each route in accordance with the route cards unless local conditions such as obstructions or accidents prevent this, compliance with route cards is monitored using onboard GPS systems. The reasons for any variations from the route cards must be reported to and recorded by the Supervisors.

Salting vehicles travel at a speed recommended by the manufacturer of the spreading equipment wherever possible and observe speed limits at all times whilst taking account of road and traffic conditions.

The width of spread will be adjusted as appropriate by the driver dependant upon the width of the road and the presence of parked vehicles, all front line vehicles are fitted with tracking devices able to record location, control settings to determine speed and salt spread etc.

At the end of each salting action a report form must be completed by the operator, certified as correct by the duty supervisor and returned to Highways Construction Manager on the next working day.

If, during the course of precautionary salting operations, the weather deteriorates and snow or rain starts falling and accumulating the drivers must report back to the Supervisors who will liaise with the HIM or SO and any amendment to the level of action will be considered and instructed as appropriate.

11.3 POST TREATMENT

Requests for the reactive treatment of highways affected by severe weather will be logged and the sites inspected to establish validity and to determine priorities. Except in emergencies, treatment will only be carried out once resources can be released from treatment of the PSN.

11.4 SNOW CONDITIONS

The winter service is managed within Highways and Streetcare Services during periods of severe weather. However, when extreme conditions prevail over an extended period the Council's Emergency Planning Officer will provide appropriate advice and the relevant parts of the Councils' "Emergency Plan" will be implemented if necessary.

11.4.1 TREATMENT OF SNOW

Ploughing will commence as snow depths reach 30 to 40mm, each pass of the plough may be supplemented by salt spread at the rate of 10 grams per square metre. This will prevent snow from compacting and so ease the passage of ploughs. Ploughing aided by light salting has the advantage that winter maintenance vehicles require less reloading. Should the temperature drop whilst Ploughing operations continue it is important to carefully monitor the air temperature so that spreads rates may be increased up to 40g/m² if necessary. At no time, even under the worst conditions, should it be necessary to spread at rates in excess of 40g/m².

Where there is deep snow beyond the capabilities of snow ploughs, it may be necessary to effect clearance using snow blowers, dozers, loaders and tippers etc, to remove the obstacle in bulk.

11.5 ORGANISATION OF EMERGENCY WORKS

Detailed records of instructions given, reports from supervisors, drivers, Police, and public, etc. and requests for assistance will be kept.

Staff must regularly report the severity of conditions back to the Highways Infrastructure Manager, Standby Officer or Supervisors as appropriate. If necessary depots will be opened and additional staff may be called in.

In the event of an emergency projected to last more than 5 days or at the request of the Service Director of Highways & Engineering, the Service Director of Frontline Services will instigate an Emergency Winter Service Group consisting of officers from Streetcare, Highways Infrastructure, Procurement, Finance, Emergency Planning, the Press Office and any other relevant services to determine the Councils reaction to the developing situation.

11.5.1 ADDITIONAL LABOUR

If the need for additional labour resources arises the Service Director, Highways & Engineering will liaise with the Highways Construction Manager and assistance will be sought from other service areas.

11.6 CLOSURE OF MOUNTAIN ROADS

On receipt of a forecast of heavy or drifting snow a decision may be taken by the Service Director, Highways & Engineering and communicated to the Traffic Manager to close one or

more of the Bwlch, Rhigos, and Maerdy mountain roads well in advance of the onset of precipitation. The date and time of the closure will be noted on an emergency closure notice. Closure of the A4061 Bwlch route will only be implemented following consultation with Bridgend County Borough Council. Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council will be advised of the intention to close the A4061.

When considering the closure of mountain routes close liaison will be maintained with the Emergency Services and the Forestry Commission will be advised.

The media and public will be advised via the County Borough Council's Press Office.

At the appointed time the road(s) will be physically closed with barriers and drop down signs will be opened. As soon as the roads are closed, a single patrol will be undertaken to ensure that no vehicles are stranded on the mountain.

11.7 CLOSURE OF OTHER ROADS

The Service Director, Highways & Engineering, Highways Construction Manager or Standby Officer may decide to close any road as they see fit in emergency situations, either acting alone or in partnership with the Police. This process will be discussed with the Traffic Manger prior to implementation. Where the road to be closed crosses into a neighbouring authority close liaison will be maintained. The procedure for the closing of roads is detailed in Appendix XVI

11.8 DEPLOYMENT OF EQUIPMENT

Front line gritting vehicles will be deployed on the strategic and main distributor network to plough and salt as necessary. This action will continue until the situation is under control.

Second line machinery will attend to other roads in accordance with the priorities as identified should it be determined that they are not required on the strategic and main distributor network.

11.8.1 HIRED EQUIPMENT

Operators of hired equipment will be given precise instructions and directions. A responsible employee of Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council will be designated to direct work, to keep a log of hours worked and to note any incidents that may occur. No hired plant is to be deployed unsupervised.

11.9 TRAFFIC CALMED STREETS

Extra care should be exercised when ploughing in areas of traffic calming to avoid damage to plant, the calming features and operatives. Operatives will remain vigilant at all times to identify any such obstructions in the carriageway.

11.10 OPERATIONAL MONITORING

Operational monitoring will be undertaken via action report forms, electronic recording devices and supervision of activities.

All winter service action sheets issued out of normal working hours and action report forms will be forwarded to the Highways Construction Manager on the next working day following the action.

11.11 OPERATIONAL RECORD KEEPING AND REPORTING

All forecasts and instructions will be held by Highways Infrastructure team. The Standby Officer will forward copies of forecasts and actions issued outside of normal working hours to Highways Infrastructure Manager on the next working day to facilitate performance monitoring.

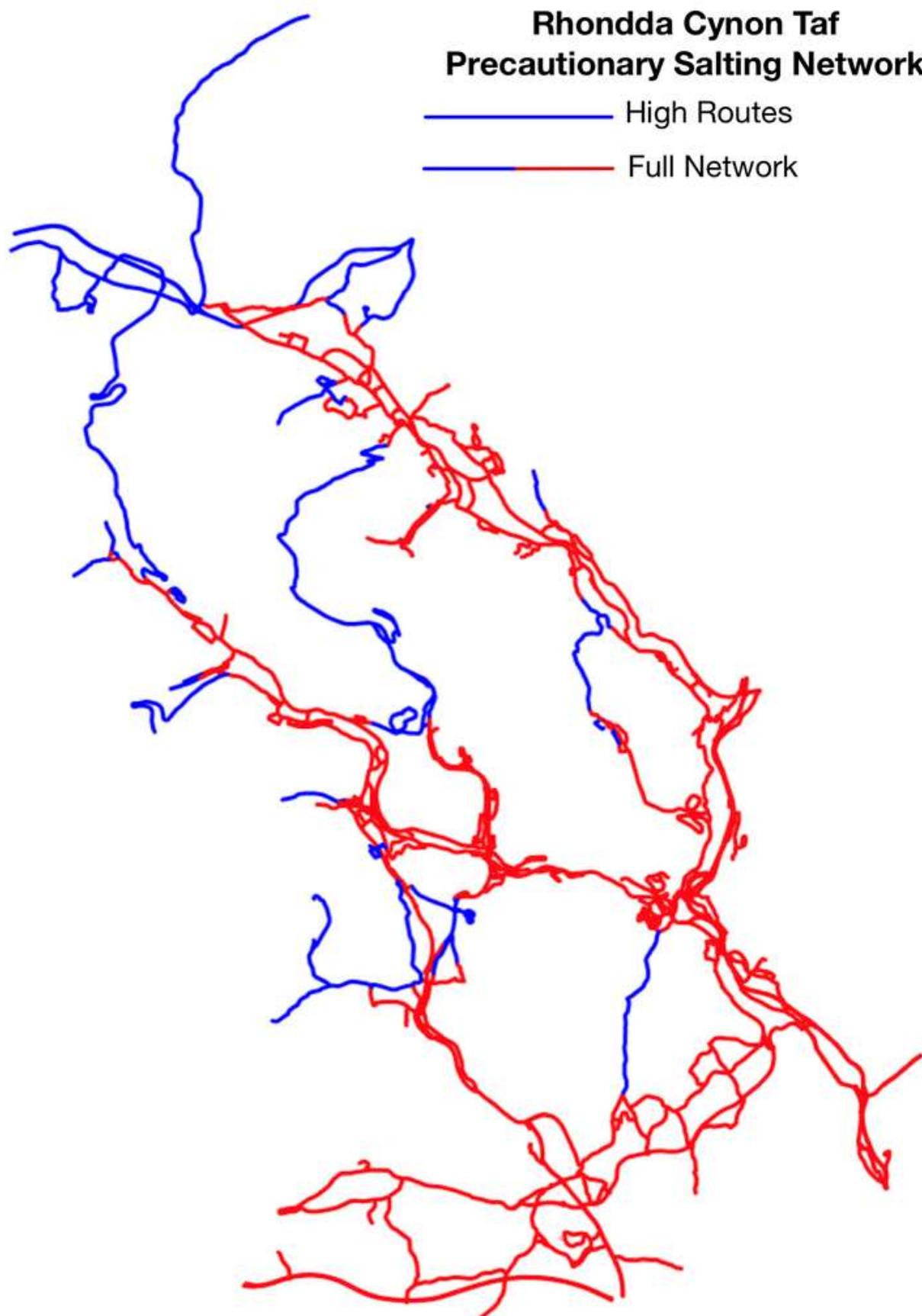
The Standby Officer will record any pertinent information relating to forecasts or action taken in the Standby Officers diary and will inform HIM who will enter the information into the Winter Action database. These actions are e-mailed to the distribution list shown in Appendix II. At the end of the year the Standby Officer diary will be forwarded to Highways Construction Manager.

The Call Out Officer will record any pertinent information relating to winter service activities in the Call Out Officers diaries. At the end of the year these diaries will be forwarded to Highways Construction Manager.

Action report forms will be completed by the drivers at the completion of any precautionary salting action and will be handed to the supervisors.

The Highways Infrastructure Manager will record post treatment actions during normal working hours and by the Standby and Call Out Officers outside of normal working hours.

APPENDICES



COVID – 19 winter maintenance provisions.

COVID-19 has caused, and will potentially cause, disruption to the supply of services across most industries. With the prospect of periodic lockdowns and the rise in coronavirus cases, the authority will be introducing additional measures and training to successfully complete our winter service obligations. The authority will introduce the following as part of this year's operational plan;

The following control measures / safe working procedures must be implemented by all RCT employees and Sub - contractor's eliminate / minimise the risk(s) of infection with, or transfer of, COVID-19 (Coronavirus).

- All employees/subcontractors to confirm and fully adhere to current government guidelines on COVID19.
- Wear gloves at all times. Gloves to be regularly cleaned or replaced where worn through and avoid contact with the face.
- Wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds as often as possible.
- Where practical, maintain a 2 metre minimum distance from other workers and the general public.
- Mobile plant ideally one operator per machine. Where that is not possible, touch points in mobile plant (door handles, operating levels, etc.) shall be thoroughly cleaned with soap and warm water between uses by different operators.
- Van touch points (e.g. door handles, steering wheel) to be regularly cleaned with an appropriate cleaning solution.
- Verbal communication between drivers and loading operatives to be kept to a minimum. Maintain a 2 metre minimum distance when checking that the vehicle is loaded sufficiently.

In addition to these measures the authority will look at the following to cover off the eventuality of additional restrictions being implemented;

- Additional drivers being trained from other service areas.
- Contractors potentially being trained to cover our in house staff.
- The removal of mates from additional routes until snow ploughs are required.
- Drivers will be placed permanently on evening shifts should staff numbers fall through illness or self-isolation.
- Development of a critical salting network to be retained as a contingency should normal level of service be impossible to resource, this would only be utilised alongside explanatory public information messages.

Any RCT operatives or Sub-contractor that develops Coronavirus symptoms, or has a relative or other close contact that develop Coronavirus symptoms, MUST report the details to their Supervisor immediately. The following actions MUST then be completed:

- The affected employee to be isolated immediately from all other employees & members of the public.
- The affected employee must wear a face mask & latex gloves to eliminate / minimise the risk(s) of infecting any other person.

- The issue MUST be reported to the Highways Construction Manager as soon as reasonably practicable & appropriate follow up actions for each specific case scheduled & implemented.