



BT Openreach Meeting, Manchester, 12 February 2015.

Present: David Capon, JAG(UK) Manager

Elizabeth Draper, BT Openreach Street Works National Manager

1. BT Openreach Regular Phone Conference Call

The relevance of the conference call was with Elizabeth Draper; it is of value in terms of its aims but the numbers of the participants, and the level within the organisation, meant the process was turning into a talking shop resulting in no real way forward now emanating from these calls. It was agreed that a monthly face to face meeting between the JAG(UK) Manager and BT Openreach Street Works National Manager Elizabeth Draper will now be set up and that regular phone calls will be restricted to the North West plan only. Ian Wilson BT, Openreach Contract Manager will also join the face to face process and with other personnel joining as other issues arise.

Continued monitoring of the North West Plan is still relevant and meaningful metrics will continue to be discussed in terms of progress. The plan has had engagement issues etc due to staff shortages and a weakness in the governance. On the positive side, after 4 weeks of steady reduction, initially 40 of the legacy defective reinstatements were rectified with the average rising to 70 with last week reaching 170: this has resulted from a dedicated resource working on legacy defective reinstatements. New defective reinstatements that were averaging 50 per week are now down to 32 per week. Both JAG(UK) and BT Openreach are looking for sustained improvement, however, the current trend is encouraging. Legacy supplier issues which still present a barrier to progress are being gradually sorted with contract/commercials have been a problem. Presently, 2 contracts are in place with 3 further ones remaining to be finalised.

2. Consistency of getting the message across the community

The issues of better communications were discussed and JAG(UK) are keen for a more open approach to issues and the need to re-affirm certain rules, roles and responsibilities would be beneficial. JAG(UK) would also support a programme of information events/talks to internal BT staff and at regional HAUC meetings to highlight what is happening to deliver meaningful metrics and to discuss various issues from both an HA and utility perspective giving an opportunity to promote a better understanding of the issues on both sides and to try and move some of these issues which are hindering progress for improvements; Urgent Works being a classic example. Mike Unsworth, BT Openreach is already working on communications material which JAG(UK) will support as and when required. Elizabeth Draper has already devised a note for all BT staff on the urgent works subject and a copy will be provided for the JAG(UK) website. This will mean that JAG(UK) will be able to deliver a consistency of the message to members.

JAG(UK) would also like to see a wider street works influence within BT Openreach and in particular the Ct contract.

3. Consistency of delivery of the message

This is an interesting area as, across the country, there is always a slightly different take on issues. This is from both sides and the aim is to try and iron out some of the misinterpretations and deliver a consistent view. The regular meetings will hopefully resolve some of those issues, particularly with invoicing queries where it is apparent that there is some inconsistency has caused payment delays and wrong interpretations being delivered. Elizabeth Draper agreed to work closely with JAG(UK) on trying to understand the issues; agree a joint position; and communicate to the industry.

4. Role of contractor

There has been some confusion about the role of BT Openreach's street works consultants and that of the equivalent within Carillion Telent. BT Openreach's street works consultants are the first line for contacting BT Openreach and it is their view which should be interpreted as the definitive BT position in terms of day to day operational matters. This runs alongside any escalation process and, of course, raising queries and inconsistencies through the JAG(UK)/BT Openreach liaison route is an important part of this process.

5. Metrics in respect to delivery changes

Arising out of the issues in the North West and invoicing problems, the need to try and deliver some meaningful metrics to show the current trends and delivery targets being met or missed were discussed. The aim is to try and gain a view of what "good" looks like. These metrics will be a regular feature on the JAG(UK) Website as will a summary of continued discussions with BT Openreach.

6. Legal view versus operational view.

This was just an observation made by JAG(UK) that the delivery of a legal view, as an initial starting point, is counterproductive in terms of finding operational solutions and that all it achieves is to force an authority into a corner with the only outcome is a continued deterioration of relationships and cooperation from the authority.

7. Regional Problems

a) Herts CC difference in EEPS scheme and legislation.

An invoicing problem has arisen in terms of payments for Permit Applications in Advance (PAA). The EEPS scheme would seem to be set out slightly differently to the actual words in the legislation and BT Openreach has asked for a view on which one to follow. JAG(UK)'s view is that a permit scheme cannot circumvent the legislative framework in place and therefore the correct interpretation was the Act itself and the words contained therein. Elizabeth Draper will speak with Paul Castleman to sort out a way forward.

b) Wales.

David Capon raised some issues following a Welsh JAG meeting. Main points were noticing issues and, in particular, related to the broadband roll out which seems haphazard in its delivery and poorly planned. Signing and guarding and the misuse of give and take was a further issue and invoicing, in terms of Cardiff sample inspections, another.

c) Salford Call.

Salford have an issue with BT Openreach in terms of defect inspections and a difference in interpretation of the defect remedial process prior to the new HAUC England advice note on section 4.2.2 and post April 2014 when the advice note was issued. A telephone conference call was held and an honest discussion took place. Salford and BT Openreach took away actions and have agreed to continue an open dialogue to try and resolve the differences.

d) BT Openreach are also looking to trial a S12 process with Salford and other authorities to see if this delivers some public benefit.

e) EToN6 Discrepancies.

Differences of opinion in terms of the status of the BT report on EToN6 and Permits. BT feel this is a more of a widespread issue than is being reported and the HAs, through the Permit Forum, contend it is only a BT Openreach issue. David Capon will discuss this on 24th February 2015 when the new Systems Working Group meets, for the first time, to try work on differences in software interpretation of the rules by deciding what the rules should be and working with the software developers to get a consistent delivery.