

**Doncaster Metropolitan Borough  
Council**

**Working in partnership with  
South Yorkshire Authorities**

**Barnsley MBC  
and  
Rotherham MBC**

**SKIDDING RESISTANCE  
POLICY**

## Document History

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## Index

<b>Section No</b>	<b>Section Title</b>	<b>Page</b>
1	Introduction	3
2	Objectives	3
3	Individual Authority approach	4
4	Legal Duties and Responsibilities	5
5	References	6

## Definitions

South Yorkshire Highway Authorities shall mean Doncaster MBC, Rotherham MBC and Barnsley MBC (Sheffield CC are not included as they have a PFI in place).

The term “skid resistance” used in this document refers to the frictional properties of a road surface, measured using a specified device, under standardised conditions. Skid resistance testing is carried out on wet or damp surfaces, unless stated otherwise, as the skid resistance of a surface will be substantially lower than when that same surface is dry.

Skid resistance measurements are used as an empirical assessment of a road surface’s level of grip and as an indication of the potential need for further investigation based on known acceptable limits. However, it should be noted, it does not represent the definitive grip available to a road user making a particular manoeuvre at a particular time and at a particular speed.

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 South Yorkshire Highways Authorities are responsible for the maintenance of the roads in their respective areas. This is a statutory duty under Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 'to maintain highways that are maintainable at public expense'.
- 1.2 Skid resistance is an important property relating to the safety of highway users, particularly in damp or wet conditions. Over the course of the life of a road the surface can lose some of its characteristics associated with skid resistance.
- 1.3 Effective maintenance of the highway network includes the requirement to monitor the skid resistance of the road surface and to take an approach to ensure that the skid resistance across the network is maintained to an appropriate standard. Guidance on this may be found within the document 'Well Managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice'.
- 1.4 In 2015 Highways England published an updated comprehensive methodology for managing carriageway skid resistance on motorways and trunk roads and this is set out in their document HD 28/15.
- 1.5 The principles as set out in HD28/15 are considered to be applicable to Doncaster's local classified roads (A, B, C) when adapted reflective of the local environment.
- 1.6 This policy document should be read in conjunction with Appendix B Doncaster MBC Skidding Resistance Procedure document.

## 2 Objectives

The objective of this Skid Resistance Policy is to:

- 2.1 Complement the South Yorkshire Overarching Highway Asset Management Plan, and individual authorities Policy and Strategy documents and Highway Asset Management Plans which look to manage assets in a strategic way.
- 2.2 Enable the public to travel safely and easily
- 2.3 Align with the guidance document 'Well Managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of practice'
- 2.4 Help reduce the number of Killed or Serious Injury accidents on the South Yorkshire Authorities road network
- 2.5 Ensure the procedures in the individual Authority's Skidding Resistance Procedure document will set out a long-term strategy to manage the skid resistance across the Authorities highway network to an appropriate level.

- 2.6 Ensure the South Yorkshire Authorities adhere to the duty under the Highways Act 1980
- 2.7 Enable the South Yorkshire Authorities to robustly defend against claims and Corporate Manslaughter charges.

### **3 Individual Authority Approach**

To achieve the above objectives each Authority will produce a supplementary document (Appendix B to the Skid Resistance Policy - "Authority's Name" Skidding Resistance Procedure document).

This will include:

- 3.1 The Department/section/team(s) responsible for the policy.
- 3.2 Identification of the Highway Network to which this policy will apply - "the defined network".
- 3.3 Processes for monitoring skid resistance across the Authority's road network on an ongoing basis.
- 3.4 Definition of Investigatory Levels to be assigned to the defined network - this will depend on a range of factors including the speed limit and geometry of the road.
- 3.5 Procedures for identifying skid deficient sites and sites for further investigation including the use of collision data to determine whether inadequate skidding resistance could be a factor.
- 3.6 Setting out a process for determining any subsequent treatment.
- 3.7 Recommending appropriate actions to negate risks.
- 3.8 Identifying how sites will be prioritised.
- 3.9 Prioritising Skid deficient sites for any treatment or improvement works.
- 3.10 Incorporating prioritised sites into annual highway maintenance works programmes taking account of budget and programme considerations.

## **4 Legal Duties and responsibilities**

- 4.1 Highway Authorities have a statutory duty under Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 “to maintain highways that are maintainable at public expense”
- 4.2 Although the formal management of highway skid resistance is not a legal requirement it is considered good practice as guided by the document ‘Well-managed Highway Infrastructure : A Code of practice’, and it supports the aims and objectives as set out in the South Yorkshire Authorities Overarching Highway Asset Management Plan(s) and Safer Roads Strategy.
- 4.3 Section 58 Defence
  - 4.3.1 Section 58 of the Highways Act 1980 provides the ability to form a statutory defence to counter legal actions for negligence. Any Authority must be able to prove in a court of law that it has taken ‘such care as is in all the circumstances reasonably required to secure that part of the highway to which the action relates was not dangerous for traffic.’
  - 4.3.2 Section 58 of The Highways Act 1980 does not stipulate the standard of maintenance applicable to the highway. It is accepted by the Courts that different standards of maintenance are applicable to different parts of the highway network; this may relate to vehicle and pedestrian usage as well as the speed of the vehicles using the highway.
- 4.4 When considering a third party legal action against any of the South Yorkshire Authorities the Court will consider such factors as:
  - 4.4.1 The character of the highway and the traffic which was reasonably to be expected to use it.
  - 4.4.2 The standard of maintenance appropriate for a highway of that character and used by such traffic.
  - 4.4.3 The state of repair in which a reasonable person would have expected to find the highway.
  - 4.4.4 Whether the Authority knew, or could reasonably have been expected to know, that the condition of the part of the highway to which the action relates was likely to cause danger to users of the highway.
  - 4.4.5 Whether the Authority could reasonably have been expected to repair that part of the highway before the cause of action arose.

- 4.5 The development of this skid resistance policy is to ensure a suitably structured procedure and strategy is implemented by each authority for the highway under its care and appropriate levels of skid resistance are maintained.
- 4.6 Importantly, this policy will provide documentary evidence of the South Yorkshire Authorities proactive approach to skid resistance management.

## **5 References**

- 5.1 Highway Act 1980
- 5.2 Well-managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of practice.
- 5.3 HD28/15 Skidding Resistance.
- 5.4 South Yorkshire Overarching Highway Asset Management Plan.
- 5.5 South Yorkshire Safer Roads Strategy.
- 5.6 Relevant Individual authority documents.