

21st October 2004



Vaisala Limited,
Vaisala House,
349 Bristol Road,
BIRMINGHAM,
B5 7SW

For the attention of Mr. Paul Bridge

Dear Sirs,

BEST VALUE AND SALTING ROUTE OPTIMISATION

During 2001, Birmingham City Council Highways undertook a full Best Value review of its Highway Maintenance functions. Part of this review included the Winter Maintenance Service and Vaisala Limited was asked to act as independent consultants on this particular working group.

The Best Value review into winter maintenance proved most useful and highlighted a number of areas where the service could be improved. Vaisala's consultancy included the production of a detailed report into various aspects of the service and proved a principal element in the subsequent formulation of a Best Value Service Improvement Plan.

A major element highlighted within the Best Value Service Improvement Plan review was the efficiency of the existing gritting routes. Birmingham operated 32 routes from 2 separate depots covering approximately 1030 km of carriageway. The routes had been designed some years previously and, as such, had become inefficient due to alterations over the years. At the same time, the secondary gritting depot in the south of the City was due for redevelopment and closure and another suitable site was being sought.

With Vaisala's experience and knowledge of route optimisation services, they were initially employed to carry out a feasibility report to investigate whether the operation could be carried out from a single remaining depot within the required timescales. When this was deemed possible, Vaisala Limited was commissioned to carry out a full Route Optimisation exercise on a defined network of 1116 km. The results were most impressive with route numbers reduced from 32 to 26 and all operating from the single central depot, this despite the increase in coverage. Route efficiency increased from around 60% to in excess of 75%.

Continued.....

Neil Dancer
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Birmingham B4 7DQ

Your Reference
Our Reference CON/CW/CL
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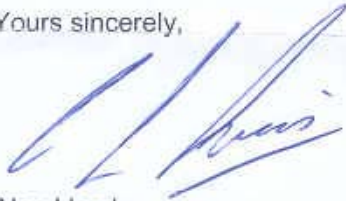
Part of the Development Directorate of Birmingham City Council

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Together with other improvements, operational efficiency savings and a restructuring of our vehicle maintenance regime, this route optimisation exercise has allowed us to reduce our gritter number from 41 to 32 and saved an estimated £1.5 million over the past 3 seasons.

I trust this information illustrates the positive results of Vaisala's input in these areas of service and proves of interest and assistance.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alan Lloyd', written over a horizontal line.

PP Alan Lloyd
Principal Projects Leader
Constituency Services Central & West