New Industry Code of Practice for Installation and Refurbishment of Ironwork

The RSTA has published a new Code of Practice for Ironwork installation and refurbishment which has been peer reviewed and endorsed by ADEPT (Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport) and Highways England.

The new Code cross references HA104/09 Chamber Tops and Gulley Tops for Road Drainage and Services: Installation and Maintenance in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges and also cross references the Specification for Reinstatement of Openings in Highways (SROH).

It is recognised that some systems and products have HAPAS certification and/or a CE mark and some products and systems are proprietary with proven use. The purpose of this Code of Practice is to provide practical guidance on avoiding early life failure and to achieve a high quality installation and a high quality repair.

The correct installation of ironwork and compatibility of the constituent materials is critical to the service life of the installation. The main objectives of the new Code are:

- To increase the average service life of ironwork installations and refurbishments by illustrating a ‘right first time’ approach using appropriate materials and good design, which when combined offer lowest whole life cost.

- To raise expectations regarding the in-service performance of ironwork assets.

- To minimise return visits, customer complaints and any potential public health and safety issues associated with failed ironwork.

Currently the service life expectation and specification guidance for the installation and refurbishment of ironwork varies greatly from location to location and between clients and guidance often covers products and components in isolation. This Code of Practice considers all aspects of installation and maintenance and consolidates existing industry experience into one document offering best practice for these applications.

For the purposes of clarification, ironwork includes gulley tops and chamber covers made from;

- Cast irons to EN124
- Steel or aluminium alloys
- Steel reinforced concrete
- Composite materials (currently excluded from this Code of Practice)
- Polypropylene and polyethylene or un-plasticised polyvinylchloride

Under typical conditions, the price of materials and components is dwarfed by the cost of traffic management, installation of the ironwork and reinstatement of the surfacing. If this has to be repeated because of poor installation workmanship, these costs rise considerably.
Research has shown that under typical conditions the cost of materials and components used in ironwork installation, covered within this document, account for about 20% of the overall cost. Therefore the whole life cost saving arises from reduced maintenance frequency i.e. less repeat visits to site.

This Code of Practice recommends the use of products with appropriate third party certification. It addresses the need for the contractor to have ISO 9001 certification, evidence of competency through relevant training records and holding appropriate CSCS cards.

Ironwork specification, selection and installation is covered in significant detail and Appendix A provides useful guidance on system product and selection. There are also checklists for the client and contractor, a glossary of terms, references and various images showing each stage of the installation. It also goes into some detail to explain the various failure mechanisms that can occur.

The Code of Practice is freely available from www.rsta-uk.org/publications/