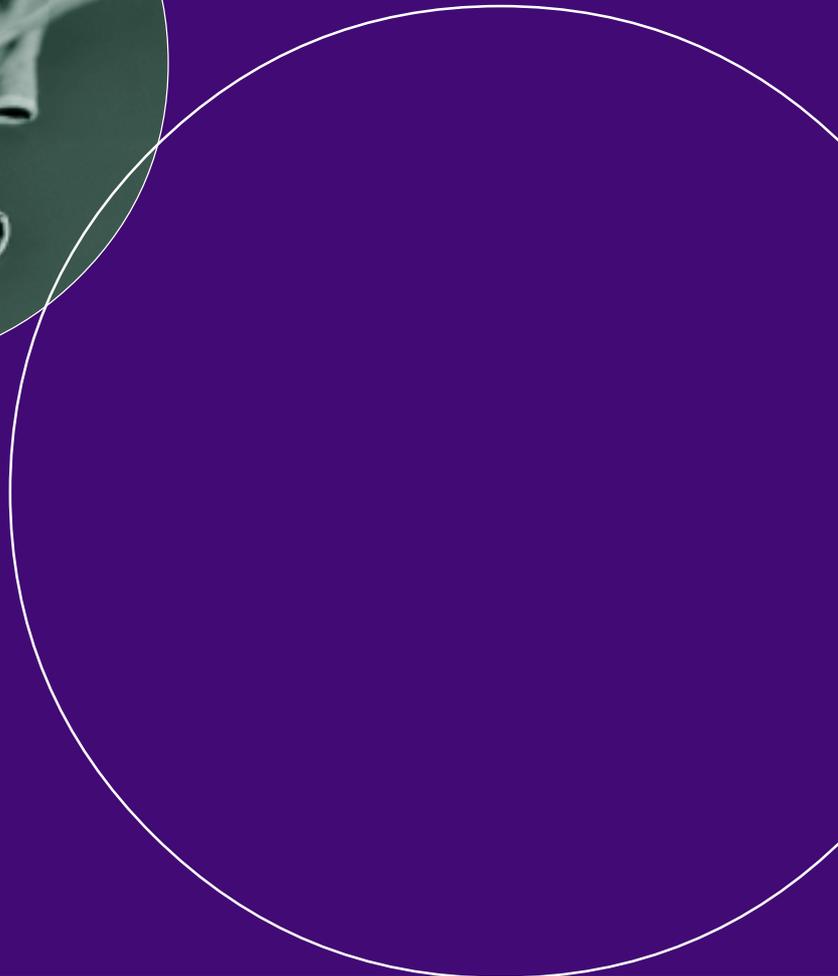


PERFORMANCE AUDIT

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 1999/2000

Environmental services

Comparing the performance of Scottish Councils



Introduction

Each year, councils publish a range of information to show people how well they are providing their services and how they compare with other councils.

This leaflet contains information on five indicators relating to councils' environment services in 1999/2000. They are the:

- cost of refuse collection per premise
- number of household waste collections that were missed
- method of household waste disposal
- special uplifts of bulky household refuse
- time taken to repair faulty street lights and faulty traffic lights.

Other pamphlets published by the Commission cover:

- Fire and Police services
- Social Work services
- Housing services
- Leisure and Library services
- Education services
- Regulatory services
- Benefits, Finance and Corporate issues

The Commission also publishes:

- a comprehensive compendium of the information for all the services for which there are performance indicators
- council 'profiles' analysing indicators on a council-by-council basis.

Using the information

For each activity we have set out why some of the differences in performance may have arisen. We also highlight particular features of the information – for example, the range in performance achieved by different councils or the overall change in councils' performance over time.

Several factors affect the way a council performs its activities. You need to be aware of these in order to understand why results may vary. Some of these factors are outwith the control of the council – for example, population size and density, geographical area, and the mix between urban and rural settlements. Others may be specific to a particular service or the groups of people it serves. These **local factors may mean that a council with a performance which, at first sight, appears to be worse than that of another has, in fact, done better** given the circumstances it faces.

In this pamphlet we have shown information for councils for 1999/2000, and where appropriate made comparison with previous years.

Key

Auditors appointed by the Accounts Commission have reviewed councils' arrangements for producing the performance information. In the tables and charts shown in this pamphlet, an asterisk (*) against a council's name indicates that the auditor expressed doubts about the reliability of the council's arrangements for producing the information.

The average gross cost of refuse collection was £46 per premise. This varied significantly across councils from £34 to £72.

see indicator 1

Across Scotland, councils made over 125 million refuse collections from domestic premises during 1999/2000. The number of collections missed was slightly under 60,000 or one missed collection per 2,000 premises.

see indicator 2

Ninety-three percent of household waste was used for landfill, slightly over 5% was recycled and almost 2% was used for the recovery of heat, power or other energy sources.

see indicator 3

Across Scotland, there were over 924,000 special uplifts of bulky domestic refuse, of which slightly over 758,000 (82%) were collected within the target time of five working days – a reduction of almost 8% collected within target compared with 1998/99.

see indicator 4

The overall proportion of street light repairs undertaken within seven days (89%) has shown gradual improvement over the past three years.

The proportion of traffic light repairs undertaken within target time has remained relatively steady over the past three years.

see indicator 5

INDICATOR 1: COST OF REFUSE COLLECTION

The gross cost of refuse collection per property.

The indicator shows the overall cost to the council of collecting refuse, per property, including both domestic and commercial premises. It includes both the direct costs (eg depots, vehicles and the wages of the crews involved) and the indirect costs (eg the cost of the service management offices). It also includes the cost of undertaking special uplifts of bulky items from domestic premises, which are not usually uplifted as part of the normal waste collection round.

The Commission's report '*Benchmarking refuse collection*' April 2000, arranged local authorities into family groups based on population dispersal which measures the degree to which the population is spread across the council's area, and the number of properties served. Councils have been divided into three groups, urban, mixed urban/rural, and rural. These groupings have been used for the purposes of this indicator.

Points to bear in mind

The majority of councils collect domestic refuse once a week, though a small number operate a twice-weekly uplift. Generally, commercial uplifts are carried out two or three times a week. Some councils undertake separate collections of garden refuse and waste paper.

Most councils use the wheeled bin method of collection. Alternative methods are the uplift of static bins or sacks from either backdoor or kerbside.

A council that has a population which is scattered over a wide geographical area is likely to incur a higher cost of refuse collection than one where the population is relatively concentrated. However, in urban areas the impact of traffic congestion and restricted access to collection points can affect costs.

The costs of waste disposal (eg landfill management or recycling plant) are excluded.

Commentary

All councils reported the gross cost of refuse collection per premise for 1999/2000. **Across Scotland, the average cost was £46 per premise. This varied significantly from £34 (Falkirk) to £72 (Western Isles).** Seven councils reported gross costs per premise of less than £40, while a further seven councils reported gross costs per premise in excess of £50.

Table 1: Gross cost of refuse collection per premise

	Cost per premise £	Number of household and commercial premises
COUNCIL	Rural	
Aberdeenshire	34.58	99,421
Scottish Borders	37.00	53,225
Dumfries & Galloway	43.21	72,341
Highland	46.02	104,139
Shetland Islands	48.38	11,660
Perth & Kinross	49.43	63,315
Argyll & Bute	53.61	45,344
Orkney Islands	65.13	10,896
Eilean Siar	72.17	14,866
	Mixed	
Angus	35.97	49,872
South Ayrshire	37.11	53,347
Midlothian	37.69	32,647
Moray	39.66	38,293
West Lothian	41.68	64,720
East Renfrewshire	41.88	37,132
Fife	42.73	158,585
East Lothian	42.95	40,472
South Lanarkshire	43.42	131,943
Inverclyde	43.62	39,993
North Ayrshire	43.64	63,964
East Ayrshire	52.38	53,476
Clackmannanshire	60.44	21,701
Stirling	61.47	37,513
	Urban	
Falkirk	34.15	67,585
Aberdeen City	42.41	106,064
East Dunbartonshire	42.90	43,664
West Dunbartonshire	45.27	44,343
North Lanarkshire	47.37	136,662
Renfrewshire	47.41	80,670
Glasgow City	48.22	295,015
Edinburgh, City of	48.29	231,521
Dundee City	53.22	79,997
All Scotland	46.00	2,384,386

INDICATOR 2: NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLD WASTE COLLECTIONS THAT WERE MISSED

The number of household waste collections that were missed, per 100,000 collections, during the periods:

- May to September
- April and October to March.

This indicator shows the recorded incidence of missed collections for household waste within the council. Missed collections include those not taking place on the normal day. These include collections:

- reported missed by residents where they had not been notified in advance by the council
- missed as a result of a failure by the council or its contractor, and include collections missed as the result of weather conditions or industrial action
- missed collections where tenants were not informed in advance by the council of changed arrangements.

Points to bear in mind

Adverse weather conditions may well be a greater problem to some councils during the winter months.

Some councils rely on contactors to provide this information. However, it is a matter for the council, as the client, to ensure that a contractor provides this information.

Commentary

Across Scotland, councils made over 125 million refuse collections from domestic premises during 1999/2000. The number of collections missed was slightly under 60,000 or one missed collection per 2,000 premises.

Overall, the number of missed household waste collections averaged 48 per 100,000 collections. During the summer months these varied significantly from only 1 missed collection per 100,000 (Aberdeenshire, East Lothian and Moray) to 372 (Fife). There was also significant variation during the winter months from no missed collections reported by Moray to 157 reported by Inverclyde per 100,000 collections.

Twenty councils reported the same or more missed collections during the summer months than they reported for the winter months.

Table 2: Number of household waste collections which were missed, per 100,000 collections

COUNCIL	May to September	April and October to March
	1999/2000	1999/2000
	Rural	
Aberdeenshire	1	1
Argyll & Bute	39	37
Dumfries & Galloway	15	30
Eilean Siar	246	107
Highland*	82	49
Orkney Islands	9	3
Perth & Kinross	46	34
Scottish Borders	2	1
Shetland Islands	8	10
	Mixed	
Angus	12	15
Clackmannanshire	81	87
East Ayrshire	21	18
East Lothian	1	3
East Renfrewshire	97	79
Fife	372	140
Inverclyde	54	157
Midlothian	13	22
Moray	1	0
North Ayrshire	35	33
South Ayrshire	43	41
South Lanarkshire	33	35
Stirling	54	69
West Lothian	52	44
	Urban	
Aberdeen City	32	25
Dundee City	37	31
East Dunbartonshire*	129	129
Edinburgh, City of	60	63
Falkirk	33	38
Glasgow City	9	3
North Lanarkshire*	20	33
Renfrewshire	19	17
West Dunbartonshire	41	39
All Scotland	53	44

INDICATOR 3: HOUSEHOLD WASTE DISPOSAL

The method of disposal of household waste and the proportion that was recycled.

The indicator shows the methods adopted by councils for disposing of household waste and the percentage of waste, per household, disposed of by a range of methods.

Recycling and recovery methods include waste used for recovery of heat, power and other energy sources and composting.

Points to bear in mind

The Government set the target of recycling 25% of household waste by the year 2000.

The European Commission landfill directive sets targets for the amount of biodegradable municipal waste going to landfill. The first of these targets is that by 2006 the amount of biodegradable municipal waste that a council sends to landfill must be reduced to three quarters of the 1995 level.

Councils will require to find alternative methods of disposing of refuse, and recycling will become an even higher priority.

In some cases councils estimate the weight of waste because they have no direct weighing facility.

Commentary

Ninety-three percent of household waste was used for landfill, slightly over 5% was recycled and almost 2% was used for the recovery of heat, power or other energy sources.

Twenty-five councils reported that over 90% of their household refuse goes to landfill sites. Fife and North Lanarkshire are the highest reporting over 98% of refuse being used for this purpose. Orkney Islands was the only council that reported no household waste going to landfill.

Two councils, Dundee City⁷ (38%) and Orkney Islands (79%) dispose of household refuse at incineration plants for the recovery of heat, power and other energy sources. Some neighbouring councils also use these facilities (Table 3a).

⁷ Dundee City incineration plant was operational for approximately six months during the year.

Seventeen councils reported an increase in the amount of household waste that was recycled, which includes, where appropriate, household green garden waste which is composted centrally (Table 3b). However, all councils failed to meet the Government's target of 25% recycled by the year 2000.

Six councils reported recycling more than 10% of household waste – two more than last year, with Orkney Islands the highest with slightly over 20% recycled. Thirteen councils, the same as the previous year, reported recycling less than 4%. Nine councils reported facilities for composting household green garden waste at central locations within their area.

Table 3a: The percentage and methods of household waste disposal

	Recovery of heat, power and other energy sources	Composted by the authority	Other recycling or recovery methods	Landfill	Other methods
COUNCIL	Rural				
Aberdeenshire			5.6	94.4	
Argyll & Bute			10.8	83.8	5.4
Dumfries & Galloway			3.2	96.8	
Eilean Siar			3.7	96.3	
Highland*			2.2	97.8	
Orkney Islands	79.4	9.2	11.4		
Perth & Kinross	0.5	9.9	5.7	84.0	
Scottish Borders			12.8	87.2	
Shetland Islands	15.2		12.4	72.4	
	Mixed				
Angus	13.5	7.3	6.2	70.5	2.6
Clackmannanshire			4.0	96.0	
East Ayrshire			2.1	97.9	
East Lothian			4.7	95.3	
East Renfrewshire			7.8	92.2	
Fife			1.6	98.4	
Inverclyde			3.9	96.1	
Midlothian			2.2	97.8	
Moray			2.7	97.3	
North Ayrshire			3.6	96.4	
South Ayrshire		1.8	3.6	94.5	
South Lanarkshire		3.5	3.3	93.2	
Stirling		0.4	7.2	92.3	
West Lothian			3.5	96.5	
	Urban				
Aberdeen City*			4.3	95.7	
Dundee City	37.6	4.3	4.3	53.8	
East Dunbartonshire			7.4	92.6	
Edinburgh, City of			4.9	95.1	
Falkirk		2.7	4.4	92.9	
Glasgow City			2.5	97.5	
North Lanarkshire			1.8	98.2	
Renfrewshire		0.9	2.8	96.3	
West Dunbartonshire			6.5	93.5	

Table 3b: The percentage of household waste recycled

	1999/2000	1998/1999	1997/1998	1996/1997
COUNCIL	Rural			
Aberdeenshire	5.6	6.1	6.1	*6.5
Argyll & Bute	10.8	16.8	14.9	13.4
Dumfries & Galloway	3.2	3.3	3.6	2.4
Eilean Siar	3.7	5.9	11.5	1.3
Highland	*2.2	2.9	*2.9	3.6
Orkney Islands	20.6	Not reported	Not reported	19.9
Perth & Kinross	15.6	12.9	8.2	6.2
Scottish Borders	12.8	11.0	12.1	16.3
Shetland Islands	12.4	4.6	4.3	5.0
	Mixed			
Angus	13.5	11.4	9.2	10.7
Clackmannanshire	4.0	3.7	3.1	2.3
East Ayrshire	2.1	1.5	1.9	2.5
East Lothian	4.7	4.5	4.5	2.8
East Renfrewshire	7.8	9.0	8.4	7.3
Fife	1.6	1.8	8.1	10.7
Inverclyde	3.9	3.1	2.9	2.2
Midlothian	2.2	2.8	*2.5	1.8
Moray	2.7	2.5	6.4	7.8
North Ayrshire	3.6	3.2	3.8	3.4
South Ayrshire	5.4	5.5	5.1	2.4
South Lanarkshire	6.8	4.4	1.4	1.4
Stirling	7.6	7.8	7.5	6.3
West Lothian	3.5	3.3	3.6	2.3
	Urban			
Aberdeen City	*4.3	7.2	5.4	Not reported
Dundee City	8.6	8.1	12.3	9.6
East Dunbartonshire	7.4	6.1	7.1	6.4
Edinburgh, City of	4.9	4.2	4.5	*4.6
Falkirk	7.1	9.0	*8.3	9.5
Glasgow City	2.5	2.2	1.6	1.4
North Lanarkshire	1.8	2.2	2.4	1.3
Renfrewshire	3.7	2.3	2.2	1.4
West Dunbartonshire	6.5	6.8	*5.7	4.6

INDICATOR 4: SPECIAL UPLIFTS FOR BULKY DOMESTIC REFUSE

The proportion of special uplifts for bulky domestic refuse undertaken within five working days of request.

With the exception of Shetland Islands all councils provide, on request, a special uplift service for the removal of bulky items such as furniture or domestic appliances, these are items which would not normally be uplifted as part of the routine refuse collection service.

The indicator highlights the proportion of special uplifts completed within five working days of a request being made.

Points to bear in mind

In part, the indicator measures the efficiency of the council's contractor. However, it is a matter for the council, as the client, to ensure that the contractor's performance is satisfactory.

Approximately two-thirds of councils charge householders for this service and these councils generally have lower take-up rates, as do rural areas.

The number of special uplifts will also be affected where a Council provides householders with an alternative free means of disposing of bulky items at a civic amenity site.

Commentary

Across Scotland, there were over 924,000 special uplifts of which slightly over 758,000 (82%) were collected within the target time of five working days – a reduction of almost 8% collected within target compared with 1998/99.

Seventeen councils completed more than 90% of special uplifts within the target time, which is a slight reduction compared with the two previous years when 19 councils completed more than 90% within target (Table 4). A further six councils completed three in every four within the target time. East Dunbartonshire (16%) and Edinburgh (26%) were the only councils to fail to complete at least 50% within the target time of five working days.

Five councils (Dumfries & Galloway, East Ayrshire, East Renfrewshire, South Ayrshire and Stirling) have improved their performance against target year-on-year since 1997/98. Renfrewshire has achieved 100% within target for each year over the same period.

Table 4: Percentage of special uplifts completed within 5 working days

	Number of special uplifts	Percentage of special units		
		1999/2000	1998/1999	1997/1998
COUNCIL		Rural		
Aberdeenshire	11,425	98.3	99.6	98.1
Argyll & Bute	2,141	81.4	83.5	85.0
Dumfries & Galloway	3,228	99.1	99.0	97.6
Eilean Siar	1,777	85.1	95.1	95.1
Highland	43,542	92.3	94.3	98.4
Orkney Islands	1,357	71.9	75.9	Not reported
Perth & Kinross	3,873	97.3	97.4	97.8
Scottish Borders	5,679	96.2	94.2	98.3
		Mixed		
Angus	7,697	94.9	97.1	97.4
Clackmannanshire	7,971	93.9	95.2	95.4
East Ayrshire	59,288	97.5	96.4	92.5
East Lothian	32,057	65.2	86.0	93.3
East Renfrewshire	7,214	92.8	80.2	78.0
Fife	84,296	60.0	*91.8	95.5
Inverclyde	10,319	95.0	99.4	95.4
Midlothian	15,773	50.5	*61.3	77.5
Moray	10,006	70.2	60.5	67.9
North Ayrshire	44,095	97.8	98.3	96.5
South Ayrshire	25,361	85.9	85.6	85.3
South Lanarkshire	80,857	74.1	71.3	86.0
Stirling	5,753	73.9	56.6	37.7
West Lothian	53,838	94.4	96.1	74.7
		Urban		
Aberdeen City	17,433	87.3	82.9	85.5
Dundee City	10,870	99.0	98.9	99.3
East Dunbartonshire	31,471	16.4	41.5	*47.5
Edinburgh, City of	30,624	26.4	Not reported	0
Falkirk	48,554	95.2	95.9	94.2
Glasgow City	87,463	95.7	97.1	97.6
North Lanarkshire	127,354	92.9	94.9	92.8
Renfrewshire	21,619	100.0	100.0	100.0
West Dunbartonshire	31,215	81.5	95.6	97.4
All Scotland	924,150	82.0	89.9	87.0

Shetland Islands did not provide this service

INDICATOR 5: TIME TAKEN TO REPAIR FAULTY STREET LIGHTS AND FAULTY TRAFFIC LIGHTS

The percentage of repairs to street lights completed within 7 days and the percentage of traffic light repairs completed within 48 hours.

The indicator shows the percentage of repairs to street lights which are undertaken within seven calendar days, and repairs to traffic lights which are carried out within 48 hours. It covers a range of different problems including such things as lamp failure, control box failure, accident damage, vandalism, shade damage, and supply failure.

Points to bear in mind

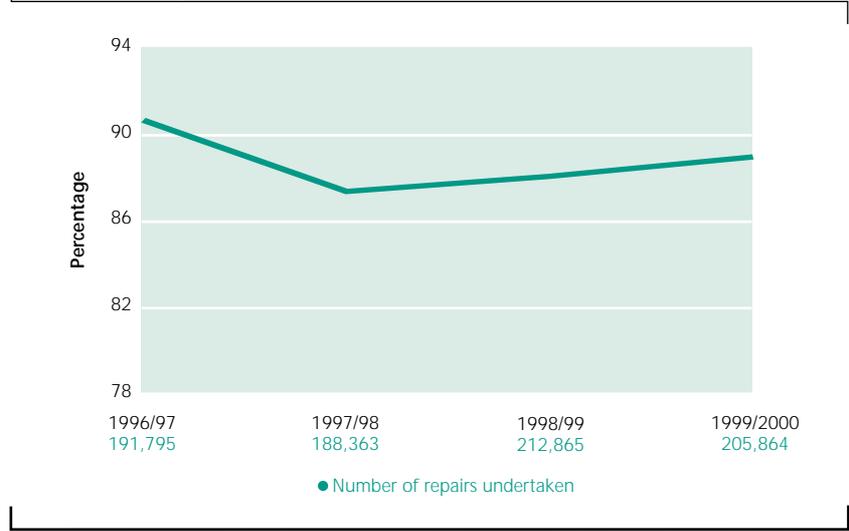
The indicator captures the time taken for the full range of activity, from notification of the fault to the completion of the repair. The actual repair work is often carried out by a contractor, and in such cases it is the contractor's performance which is, in part, being measured. However, it is the council's responsibility, as the client, to ensure that the contractor's performance is satisfactory.

Commentary

Street lights

Across Scotland, councils carried out almost 206,000 repairs to street lights, a slight decrease compared with 1998/99. **However, the overall proportion of repairs undertaken within seven days (89%) has shown gradual improvement over the past three years (Figure 5a).**

Figure 5a: The overall proportion of street lighting repairs undertaken within seven days



The proportion of street lighting repairs undertaken within seven days varied amongst councils from 71% (Inverclyde) to 99% (South Lanarkshire) with 16 councils achieving more than 90% within target (Table 5a).

Traffic lights

Across Scotland, councils carried out slightly over 12,000 repairs to traffic lights, which is 3,300 (20%) less than reported in the previous year. **While the number of repairs has reduced, the proportion of repairs undertaken within the target time of 48 hours has remained relatively steady over the past three years (Figure 5b).**

The proportion of traffic lights repaired within 48 hours varied significantly amongst councils from 49% (Moray) to 100% at 5 councils, with 14 councils, two fewer than the previous year, achieving more than 90% (Table 5b).

Figure 5b: The overall proportion of traffic light repairs undertaken within 48 hours

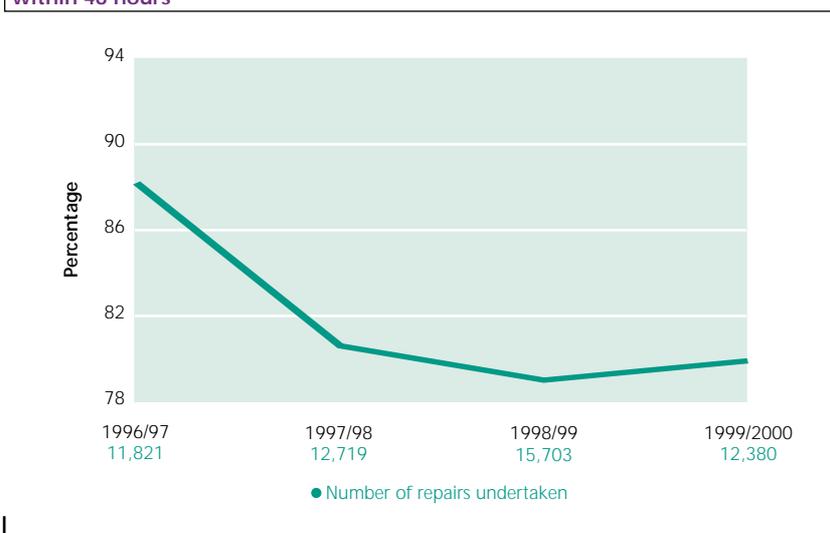


Table 5a: Percentage of all street light repairs completed within 7 days

COUNCIL	Total repairs	Percentage of all street light repairs completed within 7 days		
	1999/2000	1999/2000	1998/1999	1997/1998
Aberdeen City	11,846	73	77	89
Aberdeenshire	8,233	82	66	75
Angus	4,763	91	90	91
Argyll & Bute	2,822	87	74	82
Clackmannanshire	2,362	75	88	84
Dumfries & Galloway	7,806	82	90	98
Dundee City	7,997	93	87	91
East Ayrshire	3,106	96	98	95
East Dunbartonshire	3,028	90	88	96
East Lothian	Not reported	Not reported	*88	*94
East Renfrewshire	2,714	97	96	97
Edinburgh, City of	*12,264	*87	*80	*83
Eilean Siar	510	84	94	98
Falkirk	6,833	96	96	97
Fife	16,517	84	89	91
Glasgow City	27,039	95	90	*67
Highland	9,326	97	98	97
Inverclyde	2,711	71	85	93
Midlothian	1,112	93	89	*93
Moray	3,555	98	93	95
North Ayrshire	5,053	94	78	98
North Lanarkshire	11,895	93	96	*88
Orkney Islands	770	78	82	80
Perth & Kinross	5,965	98	98	99
Renfrewshire	13,590	87	83	99
Scottish Borders	5,704	92	91	90
Shetland Islands	133	86	80	81
South Ayrshire	2,345	93	90	Not reported
South Lanarkshire	9,472	99	99	97
Stirling	1,337	79	80	66
West Dunbartonshire	3,125	91	85	*66
West Lothian	11,931	79	84	89
All Scotland	205,864	89	88	87

Table 5b: Percentage of all traffic lights repaired within 48 hours

COUNCIL	Total repairs	Percentage of all traffic light repairs completed within 48 hours		
	1999/2000	1999/2000	1998/1999	1997/1998
Aberdeen City	1,374	96	93	82
Aberdeenshire	53	92	100	84
Angus	179	87	89	93
Argyll & Bute	*19	*74	95	100
Clackmannanshire	13	100	100	100
Dumfries & Galloway	106	72	91	97
Dundee City	227	100	91	84
East Ayrshire	162	54	68	86
East Dunbartonshire	366	55	37	41
East Lothian	68	94	97	92
East Renfrewshire	219	79	57	66
Edinburgh, City of	1,913	88	*99	*99
Eilean Siar	23	100	100	100
Falkirk	177	95	65	54
Fife	327	72	85	88
Glasgow City	2,653	69	75	79
Highland	176	97	99	99
Inverclyde	41	100	93	86
Midlothian	54	98	99	100
Moray	364	49	59	55
North Ayrshire	177	81	89	91
North Lanarkshire	1,131	75	97	*96
Perth & Kinross	350	79	71	96
Renfrewshire	613	93	74	74
Scottish Borders	27	85	93	92
Shetland Islands	15	93	90	95
South Ayrshire	204	81	71	*86
South Lanarkshire	643	88	84	78
Stirling	50	100	99	83
West Dunbartonshire	562	80	84	74
West Lothian	94	94	92	93
All Scotland	12,380	80	79	81

Orkney Islands did not provide this service

Contacts

If you have any specific queries about the performance information, you may wish to contact your council. A contact person for each council is given below. If you have general queries about this pamphlet, you may wish to contact Alec Taylor or Jim Lakie at Audit Scotland.

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