passport

The Inside Lane

Welcome to the first edition of our newly updated Passport newsletter: Inside Lane.

Each month we'll deliver the latest news from the Highways Passport community into your inbox, alongside insights, interviews and updates. It's essential reading for anyone with workers on the strategic road network.

Uptake of Passport keeps growing. It is now used by over 730 companies and has over 24,000 people on the system.

In this issue:

- Nick Harris, Highways England acting CEO, comments.
- Teresa Moss, Passport lead for Highways England, answers the questions everyone is asking about Passport.
- We look at the latest Passport implementation on the A47 at Guyhirn.
- We speak to Neil Scullion, the Health and Safety Manager at Guyhirn, to get his take on the implementation.
- Nick Holt from WJ Group shares his viewpoint on Passport as an Operations Director for a Tier 2 contractor.
- Kris Martin from Reference Point shares a sneak preview of the upcoming Passport upgrade.

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A Word From Highways England's Acting Chief Executive: Nick Harris

Ensuring that the workforce remains safe and competent is key to delivering all of Highways England's work. The Highways England Passport is a supply chain initiative which we fully endorse and regard as best practice.

The scheme provides everyone who is working on our network with clear awareness of risks and hazards in a consistent manner and also ensures that everyone is aware of how their behaviours impact on themselves, colleagues, the industry, the environment and our customers. This aligns to our vision "we want everyone who works with us and everyone who travels on our network to get home safe and well", and supports the delivery of our first imperative of Safety.

Five Passport Questions You Need to Think About

Teresa Moss, Highways England, Passport Lead

There are five questions I ask everyone in the Passport community. These are essential questions that need to be thought through if you're working towards a successful Passport implementation.

Question 1: How Well do you Understand Passport?

Passport is much more than a smartcard. It's the best health and safety system used by any highways network in the world, and it's worth taking the time to properly understand.

Each high-security smartcard connects to the powerful Passport database providing a single, transferable record for everyone. This record can be accessed in real-time and provides evidence of the Highways Common Induction (HCI), qualifications, competencies, training and other relevant information.

Having all this information in one place considerably reduces duplicated training, dramatically improves site efficiency and helps us build a Passport community that benefits everyone.

There is much more to Passport than this rapid overview, so if you're hazy on what Passport is, these two websites are an excellent place to start:

• Highwayssafetyhub.com
• Highwayspassport.co.uk

Question 2: Have you registered your organisation with Passport?

Registering your organisation is the gateway to all the advantages and features offered by the Passport scheme.

All you need to do is provide some basic organisational information and contact details for the designated admin.

To get started, follow this link, then fill in the form and click submit. Why not do it now? It will take you less time than it takes to boil the kettle.

Question 3: How will you use Passport on-site?

No matter how complicated your site or how convoluted your organisation's structure, Passport can handle it. It's a flexible tool with a range of usage options.

Here are the three most common ways it can be used on-site:

1: Swiping workers on and off site
When workers arrive on site, an access controller scans their cards to check they meet the requirements for access and scans their cards again as they leave to mark the end of their shift. This has the added advantage of helping manage fatigue.

2: Project and zone control
Many sites across the strategic network have zones that require specific access requirements that the rest of the site doesn't need. You can use Passport to swipe workers in and out of zones to verify that each worker within the zone has the competencies required.

3: Spot-checking
Spot-checking means scanning someone's smartcard in the flow of work rather than at the start of a shift. It's used to check they have the competencies they need to safely do a specific job, not just to access the site.

Question 4: What's your plan to roll out Passport for projects?

Anyone implementing Passport on a project needs a plan in place to make sure everything goes smoothly. Here's an easy five-step plan to get started:

Step 1: Decide how you want to use the system on projects (see Question 3).

Step 2: Make sure you have the supporting material and have completed the Mitie training.

Step 3: Make sure your access controllers have read through the supporting material and are confident using the app.

Step 4: Have a rollout plan in place, setting timelines for which sites will start using Passport and what functionality they will use.

Step 5: Communicate to sub-contractors that everyone will need a Passport and make sure your workers have one.

Question 5: How will you communicate the rollout with workers and sub-contractors?

For a Passport implementation to go smoothly, workers need to know in advance that they need Passport smartcards.

Communicating with a workforce spread across a complicated supply chain can be a slow process, so here are four tips:

1: Start your communications around Passport well in advance.

2: Be clear about what your organisation is expecting from workers.

3: Communicate the value of Passport, not just that it's a requirement .

4: Make sure that key people, such as access controllers, will champion its use.

The Two Questions I'm Often Asked About Passport

I've covered the five questions I always ask others, but here are two questions people often ask me.

Question 1: Why is Highways England Endorsing Passport?

Everyone in the industry understands that a worker verification system like Passport is needed; the idea for Passport originated from the supply chain in the first place.

However, some are unclear why Highways England is backing the implementation of one system across the entire supply chain. Here's why:

The Transience of the Workforce

Someone might work on one Highways England site for one contractor, then on another site for a completely different contractor, all within the same few days.

Without a system that covers the entire supply chain, each company would need to register that worker on their system. With Passport, this action becomes a single scan of their smartcard.

This makes life easier for the worker, less hectic for site teams and benefits the entire Highways England supply chain.

Efficiency

The time saved by scanning smartcards drives greater efficiency. Mark Bridges from Galliford Try described his experience of Passport like this:

"Passport cuts out unnecessary paperwork: five minutes filling in induction forms here, another ten there. That's a total of 15 minutes per person – with 2,000 workers a month, you're saving 6,000 work hours a year. The system pays for itself."

Apply those savings across our entire supply chain and Passport represents the single biggest opportunity to improve health and safety efficiency in the highways sector, ever.

Supply Chain Sustainability

Workers with a Highways Passport are more likely to work on multiple Highways projects. This added experience leads to improved quality, safety and efficiency from workers.

Tools like Passport help us build an industry that we're proud of and that tomorrow's workforce will want to join.

Question 2: Why isn't Highways England Mandating Passport?

The case for Passport is compelling. So why then, people ask, isn't it mandated? However, some are unclear why Highways England is backing the implementation of one system across the entire supply chain. Here's why:

"Highways England don't like to over-mandate. For the most part, we believe that mandating standards can lead to minimum compliance with that standard and stifles innovation and stifles going the extra mile. We have been very clear that Passport is something we want our supply chain to engage with."

A mandate would mean constraints on what implementation looks like. We want to give each organisation the freedom they need to get total value from the system. That will look different on each project and for each organisation.

Five questions for you to think about before implementing Passport, and two answers to the questions I hear most often.

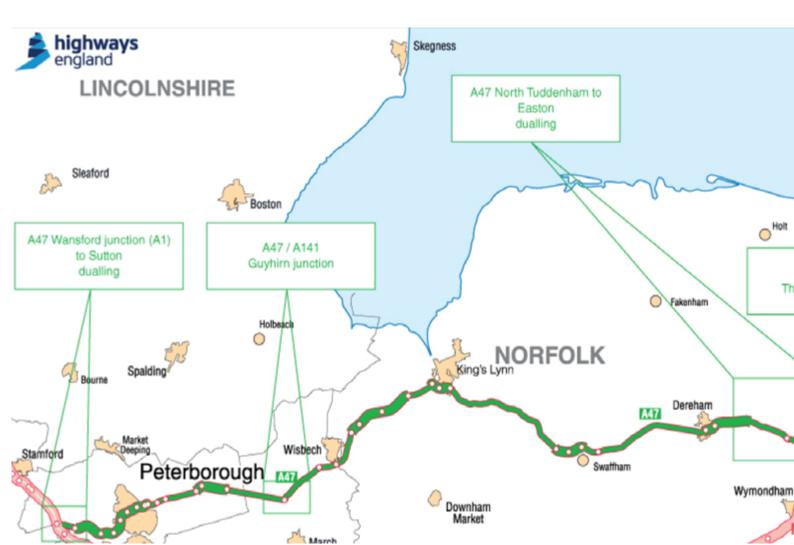If you have any other questions, the chances are we've answered them already on our FAQs page.

Galliford Try's Passport Implementation at Guyhirn Junction: a Resounding Success

Galliford Try has launched works at the Guyhirn junction and is making full use of the Highways Passport scheme from day one. More than twenty days in and it is already clear that the Passport rollout has been a huge success.

The Project at Guyhirn Junction

Highways England are improving the A47 between Peterborough and Great Yarmouth.

This £300 million project is part of an initiative to dramatically reduce congestion, improve journey times and increase safety for the 20,000 vehicles that use the road each day.

The first project to launch along the A47 is at the Guyhirn junction, running from February 2021 until April 2022. Galliford Try is the principal contractor for a set of works that includes a roundabout expansion and the construction of two lanes on all approaching roads.

The Result

Galliford Try implemented the Highways Passport scheme at Guyhirn from April 1st.

The implementation has been a resounding success. Both workers and access controllers used the system to establish a culture of safety in which workers swipe on and off site each day.

The scheme has enabled Galliford Try to confirm that everyone on site is safe to work, has had the Highways Common Induction and site-specific inductions as well. This makes for a safer and more efficient site, which means major time and cost savings across the project's life.

The team at Guyhirn have come to appreciate that the Passport scheme isn't simply a competency card. The card is a key to each worker's profile on the database, helping access controllers get up-to-date information in real-time.

Given this project's success, Galliford Try is now looking to deepen its usage of the Passport scheme on the Guyhirn project to gain more value from the system. They will also be rolling out the scheme across all their Highways England projects in future.

"Like a Breath of Fresh Air"

To learn more about the success at Guyhirn, we spoke with Neil Scullion, the regional health and safety manager for the regional development partnership at Galliford Try. He oversees six projects split into two regions: one on the A303 and the other five on the A47, including Guyhirn junction.

We spoke with Neil to learn about his experience using and implementing Passport.

How are you using Passport on the A47 project at Gurhirn?

Well, first off, everyone working on the site has a Passport checked when they turn up, whether office-bound or on-site.

We also have some simple mandatory requirements; the first is the HCI and the second is that everyone is to have a valid competency card. This means that it's easy for us to do all our due diligence checks when people turn up.

From a principal contractor's perspective, using Passport takes away all the hassle of maintaining spreadsheet databases and frees up a lot of time for the site team.

Not just that, but spreadsheets don't alert you when cards are expired.

Passport makes it so simple, workers turn up on-site and an access controller scans their card. We can immediately see all the data we need, then swipe them in, or if the system rejects them, we know why it was. You get none of that with a spreadsheet.

You were in charge of implementing Passport at Guyhirn. How did you find the implementation?

It's been a doddle, if I'm honest with you. It has gone really well; it's so much better than the other systems on the market. It's much easier, but it also has more features. I'm personally self-taught. The system is entirely self-explanatory.

All I had to do was get the site team up to standard, which only took two or three calls. One of our access controllers missed the first meeting, so he could only make one; he still found the system easy to use.

How was the support?

They've been fantastic - like a breath of fresh air! I've used other systems in the past, and whilst the systems weren't great, the support was even worse. It was all done via email with no hands-on help.

Whereas with Passport, if we've had any problems, we've had rapid support from the team, helping us get across any hurdles.

How are you using Passport on the A47 project at Gurhirn?

The team have been using it to swipe-in and swipe-out, to award competencies and to spot check. They're even capturing travel time to manage fatigue. The two guys driving the system - Matthew Aldridge and Nemo Choudhury - have done a great job. They're both site engineers and are in charge of the works that are happening at the moment. They've been swiping people in and out each day with no problems.

In the first twenty days, we've had hundreds and hundreds of swipes, which shows how quickly the team got used to it.

What was your reaction when you first learnt about Passport and were asked to implement it?

It's been a long time coming.

I've been excited about Passport ever since I first learnt about it. That one platform where everybody is all in the same place, with all of our sub-contractors already using it.

I've admired Sentinel in the past purely because it shares information across the industry. I put Highways Passport in the same sort of boat as the Sentinel card. It means that for anyone working in the Highways Industry, we can see where they've worked, what training they have, how much experience they have, how many competencies they hold - and this is vital information. But, beforehand, we didn't have it.

Do you have any plans to start using more areas of the system?

Oh definitely.

I want to use more of the fatigue management functionality. We're already tracking journey times so that we can know if someone is safe to work, but we'd like to set it up so that there is an automatic flag to alert the access controller if someone has worked too many hours.

We're also starting to use it for alerts sent out by Highways England or internally from Galliford Try. These alerts usually come on the back of an incident, and we then carry out some related training on-site to make sure everyone is aware. With Passport, we can then award that as a zone based competence to everyone that attended the briefing. This then means we can efficiently run reports on and check compliance.

In the past, we had to do all this with paper and spreadsheets, which makes for a tiresome task if you have to ensure you've captured everything you need to.

This sort of thing makes a massive difference to the site team. Before Passport, their lives were filled with things like spreadsheets, photocopying and scanners. Now all they have to do is swipe a workers card!

Finally, would you encourage other organisations and projects to use the system?

Yes. Absolutely.

Guyhirn was the tester for us, but we'll definitely be using Passport for all our future projects and I would one hundred percent encourage everyone else too as well.

It's better than the other access control systems anyway, but when you add in the value that comes from sharing data across the industry, it's a no-brainer.

"It is Going to be the Future"

Nick Holt is on the board of directors for WJ Group. Once a liner himself, Nick has over 20 years of experience, including management of the installation of the 'games lanes' for the 2012 Olympics.

Could you tell us a bit about WJ Group and your role?

WJ is a road marking company, the biggest in the UK. We're a family-oriented business and set a lot of store by looking after people. We try to be a good place to work.

I oversee the temporary and permanent markings on most of the significant construction schemes in the UK, like smart motorways, for example.

WJ was one of the scheme's earliest adopters and is one of the most committed users of the Passport system out of all Tier 2s. Why is this?

By the nature of lining, we visit sites for short periods of time. For instance, we go in and set the traffic management. Then we come out of the way while people build, then we come back and line the scheme.

We skip from project to project and aren't committed to any one site for a long time. Our men would have 20-30 inductions in a year, each taking up a whole morning with briefings that are all pretty much the same.

We see Passport as a way of simplifying that process so our man can rock up with his smartcard and he can get access. All he needs now is a scheme-specific induction.

How were things done before Passport?

I used to manage everything before. I'd have to send the lads to the site inductions. Bear in mind that my lads could be working on thirty live sites at once, so I'd try and get as many inducted at each scheme as I could.

This caused me all sorts of problems - if there was a clash, it could cause resource shortages. And then, even though the scheme would have the names of inducted workers, we also had to keep track of it all, so there was all this duplicated work going on.

Then add to that all these inductions our lads were doing were very similar.

I would question the value of how things were done before.

How do you find Passport?

We were involved from the beginning, so you would expect some teething problems, but there was only a minor one relating to record transfer which was sorted.

I never hear complaints, so I assume it's quite easy, and again, the booking of the test (for the HCI) is quite easy as well.

I'm committed to doing it because centralising big aspects of the training seems like a significant step forward. It's a good system.

Do you face any challenges with the system?

Our trainers felt that with the online training, you lose something that can only come across in person. This makes it okay for experienced people, but we do like face-to-face training, especially if someone's new.

All our new starters are signed up to the Passport scheme, receive a card and complete the HCI during their first week of work at WJ as part of the one-week induction. We add a bit of classroom training to the Passport session, to make sure it all makes sense.

Do you have any advice for organisations like yours looking to implement Passport across their workforce?

For tier 2s who visit multiple sites, you won't find many who don't like it.

So I just think they should get on with it and do it. It is going to be the future.

Tier 1s will use it more and more; it's got good traction already, thousands of people are on it and hundreds of companies. It's pretty much got the whole supply chain now.

We just need more and more schemes to make it a requirement.

Passport Upgrade Sneak Preview: Messaging

Kris Martin, Reference Point, Passport Implementation Manager

A Passport upgrade is on its way and the features we have lined up aren't just minor tweaks. They will continue to transform how organisations within the highways industry work.

In particular, the messaging module takes something previously impossible and makes it easy: sending targeted messages to anyone in your workforce, including your supply chain.

Passport Messaging is an all-in-one solution that will allow you to message your workforce directly. It does everything you need it to, including:

- Easily send messages to your workers, instantly
- Message workers in your supply chain
- Target your audience by site, competencies or job role
- Add attachments to messages
- Add links to messages
- Add buttons so that workers can respond
- Report on who has received, read and acted on your message

Messaging isn't the only new feature that will help your organisation keep its workforce safe and effective. In the next issue, we'll be focusing on the imminent update and its different features.

Want to **gain the full advantages of Highways Passport** to help keep your workforce safe and effective?

Get in touch with the Mitie helpdesk using this email: **he.validate@mitie.com**