

CASE STUDY

VolkerFitzpatrick Ltd | Permit to Dig Monitoring

Introduction

VolkerFitzpatrick experienced a disproportionately high number of service strikes on their A27 project despite the implementation of a number of measures to try to ensure best practice whilst working around services. This case study describes the process that was put in place to try and identify common issues with permits and their application, which ultimately improved performance.

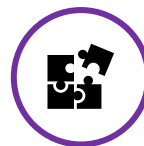


Overview

In an attempt to better understand the issues around buried services and permits it was decided to collect data on the quality of permits and their application to try to ascertain any commonalities that could be addressed to improve performance.

It was decided to collect the data through Microsoft Forms, accessed via a QR code, and review and interrogate the data through Power BI, adding to our existing buried service data.

The form collected data on permit contents, understanding and implementation.

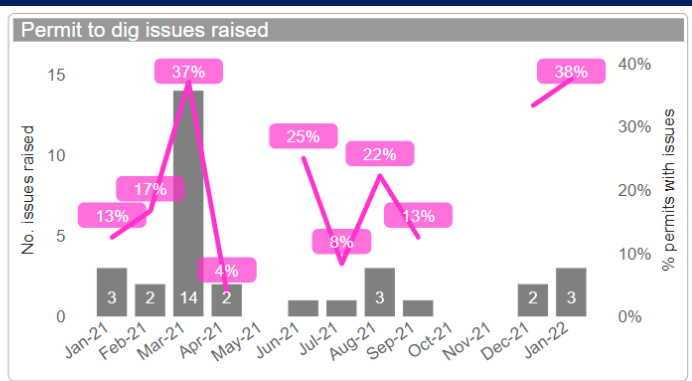
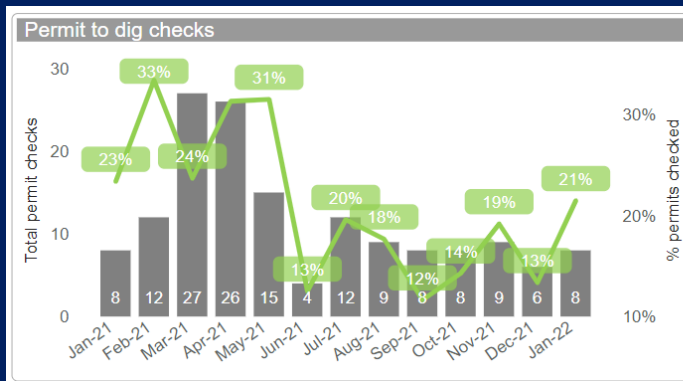


Challenges

- Collecting sufficient data to be of value
- Engaging operatives and management in the process of data collection and measurement
- Accepting criticism as constructive challenge and not as a reason to apportion blame



"After a very challenging time dealing with the numerous services on the site in the initial phases of the works, the team worked closely to take ownership and develop an intuitive process to minimise the risks, and drive real measurable improvement."



Action Taken

The use of Microsoft Forms, accessed on a mobile device via a QR code, allowed checks to be carried out by people within and external to our organisation with data to be automatically collected.

The project team and subcontractor teams were briefed in the use of the permit check form and encouraged to check permits whenever they were out on site. Checking of the same permit on different days was encouraged to ensure that sufficient data was collected and to cross-check for improvement.

A target was set and monitored for the percentage of permits checked.



Results

Issues identified during checks were generally 'minor' in that they were errors in form-filling or missing detail that it could be argued did not affect the efficacy of the permit. It became clear however that the incidence of these 'minor' issues rose over time prior to a service incident and were an effective leading measure of complacency. Addressing these minor issues when they arose appeared to improve overall performance.

The quality of drawings provided on permits was often below the required standard, which when operatives were familiar with their work locations had not been perceived as a problem. This did become an issue when gangs were working in unfamiliar areas, or when circumstances were not as expected. Measures to improve the quality of the drawings provided were put in place.

In most cases, operatives were aware of errors on permits but did not feel empowered to challenge them. VolkerFitzpatrick placed emphasis on challenging and rejecting permits that were incomplete or poorly written.

Permit checks were introduced as a CPF metric by National Highways.



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and well