

Daer Camps A RSZ Ferniegair  
Consumer Concern  
4<sup>th</sup> November 2014

DWQR Inspector:  
Colette Robertson-Kellie

Event No. 6512

## Event Category: Significant

### Summary of Incident

Between 08:00 and 09:15 on the 4<sup>th</sup> November 2014, an 8" main was isolated in order to make a connection to a new 180mm main on a new housing development in Hamilton. Scottish Water was alerted to water quality issues in the network by customers contacting the Scottish Water Customer Service Centre (CSC); in total there were 67 customer contacts in the area. The first contact was at 08:38 on the 4<sup>th</sup> November, and the final contact was 12:00 on the 5<sup>th</sup> November.

Scottish Water carried out reactive flushing of the distribution system, and the CSC advised customers who called them to run their taps until the water ran clear. They also called customers back to check that they no longer had concerns with their drinking water supply. Sampling of the supply was undertaken by Scottish Water after flushing, and showed that one sample out of the four taken failed the iron and manganese standards. A number of further customer contacts were received by the CSC after the flushing had been completed, and it was decided that the network should be flushed again. However, the Network Service Operator (NSO) considered that the better option was to allow sediments in the network to settle rather than generate further disturbance. No further samples were taken in response to the incident to demonstrate that water quality was restored, but the CSC called customers who had been affected by the incident, and they reported that the supply was running clear. No further contacts were received by the CSC for this incident.

### DWQR Assessment of Cause of Incident

The cause of the incident was the disturbance of deposits in the network caused by the isolation, reversal of flows and recharge on the 8" main where a new connection was to be made to a new housing development.

### DWQR Assessment of Actions Taken by Scottish Water

Scottish Water's local Network Control group had rejected or delayed four submissions for the housing development to be connected to the mains supply due to a lack of information provided, thus demonstrating that Scottish Water has processes in place to assess requests from developers.

Scottish Water received contacts from a total of 67 of its customers in relation to discoloured water or requests for information relating to this incident, and used internal procedures to notify appropriate staff within Scottish Water of the issue in advance of its 'trigger' levels of contacts being reached, and DWQR is satisfied that the process for escalating the issue worked effectively.



No flushing of the network was undertaken to minimise disruption of deposits in the network prior to commencement of the work, and Scottish Water has acknowledged that flushing should be considered in advance of all complex planned work. Customers were not warned of potential for disruption in advance of the work; Scottish Water completed a Distribution, Operations and Maintenance Strategy (DOMS) Impact Assessment Impact Assessment Form and did not anticipate any disruption. Scottish Water reported after this incident that it is unlikely that flushing would have generated the required velocities to reduce the impact of flow reversal on the system, and that the benefits of flushing should be assessed on a case by case basis. DWQR is in agreement with this, but it is important that Scottish Water formally assesses and clearly records its reasons for decisions for networks not being flushed in these instances; this was not recorded on the DOMS Impact Assessment for the work that led to this incident. Scottish Water has acknowledged that its Impact Risk Assessment could have contained more detail, and has taken action to remind appropriate staff of the need to complete all areas of the Impact Assessment. DWQR feels that this is appropriate.

Samples were taken in appropriate locations in the network in response to the incident, and the NSOs involved in the response to the customer contacts had the appropriate DOMS training.

The event has been categorised as Significant. Scottish Water has identified a number of actions and DWQR accepts that these are appropriate and will be monitoring them to ensure all are completed prior to signing off the incident.

