**Traffic Open Products and Specifications (TOPAS)**

Dr Mark Pleydell - Member of the Management Board

**Purpose of Note**

To outline the role of TOPAS and aspirations for collaboration with Elexon and the UMSUG to simplify the charge coding of traffic control equipment.

**TOPAS**

In April of this year that DfT revised legislation relating to traffic signs, traffic signals and similar equipment. As part of the Government’s removal of red tape they discontinued the process of Type Approval for traffic control equipment.

The industry and user communities, who have always worked closely with UK Governments and Highways England set up TOPAS (in 2014) as a successor in both spirit and style of operation.

TOPAS manages the specifications that apply to traffic control equipment and also a product register of compliant products. (See [www.topasgroup.org.uk](http://www.topasgroup.org.uk) for further information.)

**Objectives**

While the charge coding of traffic control equipment fell outside of the scope of the type approval process it has become clear that the measurement methodology for obtaining charge codes for some types of traffic control equipment is not fully defined and leads to ambiguities and delays in manufacturers obtaining codes and consequently makes compilation of users’ inventories less reliable.

While for some products the process of obtaining a charge code is well defined, there are a few areas where things are not clear cut. Specifically there are products with quite variable power consumptions, including variable message signs, count-down displays, etc. There are also many products that run not directly from the LV supply but at 48Vac, and many items that are powered at 24Vdc (being the standard traffic signals equipment supply for detection and other miscellaneous items).

We would like to get a better understanding of UMSUG’s concerns and processes so that the traffic industry can work with UMSUG to implement and maintain a process which meets everyone’s requirements and from time to time as charge code processes and/or technology developments dictate can be reviewed and updated.

Mark Pleydell – TOPAS 19-Sept-2016

[Mark Pleydell is founding Chair of TOPAS and also Chairs the industry trade body (ARTSM) working group on traffic signals and control. He is a physicist with over 20 years in the traffic sector in product R&D and more recently technical consultancy.]