

THE LINK BETWEEN EBSR AND NaPTAN/NPTG

1 Background

The NaPTAN (National Public Transport Access Nodes) and NPTG (National Public Transport Gazetteer) databases are essential to EBSR since registrations submitted under EBSR are based on NaPTANs which are not only used to define the stops served and the timetable for the service, but also help define the route the bus will follow. Because of this, it is important that NaPTAN and NPTG are correct. This note highlights some of the common problems and explains what their consequences might be for EBSR.

NaPTAN & NPTG provide the “building blocks” for EBSR. NaPTAN contains details of all points at which passengers can board/alight from public transport services. It includes details of rail stations, tram & metro stops, ferry ports, airports, taxi ranks etc. but most significantly every bus stop in the country. NPTG contains details of every place that people may want to get to (everything from towns & cities, through suburbs to villages & hamlets). NPTG is also used for destinations in planning car journeys. Every NaPTAN must be linked to a locality.

In EBSR not only are the route and stops served defined using NaPTANs but the recommended structure of stop names, Locality, common name, Indicator, also links the stop to its locality.

2 Important Attributes of a NaPTAN

There are a certain number of attributes of NaPTANs which can have an impact on EBSR; these include:-

- Geographic Location – In creating an EBSR, operators will plot the route of their service via NaPTANs. In modern systems that is simply done by point & click on a map that includes NaPTANs. If they are wrongly positioned, or share the same grid reference, then operators will find it difficult to determine which to use
- Common Name – agreed and simple (short, where possible) Common Names are essential for passenger information, timetables etc. These should be the name by which the stop is known locally. Pairs or Groups of stops should share the same Common Name with the Indicator providing uniqueness. Again the correct naming of a stop is important to help define the EBSR
- Indicator – The Indicator qualifies the Common Name of each stop, and the combination of Common Name and Indicator needs to provide a unique name for each point within a Locality. If two stops on each side of the road have the same, or no, indicator it is impossible to be sure which one should be used for which direction. In EBSR the recommended format for the display of a stop name is Locality, Common Name, Indicator; this combination should ensure that each stop has a unique name

- Bearing – the bearing field in NaPTAN should be used on all stops to show the bearing (direction) of a bus when it is stopped at that stop
- Locality – as explained, this is an important attribute for each NaPTAN. It not only describes where the stop belongs to, but is also used in information systems to describe the name of the stop

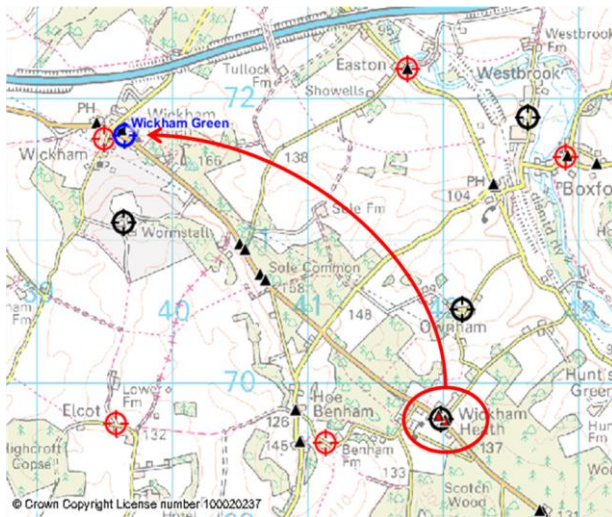
3 Some Useful ITO Warnings

The ITO system tests the NaPTAN and NPTG data and provides a series of warnings about NaPTANs and Localities, a number of which could have an impact on EBSR. Examples include:-

- Stop Area members without identical names – All NaPTANs in the same stop area should normally have the same Common name and be differentiated by their Indicators. That way it is clear that the stops are part of a grouping and it is easy to distinguish between the stops that are members of that Stop Area in order to identify the specific stop that needs to be used in the EBSR
- Stop Area Members with different localities – because a Stop Area describes a grouping of stops in the same vicinity, it would be illogical for them to belong to different localities. This warning indicates where this has happened. The example below illustrates this problem.



- Locality shape – this usually indicates that either the stops are linked to the wrong locality, or that the OSGR of a stop or the Locality is wrong. Either way this can lead to errors in EBSRs and also to problems with stop naming.



In this example, the stops in Wickham Heath have been linked to the Wickham Green Locality, which will cause problems with stop names

- Locality with identical stops – As mentioned above, the combination of Common Name and Indicator should be sufficient to ensure that every stop in a Locality is unique. This warning indicates where stops in the same Locality have the same name/indicator combination and cannot easily be differentiated between each other. The following example illustrates this warning:-

HIGH STREET (N)
 HIGH STREET (S)
 HIGH STREET (S)
 HIGH STREET (S)
 HIGH WEST STREET-CIVIC CENTRE--
 S/B (S)
 HIGH WEST STREET-CIVIC CENTRE-
 N/B (N)
 HILLS STREET-E/B (E)
 HILLS STREET-W/B (W)
 JACKSON STREET (E)
 JACKSON STREET (E)
 JACKSON STREET (E)
 JACKSON STREET (E)
 JACKSON STREET (W)
 JACKSON STREET (W)

In this example there are 3 stops named High Street (S) 4 stops named Jackson Street (E) and 2 stops named Jackson Street (W).

Because of the lack of uniqueness in these stop names it is difficult to differentiate between these stops. An operator would find it difficult to determine which stop should be used in an EBSR.

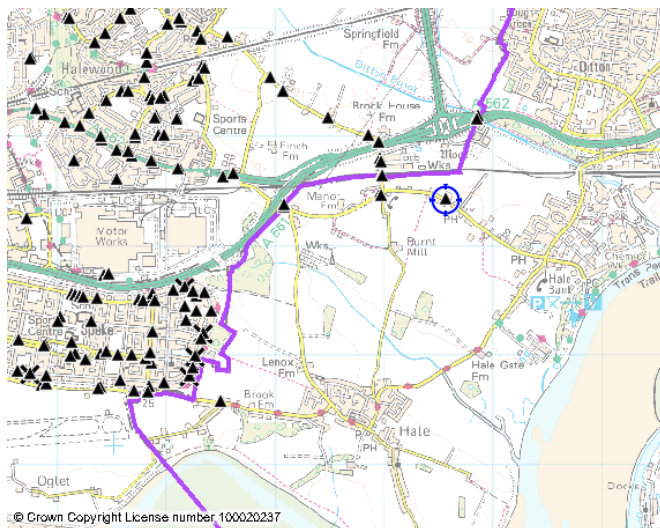
Uniqueness is usually determined by the Indicator, often by the use of local “codes” for each bus stop which would usually be shown on the bus stop (such as “stop A” or “Bay 3”).

The Indicator is therefore an important field as it is intended to be a very short way of qualifying which stop (of two or more that may have the same CommonName) is being referred to. Indicators are usually terms such as: o/s, opp, adj, Bay1, Stance B, Stop C, o/s 23, E-bound. The test that should be applied is “does this Indicator work well with the CommonName?” - good examples of the use of the Common Name/Indicator combination would be:-

St Peter’s Church, opp
 Coronation Street, adj
 Post Office, o/s
 Bus Station, Bay 1
 War Memorial, stop C

High Street, o/s 23
 Redfield Farm, E-bound
 Kingscroft Road, opp
 Kingscroft Road, adj

- Stops with wrong Bearing – Warning about Bearings have recently been added to the ITO system. Bearings can be helpful in differentiating between NaPTANs since they illustrate the direction that buses are pointing in when at a stop. For EBSR purposes this can be helpful in identifying which stop should be used for which direction of operation.
- Stops in different admin area - Stops with coordinates physically located in a different local authority's area from the authority that owns the stop.



An example of this problem is illustrated here. Some NaPTANs belonging to one authority are clearly located within the adjacent authority's area. Because VOSA checks use the first 3 digits of the ATCOCode for a stop in NaPTAN, this can potentially exclude an Authority from the list of those that should receive notification of the registration.

4 The Impact on EBSR

The examples below illustrate how some of these problems feed through into EBSR. They are taken from actual EBSRs that have been submitted in different parts of the country. In Examples 1 & 2 the format of the stop name follows the EBSR rules of Locality, Common Name, Indicator. In Example 1, the stop names are clear and stops are differentiated by use of the Indicator (near, opp etc.). In Example 2 however, there is little differentiation between stop names and it is impossible to identify, for example, which stop in Higher Road is which from this timetable. Example 3 illustrates the impact of not including Locality and Indicator in the EBSR submission. Given that this example is from somewhere in the South East and will be handled by a VOSA case worker based in Leeds, there is clearly a risk that this registration might be rejected because it is unclear – and it is certainly unclear for any user of the registration subsequent to registration.

EXAMPLE 1

Yaxley, Windsor Road, near	06:21
Yaxley, Lansdowne Road, opp	06:21
Yaxley, The Duck & Drake, opp	06:22
Yaxley, Rosewood Close, opp	06:23

EXAMPLE 2

Halewood, HIGHER ROAD, HIGHER ROAD	06:43
Halewood, HIGHER ROAD, HIGHER ROAD	06:44
Halewood, HIGHER ROAD, HIGHER ROAD	06:45
Halewood, LEATHERS LANE/HIGHER ROAD,	06:45
Halewood, LEATHERS LANE/HIGHER ROAD,	06:46

EXAMPLE 3

Broadway	08:31
Police Station	08:31
The Jolly Sportsman PH	08:32
Berkhamsted Road	08:32
The Nash Arms PH	08:33
Preston Hill	08:33

5 Making Corrections

Since NaPTAN & NPTG data is managed by the Local Authority that owns the record, corrections to existing data to resolve any problems need to be done by that Authority. If an operator has a query with the existing data when creating an EBSR, they will need to discuss this with the owning Authority and work with them to get any corrections or updates made to the data. This need not delay the submission of the EBSR as the correction to the data can be made later. However, if a **new** NaPTAN record is needed this should be dealt with straight away so that the EBSR submission will not be rejected by the VOSA systems.

6 Further Help and Advice

You can seek further advice on any issue related to EBSR, NaPTAN, NPTG etc. by sending an email to Transport Direct at ebsr@dft.gsi.gov.uk or to VOSA at ebsr@vosa.gov.uk