

Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (COPLAR): New Duties for Highlands and Islands Airports

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 section 89 (1) places a duty on relevant landowners to keep their land clear of litter and refuse. The Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (Scotland) 2018¹ provides practical guidance on fulfilling these duties and was updated last year to introduce new duties for public bodies in Scotland. These duties are:

- to keep land clear of litter and refuse (Duty 1)
- to keep certain roads clean (Duty 2)

There are 3 main changes to the updated code compared to earlier versions:

- An emphasis on the role of prevention (particularly for Duty 1)
- Revised grades and response times for each duty
- Greater clarity about where litter/refuse should be removed from

Highlands and Islands Airports (HIAL) share Scottish Government's ambitions 'Towards a Litter-Free Scotland'² and, as a public body, will contribute to achieving this by following the code.

Duty 1 only is relevant to HIAL to ensure that land (or land that is under our control) is kept free of litter and refuse. This only applies to publically accessible landside areas since airside land is subject to strict foreign object debris (FOD) guidance, with litter being removed as soon as possible.

The code supports the duty by setting a 'Grade A' standard along with maximum timescales to restore the area to the standard, depending on what 'zone' this area falls into. Zones are allocated by considering two factors that affect the rate an area declines:

- Footfall/vehicle intensity
- Potential Litter Sources (PLS)

All HIAL's airports have now been allocated zones and maps are available to view on our website.

With the focus being on litter prevention, the next step will be to prepare a Litter Prevention Action Plan and we will use a mix of the following measures to influence behaviour at our airports:

- Improved monitoring – understanding where and why a zone is not meeting the standard can help decision making
- Communications – signs, news stories, marketing materials, social media
- Engagement – stakeholder and community engagement
- Partnership working – with other bodies/businesses/community groups to address problems across boundaries
- Infrastructure – facilities/services including smart bins and recycle-on-the-go containers
- Enforcement – as a last option where, when and how enforcement teams are deployed or to create Litter Control Areas

¹ [Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse \(Scotland\) 2018](#)

² National Litter Strategy: [Towards a Litter-Free Scotland](#)