

**Timber Transport Forum Meeting  
FC, Silvan House,  
20<sup>th</sup> September 2012  
Agreed Minutes**

**Present:** Roland Stiven, David Sulman, Crispin Thorn, Hazel Newman, Andy Leitch, Claire Glaister, Colin Mackenzie, David Eaglesham, Simon Oldham, James England, Neil Dyson, Margaret Horn, Colin McNicol, Ken Sinclair, Richard Scott, Margaret Watson

1. Welcome and Apologies

In the absence of Alistair Speedie the meeting was chaired by Andy Leitch.

**Apologies** were received from Jamie Farquhar, Alistair Speedie, Fergus Tickell, Neil Stoddart, Will Anderson, David Spaven, Donald Maclean, David Hern, Steven Herriott, Kirsty Robb

2. New Members

Claire Glaister was welcomed back to the Forum as project officer for Stirling and Tayside and Grampian.

3. Previous Minutes

The draft minutes of the meeting of 14<sup>th</sup> June 2012 were accepted as accurate with one revision.

**Actions**

**Outstanding Action: Formal STTS press release.** The Annandale and Ae timber haul route is now finished and Alistair Speedie has sent a letter to the new Scottish Forestry Minister Paul Wheelhouse MSP inviting him to open the route this autumn. If this invitation is taken up it would be an opportunity for a major press release regarding STTS.

**Outstanding Action: Approach Scottish Renewable** regarding links between windfarm infrastructure and timber haulage. There has been no development at a national level but this does occur at regional level. Andy Leitch noted that the ongoing experience of constructing the West Loch Awe Haul Route (which has STTS funding) draws attention to the differences in road specification for timber haulage and windfarm construction. This needs to be taken into account in partnership projects.

**Outstanding Action: Core path networks** and timber haul routes. Andy Leitch asked that the regional groups continue to report on this subject where it is an issue. New FCS guidance on access is expected which may help to address issues.

**Action: Consultation on planning consent for hill tracks.** The Forum contributed a response to this. An [analysis of responses](#) has now been published which reflects well the arguments set out by the forestry sector. The Scottish Government is expected to take a decision in due course.

**Action: Agreed Routes Map WebGIS** The brief for this has been prepared and likely contractors will be invited to tender shortly [*done 24.9.12*]. An STTS application has been submitted for a proportion of the funding and additional funding has been offered by FC England and the three English timber transport groups.

**Action: Truckfest** Neil Stoddart and Dan Cathcart organised a Forum stand at Truckfest on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> August bringing in specialised timber lorries from McKerrals, Fergusons, John Miller, JST and a JST loader. They distributed copies of the Road Haulage of Round Timber Code of Practice and the reprinted Timber Transport Management Good Practice Guide. FCS paid for the stand area and the TTF budget paid for some extras, including a new banner, a feather flag, T-shirts and refreshments. The forestry stand made the front cover of Transport News!

## **Matters Arising**

Roland Stiven reported that **Richard Lochhead** visited Ferguson Transport Ltd and Kilmallie sawmill at the end of July at the invitation of Confor and BSW.

**The Woodland Expansion Advisory Group [report](#)** has now been published with limited mention of timber transport issues. A response is expected from Scottish Government this autumn [\[now published\]](#).

**Draft Business Plan.** There has been limited feedback on this so far, but it is still welcome. Roland Stiven and Alistair Speedie will finalise the business plan at the end of October.

**APF SHOW** – The Forum had a stand at the APF Forestry Exhibition held at Ragley Estate near Worcester. We shared the stand with a James Jones lorry fitted with tyre pressure control on all axles. Brian Spreen of Tireboss and Frank MacCulloch were on site explaining the system to people. We gave out around 100 copies of the Code of Practice and a similar number of the on Managing Timber Transport Good Practice Guide. The lorry also held a prototype of the chip transporting 'Big Bag' that enables a skeletal timber trailer to haul chips from sawmill to customer.

One issue that arose from discussions at the APF was the need for better guidance on specifying road-friendly vehicles, e.g. What lorry configuration is appropriate in different situations? How should a haulage contract specify low ground pressure options?

The Forum discussed this and agreed that guidance should be prepared on 'road-friendly' vehicles in timber transport. A short guide is envisaged, drawing together existing information and aiming to give local authorities, hauliers and harvesting managers an understanding of the options and resources currently available while providing a realistic expectation of what they can deliver.

**ACTION: Roland Stiven to draft, and circulate for comment, a proposal for preparing guidance on 'road-friendly' vehicles in timber transport.**

**The National (Scottish) Road Maintenance Review**, highlighted by Pam Stott at the previous meeting, was published in the summer. As part of this, a Scottish Road Research Board was set up which has asked TRL (Transport Research Laboratory) to investigate where over-specification may increase costs and so discourage appropriate improvements. This is an issue the Forum has promoted previously, looking for appropriate low cost solutions for improving low volume roads used for timber haulage. Roland Stiven requested feedback from local authority contacts on examples of where more appropriate works could have been carried out. There has not been a clear response from councils but Colin Mackenzie has provided some commentary on the subject to TRL highlighting the lessons learned from Roadex. It was agreed that the Forum should provide a description of the kind of road works being undertaken by councils to maintain and improve public roads used for timber haulage. Ken Sinclair noted recent discussions within FCS on how to account for forest road costs from either revenue or capital budgets.

Roland Stiven met with John Lyons of Coillte to discuss issues of mutual interest with the **Irish Timber Transport Group**. Coillte is currently working to bring roundwood haulage of sawlogs in house, delivering to sawmills rather than sawmills contracting haulage.

## 4. Independent Panel on Forestry

Crispin Thorn provided a brief overview of the process and outputs of the Independent Panel on Forestry which was looking at the future of English forestry. The [final report](#) of the panel has been published and a response from government is expected by January 2013. Comments can still be sent via [forestryresponse@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:forestryresponse@defra.gsi.gov.uk). Recommendations in the report include one to increase forest cover in England by 10-15% and to increase woodlands under management from 50% to 80%. Crispin also noted the government's [response](#) to the Forest Regulation Task Force. The section regarding the Highways Act and the issue of extraordinary traffic says that the Forestry Commission will 'encourage the forest industry to work in partnership with local highway authorities'. FC England has offered £2k towards the new ARM map web hosting project but otherwise input is likely to be limited to staff time.

The new forestry minister in England is David Heath and it is expected that the over-riding government priority of economic growth will continue to be reflected in forest policy.

## 5. Regional Updates

**Highland** Colin Mackenzie reported that the Highlands has been offered funding for a number of STTS projects in the latest round and will be looking to publicise this. Another 5-7 projects are in the pipeline for the next round in November. There is a growing need to come up with a mechanism to ration road space on certain fragile roads in Sutherland, e.g. allocate a share of a limited number of lorry loads per day to the various forest owners served by a road. Richard Scott saw this as a role for the groups. Neil Dyson noted that the Lorg Glen (a road upgraded with STTS funding) has a road management sub group of the timber transport group which agrees a voluntary road space allocation between forest owners. Simon Oldham asked how in practice this could be rationed and enforced given the legal right to use the roads. Andy Leitch noted that haulage contracts could be one mechanism to 'enforce' a voluntary agreement.

**Argyll** Kirsty Robb had provided a written update which is attached. Andy Leitch noted the current status of the A83 Rest and be Thankful diversion route which has come under the remit of a new task force. Andy and Kirsty are on the task force which is focusing work on the old military road rather than the forest road as previously expected. It is likely that the existing STTS contract will be revised and the funds transferred to the old military road, through Transport Scotland.

**Grampian and Stirling and Tayside** Claire Glaister noted that, following a tendering exercise, as of 1<sup>st</sup> October 2012, she will resume the role of project officer for Grampian and Stirling and Tayside, whereupon she will liaise with the groups to agree priorities for work. Claire will be working in a self employed capacity trading as 'GR Forestry Consultancy'.

**Dumfries and Galloway** James England reported that the Annandale and Ae haul route is finally complete and open. A further 4-5 projects are in the pipeline for the next round of STTS applications. He also noted that a number of people are liaising with the local authority over transport implications of possible sites for new planting. On the other hand some recent sales particulars for forest areas have failed to suitably describe the public road access limitations. James is encouraging selling agents to include a reference to the Agreed Routes Maps in sales particulars, encouraging likely buyers to consult these and liaise with the council where appropriate. The A708 Moffat to Selkirk road was subject to weekend closures to allow the safe removal of areas of roadside plantations. This generated substantial media coverage. From the harvesting company's perspective the long period of planning paid off, with the work only requiring two weekend closures rather than the four weekends allowed for.

**Scottish Borders** James England reported briefly on a meeting with Robertson community which resulted in a list of issues. A timber transport management plan is being considered as a way forward for the community together with greater police interaction over the use of routes by timber vehicles. Simon Oldham mentioned an issue elsewhere in the Borders where a consultation route is attracting unintended through timber traffic, and the concomitant issues of enforcing and policing this voluntary restriction.

**Ayr** James England reported that in general the Ayrshire councils are responding to approaches from the forest industry more promptly. N Ayrshire has 3 potential STTS projects in preparation. South Lanarkshire has agreed to the development of an Agreed Routes Map for Ayr. Neil Dyson noted that a new biomass plant being built in South Ayrshire will be accessed directly from an A road.

**Cumbria** Richard Scott reported that the group met on 5<sup>th</sup> September and continue to make minor changes to the ARM and to develop timber traffic management plans for sensitive roads. In one particular case members of the group are involved in trying to find agreement on haulage of 20k tonnes over a fragile road. It is apparent that roads authority staff do not always understand the implications of different lorry configurations and tyre pressure control systems. Guidance on this subject would be useful. In some instances poor drainage is being overlooked as a significant contributory factor in road damage. The group is planning site visits to roads, processing facilities

and forests to help share understanding between roads authority and forestry staff. Cumbria County Council has agreed to provide £500 towards the webGIS ARM project.

**North Yorkshire** Crispin Thorn reported that the NYTFQP are continuing to finalise the Agreed Routes Map following a constructive public consultation. Substantial effort has also gone into agreeing a Memorandum of Understanding on roles and responsibilities and this is nearly done. Members of the group are still involved in trying to influence/resolve particular haulage situations.

**North East England** Hazel Newman said that there is still enthusiasm for the group which is making progress. The timber industry members have prepared a first draft of an Agreed Routes Maps which is now with council staff for their consideration. In general the council involvement is becoming more positive. A new council representative has been brought to the group who is learning more about the industry. Last year's subgroup on winter working has been re-initiated again this year. NCC has agreed to provide £500 towards the WebGIS ARM project.

**Wales** Roland reported that following a letter from the Wales Timber Transport Group to the Carl Sargeant, Minister for Local Government and Communities (including transport policy and roads), David Hern had been asked by the minister to meet formally with Kath McNulty as chair of the Wales TTG and Roland Stiven. The letter to the minister had proposed a pilot timber haul route for Tywi Forest and re-iterated the need for a Wales Freight Group to provide a suitable mechanism to inform government policy on freight issues. Following the meeting, David Hern reported that they are actively seeking Ministerial approval to restart the Wales Freight Group and to start work to refresh and update the Wales Freight Strategy.

#### 6. Timber Transport Conference

The Forum discussed a possible spring conference. Roland Stiven noted that following the successful conference in March there was not a wide range of new subject matter ready for a spring 2013 conference. One idea was to focus on public road maintenance – linking into the Scottish National Roads Maintenance Review. The Forum felt that such a theme had value though it is usually difficult to attract local authority staff. A link to SCOTS and perhaps CPD recognition for engineers and transport planners might help boost attendance. In general however it was felt that it would be better to skip a year, go for a biannual conference in spring 2014 and use the intervening time to prepare material. This could include the guidance on road-friendly vehicles, case studies on public road improvements and haul roads and perhaps also a focus on drainage and other issues arising from Roadex.

**ACTION: Roland Stiven to propose a theme for a 2014 conference and set out a programme of preparatory work and case studies linked to the Forum's business plan.**

#### 7. Health and Safety and Timber Haulage

David Sulman reported that the Forest Industry Safety Accord had been agreed and launched at the APF Exhibition in September. A Forest Industry Safety Group (FISG) has been established with a plan of action involving eight workstreams. One of these is titled 'Timber Haulage in the Forest' with an action to 'Establish a set of forest haulage guidelines by October 2013'. The group is also learning about forest safety in other countries including Canada. David Sulman will continue to provide a formal link between the group and the Forum. Roland Stiven noted that Forum members Alasdair Ferguson, John Paterson and Donald McLean also on the group. David Eaglesham noted that the HSE is implementing a charging regime as of 1<sup>st</sup> October whereby any action by the HSE arising from checks on companies will incur a charge. Colin McNicol suggested that all hauliers should work towards ISO 18,000 certification (Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems).

#### 8. Funding Update

**Strategic Timber Transport Scheme** Andy Leitch referred to the circulated table on current STTS awards and noted that while £3.5m has been awarded, actual uptake will depend on projects progressing and being delivered on time. To allow for more lead in time on projects, FCS has adjusted the fund's budget profile to £2m this year, £3m next and £4m in 2014-15. When the likely Timberlink requirement is taken into account, around £3m remains to be allocated to

projects. Applications to the STTS are invited by November 16<sup>th</sup> 2012. The [STTF webpage](#) provides updated application forms and guidance with the guidance noting a more specific link to approved Forest Plans.

**Freight Facilities Grant** Margaret Horn reported that projects which had applied for the Scottish Government's FFG funds in this spending review period were progressing relatively slowly towards supplying the evidence necessary to allow for assessment and so it was currently unclear whether there would be any awards of grant this financial year.. There has been some clawback from underperforming projects claiming Mode Shift Revenue Support (MSRS) in 2012/2013 and so the scheme remains open to interested parties .

**Innovation Fund** Margaret Watson noted that both the floating piers and the recent chip carrying 'Big Bag' prototype had received [innovation grants](#) from Scottish Enterprise which continue to be available to eligible projects.

#### 9. Type Approval; Exemptions for timber lorries

Roland Stiven noted the concerns raised by hauliers that current exemptions for timber lorries are not being carried through to the new type approval process. The current exemptions mean that skeletal trailers (and skeletal rigid lorries) designed specifically for round timber do not need to fit rear and lateral guards or spray suppression systems. These cause problems when working in the forest environment. Timber trailer builders approached at the APF had not managed to get a clear indication of whether the exemptions will continue and were assuming they would need to fit these after October 2012. With advice from RHA, Roland has been in contact with DfT trying to find out if there is scope to continue the exemptions. This is ongoing.

#### 10. Climate Change National Adaptation Programme

The England Woodland & Timber Partnership is currently working with Defra on identifying potential contributions by the forestry sector to the [Climate Change National Adaptation Programme](#) (NAP). The Partnership arranged a workshop in June which focused on discussions around the Forestry Commission's Adaptation Reporting Power (ARP) [report](#) (2012) and is now in the process of setting up a Working Group to determine potential contributions / actions by the forestry sector to the Programme. EW&TP would like TTF to take an action point to share industry best practice and enable knowledge transfer on timber transport issues in England. Roland Stiven suggested that such action points would be covered by current work and the business plan. There was agreement that the Forum should make the EWTP aware of current work. David Sulman noted that he was on the EWTP.

#### 11. AOB

Simon Oldham asked if the new WebGIS Agreed Routes Map would include labels for minor roads. Colin McNicol explained that A&B roads are numbered nationally while C and unclassified roads are numbered by local authorities. Some local authorities publish these local classifications. James England noted that the current FCS website Agreed Routes Map shows the road labels for A, B & C roads that are categorised – e.g. shown as agreed, consultation etc. This dataset will also feature on the new ARMS map [*However, we may have to deliberately add labels for 'U' unclassified roads*].

#### 12. Dates of next meetings

These will be on:

To be confirmed



## **Argyll Timber Transport Group Update**

There is a high level of interest and support from the forest industry for ATTG. Meeting held on 23 August had an attendance of 23 and a site meeting held on 12 September to discuss the R&BT diversion attracted over 20 attendees although this did include representatives from Transport Scotland, general haulage, agriculture and public transport.

## **STTS Projects Approved 2012**

### **Dalmally SHR**

Budget : £284,320.00

Strategic Timber Transport Scheme Support Requested: £142,160.00

Length of road constructed in forest 3.76km

Length of council road upgrade 0.03 Km

Length of road upgraded in forest 0.137km

Haul route includes 3 different privately owned and Forestry Commission forests, and encompasses all of the forested area south of and between the village of Dalmally and the historic Duncan Ban MacIntyre Monument. This area of forestry is currently accessed from the A815 through the village of Dalmally, over a narrow railway bridge on an unclassified Argyll & Bute Council road; 'Monument Hill Road'. This road is a very narrow single track road of fragile construction which crosses areas of deep peat and has constant maintenance issue with the current level of traffic, the road would have to be significantly improved for any increase in heavy haulage.

This timber haul route once implemented will have the ability and potential to convey 200,000 tonnes of timber over 50 years, and that in perpetuity.

### **SW Glendaruel SHR**

Budget Estimate: £545,190

Strategic Timber Transport Scheme Support Requested: £272,595

New Forest Road Construction – 3080 metres

includes tarmac bellmouths at junction with U22

Existing Forest Road Upgrade – 2200 metres

Existing Tarmac Road Upgrade – 108 metres

2 new bridges

Scheme to link access between 3 private forest areas & create a timber haul route which will avoid use of the U22& C11 fragile roads in West Glendaruel & the Clachan of Glendaruel by running directly to the A886 main road. This route avoids the new playing area at the Clachan & also preserves a listed bridge structure near the village.

### **Rest & Be Thankful A83 diversion route**

STTF funds £800,000 (underspend from previous budget)

Total estimated cost £1.5 million+

Work has commenced on the Old Military Road (OMR) rather than the Forest Road originally proposed for the project. Transport Scotland had a study carried out by Transerv [HERE](#) which favoured the OMR option. Concerns raised by ATTG hauliers following a drive trial (with artic) of the first section of the OMR resulted in a site meeting with Transport Scotland to make them aware

of the issues raised. The meeting was attended by other hauliers, local businesses and a bus company. General consensus after the meeting (still gathering responses from attendees) seemed to conclude that the OMR can most likely be upgraded to a passable level and indeed some general hauliers and the bus company represented felt the OMR was the better route. Timber hauliers from Argyll are still unconvinced the OMR is the best choice but it is obvious that Transport Scotland won't rethink a and in any case this would delay the diversion being implemented. The OMR crosses land which has still to be negotiated at this late stage, although works have commenced at either end. It is still conceivable that agreement *won't* be reached and Transport Scotland may have to revert to the forest road option.

Andy Leitch and Kirsty Robb are members of the newly appointed Scottish Government Taskforce tasked with overseeing the implementation of the diversion route and resolving the wider issues with the A83, so will be able to communicate the concerns that have been raised.

**Project proposals in development:**

Four different roads within the Argyll & Bute Council network which are key timber transport routes have been identified in need of upgrade to allow for the continuation of timber haulage. We also have some in-forest haul roads and floating pier schemes under consideration.

TTMP's stipulating specific lorry configuration and minimising the use of artics/flat bed lorries are crucial to preserve some of our most fragile roads but this can create a major drawback for hauliers, the need to transfer loads from one lorry to another for the completion of the journey to market. It simply isn't cost effective to run the smaller loads on either CTI lorries or 6 wheel & drag all the way to end-users; increase in fuel consumption, overheads etc.

We all know that transferring loads from one lorry to another is a costly exercise that should be avoided, but unfortunately this isn't always possible or indeed practicable.

**Safe and usable cross loading/transfer facilities** are few and far between in Argyll, Argyll & Bute Council (A&BC) have recognised this and would like to work in partnership with ATTG to identify strategically positioned areas for hauliers to use and develop an STTF project which encompasses this.

At the recent meeting of ATTG, FCS and Argyll hauliers backed this proposal, FCS are likely to be imposing stricter rules regarding the handling of third party timber on FCS ground to further control the risk of disease spreading.

Hauliers are finding that 'modern day' lorries are less and less suitable for use on forest roads and see the need for specialised in-forest lorries being used more often which will increase the requirement for secondary loading and temporary storage facilities.

Kirsty Robb  
ATTG Project Officer  
19 September 2012