

Timber Transport Forum Meeting

Silvan House, 10.15 hrs, 28th January 2010

Agreed Minutes

Present: Alistair Speedie, Andy Leitch, Jim Dewar, Richard Scott, Jamie Farquhar, Mike Green, Richard Evans, Ian Farmer, Neil Dyson, Collin Mackenzie, Roland Stiven, Emily Maclean, David Eaglesham, Stan Corcoran

Apologies: Simon Oldham, Fergus Tickell, Ian Arnold, Ian Ross, Crispin Thorn, Steven Herriott, David Sulman, Margaret Horn, Syd House, Margaret Watson, Chris Edwards.

1. Previous minutes (of 16/92009)

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed. **Please note that these will be posted on the Timber Transport Forum website**

2. Matters arising

- The Work plan for the TTF project officer has been prepared and distributed to the Executive Group
- A response to the consultation on the English Public Forest Estate was submitted in September 2009. *[It has now been circulated to all members]*
- The Forestry Cluster groups are organising training on the application of SRDP for business development in February and March

3. Severe Weather Disruption

The recent prolonged period of snow and cold disrupted timber transport and constrained production of some processors and forestry contractors across the UK. Road clearing resources were very stretched putting local authorities under severe pressure. During the period, Alistair Speedie, as Chair of the TTF, sent out a request through SCOTS networks and Scottish Local Authorities asking for liaison with the timber industry to consider where priority routes could be opened up to minimise disruption to timber-using businesses. There were instances where this proved possible. The co-operation and assistance of Local Authorities is very much appreciated.

Richard Evans noted the repeated snowfalls that prevented local authorities from being able to address the lower priority roads. Richard Scott suggested there was a need for industry to improve contingency planning and improve the resilience of the timber supply process. It may be possible to improve weather forecast information flows so that harvesting teams can respond to severe weather warnings – as they do for severe wind forecasts. Also to highlight priority timber supply routes within the gritting programmes.

Related road damage

Following the thaw, many minor public roads are in a fragile state. The meeting heard reports from Highland, South Scotland and Argyll of damage resulting from timber traffic in specific sites. Colin Mackenzie circulated an illustration of typical frost-related damage in Highland. In some cases roads are being closed to prevent further deterioration. With road revenue budgets seriously overspent as a result of the severe winter weather, local authorities are unlikely to be able to prioritise repairs for timber haulage.

The TTF will urgently collect information on the levels of road damage, road closures and disruption to timber traffic, which will assist FCS assess if there is a need for funds to be made available through the STTS to contribute to emergency repairs of damage on strategic timber routes, to ensure safety for all users and continued access to timber supplies.

There was discussion around the mechanism for delivering any such grant support which would need a simple application process, clear criteria and speedy implementation.

ACTION: TTGs to request information on disruption from road closures. Roland to collate and forward to FCS.

4. Timber Transport Conference

The programme conference was discussed. The forestry minister is being asked to provide a keynote speech. Other options are being considered. The programme was considered to be busy and, as it stands, would need careful timekeeping. Mike Green noted emerging plans for a seminar in the summer concentrating on Roadex and Tyre Pressure Control Systems which may overlap with conference items.

Alistair Speedie is happy to introduce speakers and chair the conference.

ACTION: All – to promote attendance at the conference

5. Carbon Footprint Study and Timber Miles

The Terms of Reference for consultancy work on 'Understanding the Carbon Footprint of Timber Transport in the UK' were circulated. Tenders have been invited from several contractors and submissions have been received which will be assessed shortly.

It was noted that

- Carbon Footprints are an indicator in Local Authority Single Outcome Agreements.
- DfT are progressing work on low carbon freight involving DEFRA and FTA/RHA. RHA have released guidance <http://www.rha.uk.net/news/BTPGIM/CZXHWF>
- SCOTFLAG (Scottish Freight Logistics Advisory Group) is also addressing low carbon issues.

It is important this study integrates with other work in transport and forestry. To ensure this the ToR have been reviewed by industry specialists and contact with FTA/RHA and DfT has been established.

A related action for the TTF is to develop a methodology to calculate the **Timber Miles** Indicator. This process has been initiated with a letter to timber processors (via ConFor and UKFPA) requesting information on data they already collect that may contribute to the indicator.

6. Strategic Timber Transport Scheme Lobby Paper

A paper was circulated setting out ideas on how we can influence the continuation of the STTS in the next public spending review and drafting the key messages. While the final public spending decisions will not be taken until next year, the process for setting the priorities starts now and the period between now and the autumn is critical. We need to show ministers how it will help to deliver the Scottish Forestry Strategy and the climate change action plan.

The forum considered that such a scheme is **equally relevant to Wales and parts of England**. The Forum should therefore liaise with UK-wide representatives and progress three parallel messages, promoting the agenda through country-specific avenues.

It was proposed that a report is prepared to clarify the key messages and consider how that message can be put across. We can produce regionally specific case studies/highlights and encourage TTGs to lobby local MSPs/MPs, and Assembly members. We need to use the influence of regional transport partnerships, Freight Quality Partnerships the forestry and haulage associations and, in Scotland, of SCOTS and COSLA to highlight the importance of the scheme to ministers. Articles should be written for Public Servant Scotland, Public Service Review (Transport) and the Holyrood magazine.

ACTION: ALL Provide Roland with Feedback on draft key messages paper.

ACTION: ALL Suggest opportunities for presenting the case for STTS extension

7. Red Diesel

Mike Braithewaite has been contracted to provide responses to the Frequently Asked Questions brief prepared by the TTF in 2008. Mike has now responded having liaised directly with HMRC where required. The response has been circulated to a volunteer, informal sub group comprising David Sulman, Mike Green, Jamie Farquhar and Andy Leitch as well as Donald Maclean and Lachlan MacEwan of FCAUK.

When finalised, the TTF will consider how to present and disseminate the responses either as FAQ or as distilled key messages.

ACTION: RED DIESEL 'sub group' to review the consultant's responses

ACTION: ROLAND Develop and circulate a draft information note on Red Diesel and Forestry

8. Scottish Forestry Strategy Action Points

Andy Leith noted the proposed action points assigned to the Timber Transport Forum within the Scottish Forestry Strategy Implementation Plan 2010-2011. The Action Points were agreed. They are:

- Organise and disseminate outputs of a conference addressing key issues in timber transport (TTF)
- Produce a summary of the outputs of the Strategic Timber Transport Scheme (FCS and TTF)
- In conjunction with the Timber Transport Forum, consider the requirements for future funding for key strategic timber transport projects in Scotland. (FCS, TTF).
- Support a Timber Transport Project Officer post to lead on timber transport development work (TTF, FCS, SE, ConFor)

9. Reclaimed aggregate for forest roads

Alistair Speedie and Neil Dyson noted ongoing discussions regarding the opportunity, from 2013, to use recycled aggregate from the demolition of the Chapelcross power station to build and maintain nearby in-forest roads and in-forest haulage routes. Using recycled aggregates avoids the landfill tax due if it were to go to waste, and avoids aggregates tax on new material brought in for use on forest roads. Similar opportunities may be available throughout the country. SEPA will be required to advise on each application, as a permit or exemption would need to be awarded.

NISP is a government-supported organisation providing a free service that could help land managers identify sources of recycled aggregate for road material. Background and contact details for NISP can be found at www.nisp.org.uk

10. Regional updates

Highland Timber Transport Group (Colin Mackenzie)

- A contract to collect data on future timber production volumes and exit points onto the public road network has reported back. Consultant Chris Piper and colleague managed to achieve a 90% response rate for the private sector.

Dumfries and Galloway (Neil Dyson)

- Severe weather caused significant disruption to timber transport.
- Revisions are being made to the Agreed Route Maps including categorising roads linked to future planting proposals
- Two bids have been submitted to the STTF

Scottish Borders (Neil Dyson)

- Snow prevented timber haulage over Christmas/New Year period.
- Work on the STTF Craik project is underway and stage 2 will proceed next financial year.

Ayr (Stan Corcoran)

- Discussion on the possibility of a Straiton bypass are at an early stage.
- A report is awaited on tenders for the Barrhill Rail project. Network Rail seem to be more amenable to trackside loading. The network of roads to link to a potential railhead has been built and discussions are ongoing as to the constitution of the body who will control the use and maintenance of this network.
- Work on Arran roads will take place in spring and autumn 2010 to reduce impact on summer tourist season.
- There have been a number of private sector enquiries relating to new planting opportunities on un-agreed or consultation routes.

Stirling and Tayside and Grampian (Emily Maclean)

- Two weekend haulier events are being developed in conjunction with the Forest Cluster groups. One for Stirling and Tayside and Argyll at Balloch. The other will cover Highland and Grampian. Programmes are being drawn up.
- An STTS project for a village bypass in Aberdeenshire is being completed.
- The East Loch Lomond road improvements will be taken forward by the council in a prioritised, staged approach as funding is available.
- Work is continuing to bring in wider freight interest for a Crianlarich Railhead development. A user group needs to be established to take it forward.
- A data collection exercise, similar to the Highland work, is underway. SGRPID seem unwilling to give out agent/owner data connected with grant-aided plans or work which makes it more difficult. Previous forestry grant programmes did make this information available. Jamie Farquhar has repeatedly raised this issue with SGRPID.

Cumbria (Richard Scott)

- Cumbria Timber Transport group has been set up and will meet in early February. It has good representation from across industry and public sectors. Richard Scott will be the chair.

Argyll

- Roland Stiven reported on a recent sub group meeting to deal with the issue of in-forest haul routes being proposed for inclusion in the core path network. Work is ongoing to focus in on the specific sites where these may overlap, to consider alternatives where appropriate and highlight where issues might arise.

11. Updates

Timber Haulier CPC training

- A sub group of Margaret Watson, Neil Dyson and Roland Stiven met to progress the Timber 'SAFED' Training material developed in 2008. The group held discussions with Alan Gale of Ae Forestry Training Centre.
- Terms of Reference were circulated to the meeting for a short piece of work to set out a mechanism to deliver the training and to cost it. This work is being carried out by Neil Dyson through his Woodscapes consultancy.

CTI / TPCS legality

- Ray Engley for the RHA technical department took forward discussions with VOSA and VCA on the appropriate process for fitting Tyre Pressure Control Systems to lorries. Ray's response is as follows:

I have received confirmation that the fitment of TPCS will remain a VTG10 (notifiable alteration) for the foreseeable future. It will not be an issue for type approval unless a vehicle manufacturer decides to offer the system as option on its vehicles. If, of course, the manufacturer of the equipment decide to market it as a tyre pressure monitoring device at some future date then type approval would be necessary. [This refers to forthcoming EU legislation on tyre pressure monitoring systems]

Therefore fitting this equipment will require the submission of a VTG10 for individual vehicles for the foreseeable future.

ACTION ROLAND Circulate TPCS advice from RHA and add to the Timber Transport Toolkit.

- Neil Dyson has presented to Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland on TPCS and they have agreed to report back with regard to its use on public roads.
- Mike Green noted that there is still some nervousness in the industry and concern that TPCS will become a standard requirement for timber haulage. FES is looking at the scope for low tyre pressure approaches to reducing maintenance on forest roads. TPCS is just one such approach. So far two routes are designated specifically for low tyre pressure vehicles. There will be consultation and a 12 month lead in on any further proposals.
- FES are planning a summer seminar on the subject.

12. Scottish Rail Freight Policy Consultation

- The Timber Transport Forum submitted a response to the Scottish Government's consultation on Rail Freight Policy. Copies of this were circulated and are available on the TTF website.

13. AOB

- Jamie Farquhar noted that draft guidance on Forest Management for White-tailed Eagles (sea eagles) is in preparation, which is likely to constrain forest road building in the vicinity of WTE nests.

14. Dates for future meetings

- The next meeting will be in Edinburgh on the **22nd April 2010**
- The subsequent meeting will be on 2nd September 2010