

Timber Transport Forum Meeting

Silvan House, 10.30 hrs, 2nd September 2010

Approved Minutes

1. Welcome and apologies

Present

Syd House, David Sulman, David Eaglesham, Ian Ross, (acting Chair), Crispin Thorn, Jim Tolmie, Mike Green, Claire Glaister, Pam Stott (for Margaret Horn), Andy Leitch, Roland Stiven, Neil Dyson, Richard Scott, Colin Mackenzie, Alasdair Ferguson, Darroch Lyon, Jamie Farquhar, Margaret Watson

Apologies

Jim Dewar, Emily MacLean, David Hern, Simon Oldham, Stan Corcoran, Alistair Speedie, Richard Evans, James Gilroy, Phil Flanders, Doug Coyle, Margaret Horn

2. Previous Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed to be accurate and any matters arising were expected to be dealt with in the meeting.

3. STTF update and influencing process

Andy Leitch noted changes to administration of the Strategic Timber Transport Scheme (STTS) which have arisen because Russ Collins has moved to another post within FC. For the present the administration of the STTF will be undertaken by FC Scotland administration staff with technical issues dealt with by Roland Stiven and Andy Leitch. There will be more onus on regional groups and project officers to prepare any future STTS applications well, clearly following the guidance and scheme criteria. Regional groups will be informed of these changes directly.

The Forum expressed unanimous appreciation for the valuable contribution Russ has made in supporting the STTS application and appraisal process and wishes him well in his new post.

Andy clarified that the STT Fund provides the budget for both the STT Scheme and for the public service contract to support the Timberlink scheme.

Influencing process

35-40 letters were sent to the Minister regarding the scheme and Timberlink. Recommendations on the future of the fund were put to the FCS Management Board alongside other elements of forestry expenditure and a number of scenarios will be offered to the minister. A decision is expected following the Comprehensive Spending Review in November.

The Forum has been offered a meeting with the Minister for the Environment on the 23rd September to discuss the work of the Forum and the future of the Strategic Timber Transport Fund. A paper was circulated to prompt discussion on how we present the issues to the minister.

It was proposed that Alistair Speedie as Chair and Roland Stiven as Officer should attend the meeting with the Minister together with someone who can represent the delivery end of the industry – forest management/processing/haulage. Ideally they should be able to provide a national perspective. Another option would be to have representation – in person or otherwise from beneficiaries of the scheme – e.g. a forest owner or community representative that benefitted from the public benefits of a project.

Discussion raised the following points

- Emphasise that timber transport is rising to the top of the pile of constraints to the economic development potential of forestry.
- Highlight the complementary role SRDP can play in contributing to timber transport solutions and have examples. Provide a snapshot of SRDP funding on forest roads to date?
- The private sector should be represented at the meeting.
- Be prepared to address the question of how industry can input further to funding timber transport solutions.
- Demonstrate the social and environmental impact of the fund and the extraordinarily good value for money it delivers.
- It could be helpful to have very brief case studies and images.
- Note the leverage the fund exacts from the private sector.
- Transport infrastructure limitations may constrain new planting targets.
- Demonstrate the ongoing demand for funding – the £12-13m of tabled future projects.
- Note the importance of the low carbon agenda.
- While it may not be realistic, the Forum should anyway invite the Minister to visit an area where timber transport solutions are being addressed.

Andy Leitch noted that he will probably be present advising the minister who will be well briefed on the detail of the fund. The Forum should communicate brief clear statements on how the fund adds value and helps deliver the Scottish Governments priorities – Greener, Wealthier etc.

Colin Mackenzie asked if we could consider using the scheme more to assist local authorities with maintenance costs and noted the constraints to match funding through local authority budgets. It was agreed that the Forum's priority at this stage is simply for a continuation of the scheme and that while there may be ways to develop or improve the scheme these should be dealt with in the implementation process.

Ian Ross summarised:

- Make a small number of points.
- Show what has been delivered
- Describe the opportunities that remain,
- Align these with government priorities and
- Demonstrate good value for money.
- The team meeting the minister should be prepared with an agreed pitch perhaps some headline documentation and perhaps some images.

Various people were proposed to represent the industry.

ACTION: Any further proposals on who should represent the industry/beneficiaries at the meeting with the Minister should be passed to Roland asap.

ALL

ACTION: Discuss and invite industry/beneficiary representative to contribute and prepare presentation

Roland Stiven, Alastair Speedie

4. Future funding of Forum and regional officers

It was noted that the majority of the project officer funding (for the four Scottish timber transport groups and the Forum) comes to an end in spring 2011 though some posts have funds to carry forward. There is also financial pressure on the posts serving the Wales group and the North Yorkshire FQP.

Crispin Thorn noted pressure to consider options in North Yorkshire including a budget-version of the current support provided to the NY group. The Forum will also need to make the case for a continuing contribution from FC England to the project officer post.

Andy Leitch noted that the SSTF supported roles were generally spending slightly under budget so there may be scope for some savings. Ian Ross noted the continued importance of the project officer role irrespective of the future of the fund.

ACTION: Use influence to help secure a broad funding base which will allow project officer resource to continue.

ALL

5. Regional Updates

Cumbria - Richard Scott

The recently formed group is focusing on the development of an Agreed Routes Map. Good progress has been made with group input to a first draft which has then been reviewed by roads engineers. Over the coming weeks a series of meetings with local roads departments will allow forest industry and roads staff to meet, learn about each other and work through the issues that arise.

Highland- Colin Mackenzie and Jim Tolmie

Data collection on exit points and volumes complete. Significant new work to assess the implications for timber transport of various proposed biomass plants. Rail freight projects are attracting attention following HITRANS rail freight capacity study. HITRANS has also commissioned some work on rail solutions to a landlocked forest north of Inverness. ROADDEX project is progressing two research projects – one on vibration impacts (with Ferguson Transport) and another on drainage.

South Scotland (and Northumberland) – Neil Dyson

Northumberland - There has been continuing support for addressing timber transport issues in Northumberland with a positive drive coming from the council, North-East Forestry Forum, the forest industry and FCE.

Scottish Borders – Increasing amounts of timber being harvested and the region becoming a hot spot for timber transport concerns. Dialogue between local authorities and forest industries on options for industry actions to assist with maintenance of public roads.

Dumfries and Galloway – Sub groups continue to be active. Eskdalemuir bypass and Barrhill haul routes bearing up well. Ongoing work on a port facility.

Ayr and South Lanarkshire – Ayrshire is very busy with timber haulage creating some stress in the partnership with South Ayrshire Council. The first phase of the Arran STTS project has gone well and the second phase is starting now.

Grampian and Stirling and Tayside – Claire Glaister

Haulier Liaison days at Balloch and Forres in June had a lower than expected turnout but those that did turn up provided positive feedback.

Grampian TTG are looking into extracting the exit point data from the ARMS map so it can be used by the council in planning. Also undertaking a study of use of ports for timber transport. North East Forest Industries Cluster is looking into a haulier support programme to provide business support and training in association with the Freight Best Practice programme. In **Stirling and Tayside** there has been more public response regarding the Griffin wind farm at Alyth. TACTRAN has contracted Lorne Anton to continue work looking into the viability of a new Crianlarich railhead. The group is also responding to a request for support for a proposed biomass plant.

North Yorkshire – Crispin Thorn

Rural Development Initiatives have completed a draft Production Planning and Agreed Route Mapping Report which is currently with the council for approval. It is hoped that this report will form the basis of the development of an ARM for consultation with wider industry stakeholders. The council roads department has highlighted the fact that it is anticipating severe budgetary cuts and considering how these may impact on the work of the group and wider maintenance programmes. Generally communication over timber transport issues is improving but there remain specific issues in certain areas. A rail timber freight service has started running a weekly service from Ribbleshead to Chirk.

Wales – Roland Stiven

Kath McNulty raised the need for resources for timber transport with Ieuan Wyn Jones, Deputy First Minister and Minister for the Economy and Transport at a forum in Wales and he invited her to provide more information on the issue. Roland and Kath are continuing to meet with those involved in timber transport issues with a view to proposing a clearer way forward for the Welsh Timber Transport Group.

Argyll – Syd House

The Argyll Timber Transport Group is continuing work to rebuild relations within the group following the winter road damage.

6. Best Practice Guidance and Code of Practice

The Forum Executive Board suggested we consider best practice guidance as a means to refresh the partnering charter. Drafts of two documents were circulated – an 8 page brochure and folded A4 leaflet. Feedback on the content had been requested by email and the forum was asked for general feedback on the documents.

Crispin Thorn and David Sulman both suggested that, as GB documents, both should better reflect the situation in Lowland England. Also that the documents should be less apologetic and concentrate on the positive.

ACTION: Best Practice documents to be re-circulated with a deadline for comments prior to a revised draft being issued.

Roland Stiven

Code of Practice

Mike Green explained that Darroch Lyon (FCS Operational Services) had time allocated to a revision of the Road Haulage of Round Timber Code of Practice and asked for clarification as to whether this was going ahead. Andy Leitch noted an action point last year to review and reprint the code with minor updates. David Sulman confirmed that he and Doug Knox had agreed a list of revisions. It was noted that there was a continuing demand for the Code of Practice. With the resources available it may be possible to revise the document and publish it online. STTF funding might be available to contribute to publication costs.

ACTION: Re-establish the Roundwood Code of Practice Working Group to:

- Revisit the work that has been done on revisions to the Code of Practice,
- Consider options for revision and publication and progress as resources allow.

David Sulman, Alasdair Ferguson, Richard Scott, Darroch Lyon, Roland Stiven

7. Timber Transport Forum at the APF show (Cannock Chase)

The Forum will have a table in the ConFor tent and a separate stand demonstrating a CTI lorry belonging to Les Hughes & Sons. Tony Hughes and a colleague will be on hand to discuss the CTI technology.

The APF show runs from Thursday 23rd – Saturday 25th September. Volunteers to help man the stands for an hour or two would be welcome. Roland will not be present on the Thursday so volunteers particularly helpful on that day.

8. 2011 conference, seminar agenda

Project officers recently discussed the subject of a 2011 conference and concluded that there may not be the appetite for a full national conference in early 2011. Roland Stiven proposed that we consider:

- An event to raise awareness of timber transport partnership approaches in Wales.
- A workshop with local authorities and other TTG members to look at both communications at TTG level and the collection, management and use of timber transport information.

There may also be opportunities to present timber transport work through the proposed Cluster conference, SCOTS and other events. There was agreement with this approach.

Jim Tolmie noted that there is a SCOTS working group on appropriate design specifications for low volume roads and it would be helpful if this work could be completed and disseminated.

ACTIONS:

Continue to develop (with the Welsh Timber Transport Group) proposals for a Wales-focused seminar.

Roland Stiven

Plan a workshop/seminar event on Timber Transport communication and information

Roland Stiven and RTTG Project Officers

Continue to identify opportunities to present timber transport developments

ALL

9. Timber Haulier Training

The 'SAFED' Training material has been released on the website and drawn to the attention of hauliers in Scotland and North England. Welsh hauliers will be contacted shortly. Driver Training Centres have also been informed. There has been some feedback from training providers who are willing to develop approved courses with the material if there is market demand. We need to encourage hauliers to create the demand. Public funding may be available to Welsh hauliers through the Focus on Forestry First programme. David Eaglesham noted that RHA had some concerns on the delivery of the material as Driver CPC. Alasdair Ferguson said he has found the material useful in developing internal training for staff.

ACTION: Liaise with RHA, Alasdair Ferguson and other hauliers to encourage timber haulier specific Driver CPC training and continue to update the Forum on progress.

Roland Stiven

10. TTF Project Officer Update

A updates on various issues was circulated.

It was highlighted that the information note summarising the work on the **carbon footprint** of timber transport has been circulated asking for comment.

ACTION: Revise the carbon footprint information note based on comments received and to re-circulate with a deadline for final comment.

Roland Stiven

11. AOB

Pam Stott noted that there is a **Scottish Government Blog** to enable comment on the recently issued Scottish Independent Budget Review. The review and the blog can be found via this link <http://blogs.scotland.gov.uk/publicspending/2010/07/29/launc/#comments>

Mike Green asked if the **Timber Transport Toolkit** could now be considered as finalised. Andy Leitch confirmed that this was the case.

ACTION: Remove 'Draft' from the online version of the Timber Transport Toolkit

Roland Stiven

David Eaglesham asked about the provision of **First Aid** training in the Forest Industry. David Sulman noted that the FC Internal Review had highlighted the need for more appropriate first aid training suited to forestry situations. UKFPA is running a pilot course for harvesters and hauliers and is keen to see this approved for Driver CPC.

ACTION: Liaise with David Sulman and Emily Ramsay to consider a role for the Forum in promoting First Aid provision to hauliers.

Roland Stiven

12. Date of Next Meeting

Proposed date **Thursday 13th January 2011**

Timber Transport Forum Project Officer Update

Timber Transport Carbon Footprint. Andy Leitch and Roland Stiven were tasked with proposing how this work was promoted. A draft information note has been circulated asking for comment.

Red Diesel Information note has been finalised and is on TTF website

Highland Waterborne Freight has been published online as a Freight Best Practice publication featuring the JST floating pier Technology and Ferguson Transport.

SCOTS have produced a report on the state of rural roads

Scottish National Transport Review which was proposed is not now happening.

Scottish Ferries Review is out for consultation on Scottish Government website and includes a freight report. Timber freight issues on ferries has been given consideration but it is a dense report and as each route is different it is difficult to generalise about the issue. RTTGs have been asked to review what is said of their local routes.

An article on Timber Transport was published in **Public Service Review** (Devolved Government)

Consultations

The TTF has responded to consultations on

- Argyll and Bute Woodland Strategy
- Scottish Land Use Strategy
- Scottish Low Carbon Economy,
- DfT Ecodriving,
- VOSA powers to stop

There is currently a Scottish Government consultation 'Speak up for Rural Scotland' on economic development in rural parts of Scotland. It is proposed that the TTF respond to this. A draft will be circulated to the Forum.