

Timber Transport Forum Meeting
FC, Silvan House,
10.30 hrs, 29th March 2012

Agreed Minutes

Present

Hazel Newman, Alistair Speedie, Ian Farmer, Cameron Kemp, Richard Scott, Colin Mackenzie, James England, Andrew Kitching, Ken Sinclair, Kirsty Robb, Roland Stiven, Jamie Farquhar, David Sulman, Neil Dyson, Neil Stoddart, Alasdair Ferguson

By invitation; Nik Scott Gray of Forth Ports and (from 11.30 onwards) Anne Mackenzie (Network Rail), David Spaven (representing Deltix), and David Semple and Donald McCallum of NICS Ltd.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from: Crispin Thorn, Margaret Horn, Steven Herriott, Colin McNicol, David Eaglesham and Phil Flanders, Andy Leitch, Ian Ross, Claire Glaister, Kath McNulty, David Hern, Simon Oldham, Will Anderson, Dan Cathcart (RHA),

2. Welcome and Thanks

Alistair Speedie welcomed:

- Andrew Kitching who has taken on some of RDI's project officer responsibilities for Grampian and Stirling and Tayside timber transport groups
- Ken Sinclair (Operations Support Officer FES) who will be replacing Mike Green representing Forestry Commission Scotland operations. Mike has taken on other responsibilities which mean he will not be actively involved in the Forum now. The Forum noted their appreciation of Mike Green's dedication and constructive contribution to the work of the Forum over the years and wished him well with his new responsibilities.
- Hazel Newman (Wood buyer with Egger at Hexham) – who with John Paterson is administering the new North East England Timber Transport group

3. Previous Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 26th January 2012 were accepted as accurate.

Actions and Matters Arising

- *ACTION: Roland Stiven to work with FCS press Office to issue formal press release on STTS. This has not yet been done but will be taken forward shortly.*
- *ACTION: Project Officers to clarify Agreed Routes Maps classification. This will be tackled in association with other developments with ARMs*
- *ACTION: Alistair Speedie and Roland Stiven to approach Scottish Renewables with a request that developers look for opportunities to link windfarm / timber access projects. Roland has had some discussion with Morven Bridges regarding the relevance to this of FES document "Managing Windfarm Developments" –further discussion is required.*
- *ACTION: Roland Stiven to progress Partnering Charter and circulate before finalising. This was done and copies of the final signed charter will be printed and disseminated shortly.*
- *ACTION: Roland Stiven to progress 'Do not Convoy' material and circulate before finalising. Post cards and posters have been produced and some distributed via conference. Recognise need to develop a campaign linked to Code of Practice.*

- *ACTION: Jamie Farquhar to take forward the promotion of SRDP funding for forest roads and inclusion in future SRDP round. SRDP has wording in the first draft of the programme and Jamie has lodged the issue of continued support for timber transport. Would hope to increase the amount that can be accessed through Land Manager Options and boost the budget for forest roads available through Rural Priorities.*
- *ACTION: Alistair Speedie to send letter to Jim Paice England's forestry minister regarding the Forest Regulation Task Force recommendation on the Highways Act restating the Forum's position. This was done and the Government's response has since been issued and circulated to the Forum. Jamie Farquhar and David Sulman both noted that while the recommendation to work through the partnership approach is welcomed the first line of the response states that 'both forestry and farming traffic are considered ... to be extraordinary traffic.' The Forum agreed that this wording could not be left unchallenged as it is incorrect.*
ACTION: Alistair Speedie and Roland Stiven to write again to the (new) Forestry Minister Lord Holbeach asking for the Government's response to the task force on the Highways Act to be corrected.
- *ACTION: Project Officers to check with local access officers regarding the incidence of inclusion of haul roads in core path networks. Some feedback is available from Argyll and South Scotland this will be collated and reported.*
- *ACTION: ALL to identify key issues and highlight to Roland priority areas of work for the Forum in the coming period. Nothing has been received to date but action shall be reiterated and carried forward.*
- *ACTION: Roland Stiven to prepare a draft business plan and circulate for discussion at the next meeting. This shall be carried forward.*
- The [Woodland Expansion Advisory Group](#) is formulating a draft report. Jamie Farquhar noted that to date he does not think timber transport issues have been dealt with satisfactorily.

4. Review of Conference

Alistair Speedie noted the success of the Timber Transport Conference in Penrith on 15th March and thanked Roland Stiven, the various speakers and the other members of the Forum for their contributions to making it work. 103 people attended. General feedback has been very positive. Of the 33 evaluation forms collected, nearly all are wholly positive. There were some complaints; the back of the room was chilly in the morning; screen was on the small side for the size of the room; food - some liked it some didn't.

The presentations are available on the Forum website. Roland Stiven will write up the conference for Confor's FTN magazine and Mark Stone is writing it up for the Forestry Journal.

5. TTF presence at APF 2012

Confor's bi-annual APF show/demo (international forestry exhibition) will be held in September 13-15th Ragley Estate, Alcester, Warwickshire. It was agreed that TTF should have a presence. Neil Stoddart suggested that the Forum should be up front in attracting hauliers.

ACTION Roland Stiven to contact likely timber haulage related exhibitors to see if there is scope for collaboration at the APF.

6. Funding Update

- STTF

- Roland Stiven reported that FCS had tendered the **TimberLINK** service last autumn and two tenders were received in January 2012. The service has been offered to Associated British Ports (the current service provider) and the contract is currently being finalised to run for three years with an option to extend for two years if funding is made available..
- The **STTS advisory panel** met on 13th March 2012 to consider two extraordinary applications from Argyll & Bute Council. The panel recommended support to a national strategic project to construct a through-forest diversion route around the A83 at Rest & be Thankful. Another project that FCS had asked the panel to consider related to pedestrian infrastructure in Argyll and was not considered to meet the criteria of the scheme. The panel also considered and approved the applications from the Regional Timber Transport Groups in Scotland for project officer and related funding and for the Forum Project Officer post.
- **STTS 2011-2012** Roland Stiven provided a quick presentation reviewing the projects supported by the fund in the year 2011-2012. In addition to the project officers, STTS has supported: construction of the SW Cowal Haul road; surfacing a stretch of public road which forms part of the East Loch Awe haul road at Brenachaille; construction of a pier (floating pier site) at Pennyghael on Mull; Flow Country Roads Strategy; B871 passing places in the Flow Country; Repairs to Logie Bridge over the Findhorn River; Reinforced re-surfacing of the Potburn Road at Craik in the Scottish Borders; B729 Strengthening in D&G. There was substantial underspend arising from the withdrawal of a project in Morvern, and partial spend by the Roundwood by Rail project and B871 passing places. TimberLINK also underspent. However much of the remaining funds from 2011-2012, circa £800k, is being made available to the A83 Rest & be Thankful project. Final figures will be produced in due course.

Colin Mackenzie asked if local authorities would be able in future to carry over unused funds into the following financial year. Roland Stiven thought this was unlikely in most cases; the A83 work is a nationally important project with high level support across government.

- **STTS 2012-15** As previously circulated, applications for STTS funding are invited by 13th April 2012.
- James England asked if there would be another round for applications later in the year. He noted that with the local elections in May, council roads budgets may not be confirmed until the summer making it difficult to confirm match funding. Roland Stiven thought that it was unlikely that all of the funding available over the three years would be allocated in the April round and therefore it is probable that a subsequent round would be called.
- **FFG**
Ian Farmer reported that the third year allocation to Freight Facilities Scheme has been announced providing a total of £7.25m over the three years to 2015. There has been an initial call for applications by 20th April 2012. Consideration will be given to a subsequent round or subsequent applications after the first round is completed.

The Scottish Government had recently announced an award of FFG totalling £350,000 to JST for the floating pier to be used at Pennyghael on Mull. A press release was picked up by the Oban Times.

7. Paper on ARM map website options

James England presented a paper setting out the rationale for a preferred option for the future of the online agreed routes map www.timbermap.org. This would involve moving the ARMS map from the current FCS hosted site to an independent site allowing England and Wales ARMs maps to be incorporated and other developments to extend the functionality of the maps. This generated some discussion. Richard Scott recognised the benefits of adding value to the maps by linking them to other datasets. Jamie Farquhar noted that the ARMS represented a valuable data set in themselves and any developments should recognise the contribution from organisations and timber growers and ensure there is formal ownership by the regional groups.

The Forum agreed that the option should be further developed and costed but given that the ARMs maps are at the core of the Forum's work, access to them must be reliable and of good quality. Setup costs and ongoing costs to groups should be reasonable. Data made available to the public should be appropriate and issues such as colour coding of categories should be standardised.

Roland Stiven noted an email from Pam Stott suggesting the Scottish maps could be made available through the Scottish Government's Freight Map data layers. Jamie Farquhar said that RPID is launching a new IT platform for SRDP related data and it would be worth checking if there could be overlap with ARMs.

8. Regional Update

- **Highland** Colin Mackenzie and Cameron Kemp listed the projects being developed for the STTS : Loch Arkaig; Killiechonan In-Forest Road Solution; South Loch Ness Timber Transport Route; Highland Road Drainage Project; A897 Route Assessment; Cannich Fasnakyle; Rathad na Mara Glenelg 2. Other projects to support the Flow Country strategy include the Braehour Link and Roundwood by Rail 2. These two are still under discussion and may not make the STTS deadline.
- **Argyll** Kirsty Robb provided an update which is attached below.
- **Cumbria** Richard Scott noted that the Agreed Routes Map for Cumbria had been launched at the Conference and attracted publicity with Richard talking on local radio.
- **South Scotland** James England is developing a campaign regarding convoys of timber lorries for South Scotland groups. James, Alistair Speedie and other colleagues are attending a public meeting this evening at Lockerbie on the issue of timber transport. Scottish Borders are considering signage on narrow strategic timber routes informing the public that they are used for timber haulage and requesting co-operation.
- **Grampian and Stirling & Tayside** Andrew Kitching noted that RDI's contract to provide project officer services to the groups ends shortly and the groups will be retendering the work. There is one STTS project under development and the data collected regarding exit point production forecasts is being finalised.
- **North East England** Hazel Newman said that the group has had its third meeting. The area (Northumberland and Durham) has been split in two so two working groups can make a start on categorising roads for an agreed routes map. Relying on voluntary input so this will take time. The group is slowly coming together and keen to continue to raise the profile of the benefits of the approach and encourage continuing strong representation and input from the local authorities.

9. AOB

Rail Haulage David Spaven noted that there was growing interest in moving timber by rail. As well as the development work in the Highlands and the established flows from Carlisle and Ribbleshead to Chirk, Colas timber trains are now operating from Devon to

Chirk and to Carlisle, a new timber railhead is being developed in South Wales, interest is being shown in rail haulage from Norfolk and the possibility of re-invigorating Crianlarich in the medium term is being considered.

Fuel supplies. Alistair Speedie raised the issue of reliability of fuel supplies for timber haulage given ongoing possibility of strikes by tanker drivers. Alasdair Ferguson noted that while hauliers can make reasonable efforts to build up fuel stocks, there is a limit to what they can realistically do to maintain haulage through a substantial strike. Fuel suppliers are not keen to provide extra bulk supplies. All agreed to keep in close contact regarding any developments that may affect the industry.

10. Presentations

There followed two presentations – both are available on www.timbertransportforum.org.uk

- **Forth Ports and Forest Products:** Presentation by Nik Scott-Gray Business Development Manager (Scottish Ports). Nik provided an overview of Forth Ports business interests and operations mainly from ports in the Forth and Tay. Forth Ports are currently handling bulk timber exports and expect to become more involved in biomass supply (including home grown supply) to power generating plants in Scotland.
- **Non Intrusive Rail Crossover System:** Presentation from David Spaven (Deltix), David Semple and Donald McCallum of NICS Ltd. David Spaven and Donald McCallum highlighted the functioning and benefits of NICS which has overcome various hurdles and is now at a stage where Network Rail has agreed to support a demonstration of the system. In particular they see potential for a timber related trial. Ann Mackenzie of Network Rail also attended for the presentation. A video animation of how the system works is too large to host on the website but is included in a you tube video. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o30IEZOcKe0>

Date of Next Meetings

June 14th and 20th September 2012

Argyll TTG Update for TTF meeting March 2012

- Full group meeting held on 13 March 2012, next meeting scheduled for 23 October 2012.
- TTMP's and Protocols useful tools to date, continuing development for fragile routes.
- The CTI trial Glenstriven has also proved successful, 3300 tonnes have been hauled on the 18 tonnes weight restricted C10, using CTI fitted vehicles with exemption certificates issued from the council. The road shows no signs of deterioration, A&BC are willing to extend the exemption for periods of haulage this year. Continued monitoring by harvesting company and A&BC to ensure the road doesn't deteriorate.
- A83 Rest & Be Thankful forest road diversion – covered separately.

- **Projects for submission 2012-2015**

Dalmally SHR

KR - UPM Tilhill are leading this project on behalf of their client who own Dalmally Woodland, adjacent land owners who are clients of Scottish Woodlands and Forest Enterprise have agreed to join the project. Aprox 8 km of in-forest road linking the forests and joining the A819 through the FE block. Short crossing on public road and 3-400 m of public road repaired to forest road standard (currently surfaced road which has deteriorated so badly as to be almost completely unsurfaced). The current haul route for these forests is on the severely restricted Monument Hill Rd which goes right through the village of Dalmally with a narrow railway bridge, the SHR would mean very little forestry traffic would require to use the current route.

Cladich SHR

Proposal: UPM Tilhill/Scottish Woodlands - Ardbrecknish (Upper Sonachan) through Keppochan and then out onto the A819 via Keppochan East & Tullich forest.

East Kintyre SHR/Pier facility

Part of the Kintyre transmission system reinforcement project is SHETL's proposal to replace the 132 kV overhead transmission line between Carradale Substation and a new 132 kV substation in the Crossaig area. The proposed Crossaig Substation would connect with a submarine cable linking East Kintyre to Hunterston. See details [HERE](#). A pier at Crossaig could be used as the most beneficial route for aprox 700,000 tonnes of timber in the immediate area. The SSE project is estimated to require 8000+ vehicle movements for the construction. Negotiations are underway to use the FE cross Kintyre haul route which would have a severe impact on harvesting/haulage and the council road from Campbeltown Pier for the duration of the project.

- The West Loch Awe A&BC public road has suffered badly over recent months with the volume of heavy haulage, nearly at the stage where an 18 tonne weight restriction will be imposed, this is largely due to the Windfarm/SHR development. Negotiations are underway between A&BC, forestry sector and windfarm developers to minimise lorry movements on particular sections of the C29 Dalavich-Kilchrenan.
- A&BC have agreed to trial the JST lorry which was displayed at the TTF Conference on Mull, this requires special exemption as loaded it will be over 44 tonnes. 3 week trial closely monitored to assess impact on public road.