

Timber Transport Forum Meeting
FC, Silvan House,
10.30 28th June 2013
Agreed Minute

Present: Fergus Tickell, Kirsty Robb, Claire Glaister, Roland Stiven, Andy Leitch, Hazel Newman, Jamie Farquhar, Robin Pope, Crispin Thorn, Margaret Watson, Margaret Horn

Apologies: Ken Sinclair, David Sulman, David Spaven, Steven Herriott, James England, David Eaglesham (and RHA), Colin Mackenzie, Richard Scott, Neil Stoddart, Alistair Speedie, Simon Oldham, Victoria Hutchinson, Alasdair Ferguson

1. Welcome and Apologies

With Alistair Speedie having submitted his apologies, Andy Leitch agreed to chair the meeting.

2. Previous Minutes

1. Accuracy

A minor revision was agreed to the Argyll update section of the draft minute. It was also agreed that Forum minutes would be prepared in a larger font and re-issued with the agenda for the subsequent meeting.

2. Action Points

- Access lease paper: Some comments were received allowing a Forum response to be sent to FCS. FCS has not yet managed to consider the Forum response.
- Applications to the STTS have been invited by 30th August 2013 and the advisory panel will meet to consider applications on the 17th September 2013.
- Preparation of a document for future STTS funding: This should be a priority for the next meeting involving input from regional groups and local authorities. Arguments should be evidence based. Standard wording could be prepared to encourage wider campaigning.
- Comments on the Timber Transport Management protocol paper can still be forwarded to Claire Glaister until 15th July.
- Draft case studies: A few comments were received and new case studies continue to be drafted.
- The action to send a letter of introduction to Edwina Hart, the Welsh Minister for Transport is ongoing and should be done promptly.
- Timber Transport Toolkit: It was agreed that a small working group should be set up to review the toolkit.
 - The effectiveness of the *Wait a Minute* campaign was queried noting several incidences of convoying. This could feature strongly in a revised toolkit. In addition the postcard/poster could be re-circulated to mills. The campaign could be highlighted at Truckfest and via haulage magazines and Freight Best Practice newsletter. A window sticker should be reconsidered as promotional material.

3. Funding

- STTF /STTS Andy Leitch noted that most of the offers of funding from the previous round had now been contracted and a call made for the next round (as detailed above).

- **SRDP** Jamie Farquhar is responding to the consultation on the review of the Scottish Rural Development Programme pressing for in-forest access improvements to be retained in rural priorities.
- **Freight Grants** Margaret Horn said that the Freight Facilities Grant scheme was currently closed to new applications, with 7 active applications in the system. Immediately after the window closed there had been a flurry of potential interest. Consideration is being given to reopening the scheme for new applications to try to ensure the budget is taken up. Projects will need to be delivered by March 2015. Mode Shift Revenue Support funding continues with awards for 2013/14 made.
- **Funding for Timber Transport in England.**
 - Crispin Thorn reported that there had been some grant spend on in-forest infrastructure through the Woodfuel WIG schemes. Details will be provided.
 - The Government's response to the Independent Panel on Forestry emphasised the role of Local Enterprise Partnerships in investing in economic growth opportunities in the forestry and timber sectors. In addition some Local Authorities such as Northumberland who have already recognised the importance of the sector to the rural economy. Defra has supported the development of a Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) sub group on forestry to enable LEP's with a specific interest in forestry to share ideas. The north of England timber transport groups are engaging directly with their LEPs highlighting the opportunities to invest in transport infrastructure in support of the supply chain. The forestry and timber industry's' *Grown in Britain* campaign should also be engaged in promoting this agenda (Ian Tubby is secretary).

ACTION Roland Stiven and Alistair Speedie to liaise with English interests and write to the Forestry Minister outlining the need for investment in timber transport infrastructure to support the supply chain and highlighting opportunities for investment through LEPs and local authorities (and see item 8).

4. Regional Updates

- **Ireland** An update from John Lyons noted that the Forestry Industry Transport Group have requested research funding to collect background information on timber transport issues. They have also appointed a contractor to write a good practice guide and a CTI trial is being developed.
- **Wales** Roland Stiven reported on the opening of Esgair Dafydd haul road by the Tywi Timber Transport Forum – a partnership of Natural Resources Wales, UPM Tilhill, Aitchesse Ltd and three local councils - which is being written up as a case study. The Wales Timber Transport Group has not met for over a year and a new way of interacting with timber transport interests in Wales may need to be considered.
- **North Yorkshire** Crispin Thorn reported that the North Yorkshire Timber Freight Quality Partnership has conducted a vehicle survey of fifteen local timber hauliers. There has been a good response so far and others are being followed

up. The partnership has also drafted a factsheet/ leaflet to inform the Local Enterprise Partnership about forestry infrastructure issues and opportunities for investment. Yorwoods has funding for timber haulier training and is developing a training programme for this autumn. The group can report positive progress on a number of complex timber transport issues – some within national parks. Victoria Hutchinson is drafting a case study based on the experience of upgrading the 'Cam highway' for timber transport.

- **North East England** Hazel Newman said that following the meeting in March where Alistair Speedie presented to the highways officers, a subsequent meeting to develop a draft Agreed Routes Map was not constructive with restrictions being proposed on a major strategic haul route. The timber transport group asked for engagement at a higher level. Alistair Speedie, John Paterson and Graham Gill (Forest Management Director for the Forestry Commission in the North East) met with the Chief Executive of Northumberland County Council and his Director of Corporate Services to explain the work of the Forum and the benefits of the Agreed Routes Map approach. The meeting was positive and the Director has agreed to work closely with the group in taking the process forward.
- **Cumbria** Roland Stiven noted that the summer meeting of the Cumbria Timber Transport group has been cancelled as most business is in hand. The next meeting is set for September. Richard Scott and Andrew Harper will be meeting with Paul Dodson of Cumbria County Council, who is chairing the Local Enterprise Partnership sub group on forestry, to highlight the issue of timber transport investment in support of opportunities for growing the sector.
- **Scottish Borders** An STTS application for Tweedsmuir Bridge is being progressed.
- **Ayrshire** Roland Stiven noted that a date is yet to be set for the next meeting of the Ayrshire Timber Transport Group. James England has noted continuing liaison with South Lanarkshire Council on an agreed routes map. A meeting is being arranged later in the month with North Ayrshire Council to discuss a strategy for timber transport on Arran.
- **Dumfries and Galloway** The recent meeting of the full D&G group was cancelled. The area sub groups which were going to be dropped are being retained for now. James England has reported that he is still dealing with a high number of complaints from the public. Three applications for STTS funding are being considered.
- **Stirling & Tayside** Claire Glaister said that the group was considering two potential STTS applications. The development of a lineside loading site for Rannoch is progressing but will not require STTS support. There are options within the region for synergies with temporary infrastructure being built to serve the construction of the Beaully Denny line. In places service tracks could provide access for harvesting and for potential new planting. This would require their permanent retention justified on the grounds of the new use. Claire is discussing the opportunities relating to certain sites with the planning authorities.
- **Grampian** The group is reviewing the Agreed Routes Map for the area and the exit point volume data. An STTS application for strategic routes in Morayshire is being considered.

- **Argyll** Kirsty Robb reported on the workshop held for group members on STTS eligibility and assessment. This was well attended and considered useful for ensuring STTS bids are well prepared and suited to the objectives and rules of the fund. Two STTS projects are being prepared. Claire Glaister also attended the workshop for Grampian and Stirling and Tayside groups.

The Argyll group is continuing to develop timber traffic management plans as a means of formalising agreements for fragile road use even for roads serving individual harvesting sites.

There has been interest in the work of the group and in the STTS from community groups on Mull and at Kilfinnan. There is also ongoing dialogue with the council over calls for the designation of strategic haul roads as core paths, which in some cases is seen as inappropriate.

Argyll and Bute Council submitted an application to the Scottish Roads Research Board and SCOTS for funding to develop a pan-Scotland approach to collecting, presenting and sharing data on where timber tonnages will meet the public road network. A summary of the proposal *The Future of Timber Transport Project 2013/14* is attached to this minute. Formal confirmation of funding is awaited, but seems likely.

- **Highland** Robin Pope reported for Highland. A Hitrans study carried out by Arvika Consultants has looked at vehicle journeys into and out of all major Highland timber processors on three separate days. A report is being prepared and will be shared. Several projects are in the pipeline for STTS bids including one looking at the effectiveness of road recycling techniques for remote fragile roads where the road material is ground-up and re-layed with various additives. This technology that has been trialled in Ireland and suggested by Roadex. Claire Glaister suggested that there had been work done on this in the past in conjunction with Dundee University. There was also the suggestion that this may be suitable for SRRB/SCOTS research funding.

5. Timber Transport Forum Business Plan

A draft revision of the Forum Business plan had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Discussion focused on measuring performance. The Forum was clear that monitoring and evaluation should be kept simple and relevant. Context information describing the level of engagement by the target groups is relevant. The number of timber transport management plans was proposed as a possible indicator of achievement showing collaborative ways forward to challenging situations. Road condition assessments could also be related to the Agreed Routes Maps to provide some measure of change to the relevant infrastructure.

ACTION: ALL to provide feedback on the revised Strategy and Business Plan including ideas for indicators of performance – by 19th July.

6. Guidance on reduced ground pressure vehicles in timber transport.

Roland Stiven noted that as part of the process of developing this guidance Colin Mackenzie had prepared a technical paper setting out the relevant research into the impact of different wheel and tyre configurations on sealed roads. The paper *'Timber Truck Wheel and Tyre Configurations: Developing a selection protocol'* has been circulated to the Forum and the timber transport groups for comment. In addition Colin, Roland and Ken Sinclair visited three of the larger timber hauliers to discuss the paper and to learn about the practical considerations involved in integrated such technologies into efficient timber haulage. The Forum commented on some of the

language in the technical paper but centred on the need to ensure that the eventual guidance was targeted at the right audience and provided wider context on efficient haulage. The Forum requested that the developing guidance document be progressed and circulated and given time for discussion at the next meeting.

7. Next meeting proposal and venue for 4th October.

John Scott has offered to host the next meeting of the Forum at the JST Services depot near Ayr putting on a demonstration of specialised low ground pressure machines on a test track. The Forum welcomed John's offer and agreed to a meeting in Ayr suggesting that the demonstration be held after a business meeting in a nearby venue.

ACTION: Roland Stiven to arrange the next Forum meeting in conjunction with a demonstration of low ground pressure vehicles at JST Services near Ayr

8. Forest Regulation Task Force.

Crispin Thorn noted that a one year update had been produced which restates that the government will 'Work with the forestry sector, via the Timber Transport Forum, to continue to disseminate the guidance on resolving timber transport issues and support local discussions about this.' The Forum welcomed the reinforcement of this message which raises the profile of the work of the Forum and timber transport groups. We should refer to this in our letter to the Minister (see item 3)

9. Type approval exemptions for spray suppression and side guards

Roland Stiven noted the most recent response on this subject from the Department for Transport suggesting that there would be further delay in responding to our request for a re-instatement of the exemptions for timber lorries. The Forum agreed that we should confer with hauliers and re-assert our case for exemptions in a letter to the Department for Transport.

ACTION: Roland to confer with hauliers over the response from DfT and draft a further letter re-asserting the position of the Forum with regard to type approval exemptions.

10. New Agreed Routes Map Website

The Forum's website hosting the Agreed Routes Maps is now online, www.timbermap.org, replacing the FCS hosted site.

11. Truckfest 2013

The organisers offered a much reduced fee for the forestry arena so the Forum will again feature at Truckfest Scotland on the 3rd and 4th of August. The same haulier partners as last year will contribute timber vehicles. Roland would welcome volunteers to help promote the work of the Forum.

12. Conference 2014

The conference will be held on March 13th 2014 at Easterbrook Hall, Dumfries. A programme and registration details will be issued in the autumn.

13. Forestry Industry Safety Accord

No representatives on the group were present to report. Claire Glaister noted that the FISA transport sub-group had requested details of the Forum's haulier training material – which has been forwarded to them.

14. AOB

Jamie Farquhar reported on the massive increase in the extent of *P. ramorum* infection of larch particularly in Wales and in SW Scotland. Currently the industry is dealing with around 400ha in SW Scotland but this may increase to as much as 10,000ha. The level of harvesting will depend on what the market can handle but it is likely that there will be increased demand for transport along less than suitable routes.

15. Dates of next meetings

- 4th October 2013

Proposed dates for 2014

- January 10th
- April 11th
- June 20th
- October 3rd