



Minutes for GTTG meeting

Date: 18 July 2013

Location: Forestry Commission Scotland, Grampian Conservancy Office, Huntly

Present:

Will Anderson – Seafeld Estate (WA)

Ian Cowe – Forestry Commission Scotland (IC)

Neil Crookston – Scottish Woodlands Ltd (NC)

Claire Glaister – GTTG Project Officer (CG)

Sandy Hogg – James Jones

Johnny Morren – Moray Council (JM)

Andrew Nicol – DWP

Roland Stiven – Timber Transport Forum

Alastair Young – Forest Enterprise Scotland (AY)

Apologies:

Alasdair Cameron – UPM Tilhill (AC)

Stuart McFarlane – Aberdeenshire Council (SMcF)

Graeme Ralph – Euroforest (GR)

Agenda Item	Action	Appointed person/s
9. (11/12/12)	Members to put forward additional names for new group members	All
3. (07/03/13)	Status change of U108H to be made on ARM	CG/RS
3. (07/03/13)	Timber production data collection exercise to be initiated	CG
2.	Post Timber Transport Consultation Protocol onto S&TTTG (& GTTG web pages	RS
2.	Circulate Report on HTTG/HITRANS timber flow data collection project	CG
3.	Forest managers/agents to provide list of priority roads to CG	Industry members
3.	MC engineers to provide list of priority roads for drainage works	JM
3.	Draft Letter of Support for Pre-emptive draining programme STTS proposal	CG
3.	Chair to sign Letter of Support for inclusion with application	WA
3.	Prepare and submit STTS Pre-emptive draining programme bid	JM/CG
3.	Circulate STTS reminder email to all members	CG
5.	Update ARM website with changes agreed for U140E, U14E & C45H	CG
6.	Contact FISA Working Group 6 Chair to investigate involvement options	CG
6.	LAs to provide list of routes where previous consultation has taken place	JM/SMcF
6.	Update ARM website to show Consultation Routes	CG
8.	Follow up lorry overturn trends with police	SH
8.	Dates for Spring & Summer 2014 meetings to be sought and confirmed	WA/CG

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

WA welcomed all those present and confirmed apologies received

2. Notes of last meeting on 07 March 2013 & matters arising

Minutes of the last meeting confirmed as correct.

Action table below reviewed and amended to reflect current status (those now completed shaded); carried forward actions added to current action table

Agenda Item	Action	Appointed person/s
4. (11/12/12)	Current route classifications to be reviewed and changes submitted to CG	All
6. (11/12/12)	<i>Members to review new ARMs website and feedback comments to RS/CG</i>	All
6. (11/12/12)	Members to suggest potential case studies for 2014 Conference to RS	All
6. (11/12/12)	Potential STTS applicants to contact CG for guidance and advice	All
9. (11/12/12)	Members to put forward additional names for new group members	All
3.	Status change of U108H to be made on ARM	CG/RS
3.	Status change of U108H to be notified to forest owners	CG
3.	Request for timber volume forecasts and wishing to use U108H to be issued to forest owners so that MC can programme any maintenance works accordingly	CG
3.	Information on timber production forecasts for woodlands in the area to be sought from forest owners/managers	CG
3.	Local Authorities to identify “highest risk” roads with a view to considering a pre-emptive STTS application	JM/SMcF
3.	Issue to be raised with forest owners by managing agents	Forestry agents
3.	Timber production data collection exercise to be initiated	CG
3.	Paper to be presented to TTF in order to request support to approach Scottish Government	WA/IC/CG/RS
4.	Link to ARM test site to be circulated	RS
4.	Members to review new ARMs website and feedback comments to RS/CG	All
5.	Members advised to respond to draft timber transport consultation protocol by end April 2013	CG/All
7.	Contact HTTG/HITRANS to request information on timber production/timber flow data collection project	CG
8.	Dates for next two meetings to be sought and confirmed	WA/CG

Members to suggest potential case studies for 2014 Conference to RS

RS confirmed that he has sufficient material for the Conference and is not seeking any additional information at this stage.

Timber Transport Consultation Protocols

CG confirmed that one organisation who had requested additional time to provide comments was to be doing so by the end of the week or if nothing received, would not be making any comments.

RS advised that once finalised, the Protocol would be posted up onto the [Timber Transport Forum](#) website under the [Stirling & Tayside](#) and [Grampian](#) Timber Transport Group web pages.

Contact HTTG/HITRANS to request information on timber production/timber flow data collection project

CG advised that a short 3 day survey has now been completed. Final report currently being produced and will be circulated to GTTG members once CG in receipt.

3. Proposed STTS application/s

3.1 Pre-emptive drainage programme

CG provided brief background of proposed STTS project and overview of bid development work undertaken to date; this including circulation of the list of Strengthened (Agreed) Routes in Moray to all local forestry managers/agents with an invitation that they provide details of any routes they consider would benefit from drainage work. JM confirmed that local engineers (Derek and Paul) have been assessing the condition of the same roads from a MC perspective and will compare their highest priority roads with those identified by the forest industry. To date, one road identified by FES matched with a priority route identified by MC but it was acknowledged however that this number would increase once more information has been submitted by the forest industry. CG confirmed she will contact forest managers/agents again to request information and forward this to JM for assessment. Likewise, JM will forward CG the list of roads identified by Derek and Paul for further discussion. Given the timescales involved, it was agreed that an overall list of roads to be included in the bid would be drawn up by the end of July, this to give sufficient time to prepare and finalise a STTS application. GTTG members were in full support of the bid and a Letter of Support is to be signed by WA on behalf of the Group for inclusion in the final bid submission.

As part of the discussions, WA asked for an update on the U108H. JM confirmed that the road surface has been recycled using a process called re-treading but that it has NOT been re-strengthened. As a result, JM has advised forestry agents wishing to use the route that only empty lorries are permitted.

Given the U108H is effectively now being operated as a Severely Restricted route, WA asked if classifying the road as such would strengthen any STTS bid. RS advised that it wouldn't really make a difference as the STTS assessment panel consider the work being suggested rather than the classification of the road.

JM explained that whilst he would ideally liked to have carried out more work on the U108H so as to allow timber transport to resume in full along the road, the overall MC roads budget provides for £1.9M to be spent against a £56M reserve list.

Members agreed that given this shortfall in resources a case should be made to highlight the importance of the STTS to both the industry and LAs and confirmed they would be happy to support an approach to Ministers for its continuation. RS advised that he has been tasked to develop a paper to this effect on behalf of the TTF. JM advised that the Chief Executive of MC had expressed an interest in the work of MC with regard to timber transport and would be keen to add his support to such an approach. WA was concerned about the effective restrictions on this route and confirmed the group should seek means to assist MC in rectifying this situation.

IC asked how the panel viewed STTS applications involving repairs and maintenance on the public road network. RS confirmed that previous applications covering this sort of work have been approved. RS also confirmed that any work undertaken through successful STTS applications would have to be completed by March 2015.

3.2 Other:

CG advised that she has not been made aware of any other potential STTS bids. GTTG members suggested that she email out to all members with a reminder of the STTS call and deadline of 30 August 2013.

4. Data Collection exercise

CG confirmed that the data collection spreadsheet is now ready to be issued and reminded GTTG members to complete and return the information requested once in receipt.

5. Agreed Route Map website update

CG summarised a number of suggested changes that had been requested for ARM route classifications; a number of these were to correct road numbers and a further couple were to mark specific roads as Agreed Routes (currently recorded as Consultation Routes) on the ARM. These change requests were not brought to the Group as they involve only minor amendments to existing classifications or are to upgrade classifications to Agreed Routes.

Three suggestions however were to change the classification of the roads concerned from Agreed Routes status to Consultation. These were discussed by the GTTG;

The U140E: Archiestown

The current ARM shows the Agreed Route running from the south of the B9102 right up to the forest entrance. MC have advised that the short section to the south of the B9102 should not have been classified as an Agreed Route and so have requested this classification be removed. Similarly, FES have advised that the top section of this road is actually a forest road rather than a Council road and as such, does not need to carry an ARM classification.

Proposal: To remove the Agreed Route status from the southern section of the road (A to B on the attached map) and that from the end of the Council road to the forest entrance (C to D on the attached map).

GTTG decision: Agreed.

The U14E: Boat o Brig/Cairnty/Ordiequish

The current ARM shows two sections of the U14E as Agreed Routes; one running north from Mains of Cairnty to Newtack and the running north from Ordiequish to Fochabers. It is the southern section of this road where two queries have been raised.

Proposal: The attached map highlights the two sections in question.

- A to B - currently has no classification (so is, by default, a Consultation Route). This section has been strengthened so MC suggest it could be classified as an Agreed Route. **However**, given the bridge and road trajectory at the point where it joins the B9103 and the bends above Delfur Lodge, it is recognised that this section would not likely be used for timber haulage and so it is recommended that the current classification (an unmarked Consultation Route) be retained
- C to D - currently showing as an Agreed Route. This section hasn't been strengthened so MC have requested that this should have the Agreed Route classification removed

FES are the largest user of the road from a timber transport point of view and have confirmed that these proposals would not impact on their timber haulage options. They recognise however that there is some (albeit limited) commercial woodland along section C to D and have advised that as they have permitted private sector in-forest access for timber haulage in the past, they would be willing to consider this again, should this be required.

WA advised that he had been in touch with a couple private woodland agents/managers who had expressed some concern over the route being re-classified as a Consultation Route. NC confirmed that the volumes of timber forecast to be removed from the private woodlands were less than 1000 tonnes; a level below which MC would expect formal consultation. WA therefore suggested that NC and JM draw up email correspondence to set out what volumes would be extracted and when (NC) and how this would not be restricted by MC (JM) to provide reassurance to the respective owners. Members also agreed to extend the consultation route status from Newtack to Culfoldie to further reassure the respective owners of the small areas of woodland along this route.

GTTG decision: Agreed.

The C45H: Mulderie/Keith

The current ARM shows this road as an Agreed Route but FES have advised that due to its direct access onto the A96, they do not/will not use this road for timber haulage; instead, routing timber lorries south west along the top boundary of the woodland and onwards.

Proposal: To remove the Agreed Routes classification from the C45H

SH confirmed that none of his hauliers use this route due to the difficulties with the junction with the A96 and as it is liable to icing during colder weather.

GTTG decision: Agreed.

6. RTTG promotional activities

CG explained that she has recently been made aware of a number of instances where timber haulage has been taking place along Consultation Routes without any apparent consultation taking place between the timber hauliers/forest managers and Local Authority. The Group were asked to consider if they felt any promotional activity was required/would be beneficial and if so, what format this should take and to whom it should be targeted.

Details of previous materials used/developed – programmes for such promotional activity and haulier liaison events - were circulated for information (see attached).

The Group felt that any material should be targeted at estate managers and haulage companies in the first instance and that programmes for any haulier liaison events should be drawn up in conjunction with FISA [Working Group 6: Forest Haulage](#). CG to contact Mick Bottomley to request information on the work of the group and to offer the GTTG as a means of dissemination.

RS requested that any requests for future campaigns be raised with the TTF so an overall approach can be taken.

WA suggested that the ConFor FTN and ICF magazines would provide useful routes to promote the work of the GTTG and wider TTF network and RS confirmed he is in regular contact with the editors of both publications so can request space for copy, if required.

WA also suggested that the re-formed regional Cluster meetings could provide another opportunity to promote the work of the Regional Timber Transport Groups and will investigate options for including a GTTG slot at the next meeting, due in October 2013

In light of the apparent lack of consultation on Consultation Routes and given previous discussions regarding the re-classification of Agreed Routes to Consultation Routes, GTTG members considered their previous rationale for only showing Agreed Routes on the ARM website. It was felt that it would help avoid any future confusion if Consultation Routes were now marked up on the website. Rather than highlight all roads not shown as Agreed Routes as Consultation Routes, it was suggested that Moray and Aberdeenshire Councils review roads on which there has been consultation previously as a starting point as these would clearly be of strategic importance to the industry. Once these roads have been identified, CG to make changes to the ARM website.

7. Project officers updates

7.1 GTTG – covered under Matters Arising

7.2 TTF update – (see TTF Update July 2013 attached)

7.3 STTS update – the deadline for STTS bids is 30 August 2013. RS requested that any applicants keep 17 September clear in their diaries as this is the date the STTS assessment Panel meet and they may call applicants for interview on that day



8. Updates from members and on regional developments

SH reported that a timber lorry had overturned at the Forres Horizon Enterprise Park roundabout and that this was the second overturn incident in recent months. Police have not interviewed the driver as no witnesses questioned to date have suggested that the lorry was travelling too fast. Current thinking is that the camber of the road is the problem.

Members suggested that SH contact the police to see if they have identified any trends at this location; in which case, an approach to BEAR should be made.

SH also raised the issue of roundabout markings (albeit this is more a Highland area issue) whereby timber lorries travelling straight on are sometimes directed to take the inside lane going around a roundabout. SH to raise the issue again at the HTTG.

9. Date of next meeting/s

Autumn/Winter 2013 meeting: 13 November 2013

Spring/summer 2014 meetings: Doodle Poll to be circulated to establish members' availability