

## Timber Transport Conference 2012

The Timber Transport Conference for 2012 was held at The Rheged Centre in Penrith on the 15<sup>th</sup> March 2012.

The Conference was well attended with over 100 people from across the UK and from Eire.

### Conference 2012

The Cumbria Timber Transport Group launched its agreed routes map at this year's Timber Transport Conference held at the Rheged Centre on the 15th March. The choice of venue reflects the present level of activity in north England with similar agreed routes maps being prepared by groups in North Yorkshire and north-east England.

For the 100 or more people attending the conference it is clear that the work of the Forum and groups remains crucial to maintaining a reliable flow of timber from forest to processor while sustaining our minor rural road network.

Chair of the Forum Alistair Speedie opened the conference by adding his signature to complete a refreshed partnering charter. The Forum and groups rely on a voluntary partnership approach to sort out timber haulage issues and so it was good to see thirteen groups and eleven partner organisations all signed up to a common set of values and practices.

Hamish Macleod gave the keynote address. As both a Forestry Commissioner and head of public affairs for BSW he was well placed to set the conference agenda in context. Hamish highlighted the substantial increase in timber harvests, the value of a reliable supply chain to the continued growth of our timber industries and the need to focus on sustainability and safety.

Andrew Harper of Cumbria County Council, and Richard Scott of BSW (and chair of the Cumbria Timber Transport Group) then launched Cumbria's agreed routes map. It has taken two years to produce, gaining buy-in from local authority roads engineers, timber hauliers, forest managers and timber processors. Interestingly, it has also been out to public consultation, coming through that process improved and strengthened.

James Gilroy of North Yorkshire County Council continued the theme, demonstrating the online agreed routes map currently out for public consultation. This map shows which roads require consultation with the council before use for timber haulage but also provides an indication of the volume of timber traffic harvesting activities are likely to generate.

Callum Robertson of Argyll & Bute Council and Kirsty Robb the Argyll group's project officer explained the consultation procedures that the group has agreed for managing timber traffic on Argyll's fragile road network. In particular they focused on the timber traffic management plans – detailed prescriptions for low impact haulage that are enabling haulage along 'severely restricted' roads that would normally warrant a weight restriction.

Colin Mackenzie gave the conference a wry look at the history of forestry in Sutherland's flow (bog) country explaining the problems associated with transporting harvested logs from the plantations over single track roads floating on peat. Careful haulage using CTI-equipped lorries managed to shift initial volumes without too much damage but as the volumes have increased it is clear that road haulage will struggle to be sustainable. A combination of rail and road haulage is being encouraged.

Over lunch, delegates were able to view JST Services latest road-going, low ground pressure, 8-axle timber haulage vehicle which was parked behind the venue. This can carry a 35 tonne load under off road conditions but uniquely it can also manage 21t legally on a forest to mill haul. With only 5 tonnes loading per axle and offset wide wheels fitted with CTI this is a gentle giant.

Lorries were the theme after lunch with Alistair Evans of Cargotec covering the changing rules regarding type approval of lorries. Timber trailer builders and those putting together bespoke timber vehicles will need to be aware of the requirements for type approval of the completed vehicle.

Ian Mclean of Volvo introduced the Dynafleet vehicle tracking system, describing its ability to track the movement of a lorry, calculate working hours, monitor and report driving styles, and analyse fuel consumption. John Scott of JST Services noted the value of the system in terms of safety – keeping contact with hauliers working alone in remote sites – and described how vehicle tracking information had sorted out an incidence of fuel theft from a vehicle.

After the break, David Sulman Executive Director of UKFPA and chair of the Forum's Technical Working Group launched the 4<sup>th</sup> Edition of the Road Haulage of Round Timber Code of Practice. With the previous 2003 edition out of print, the opportunity has been taken to update the document, refreshing the text and images and incorporating the 2006 agreements on strapping timber loads. Low ground pressure vehicles, driver training and carbon footprints have also been covered. Timber Transport Groups will be helping to roll out this new edition ensuring it reaches the hands of drivers, and those contracting and managing timber haulage.

With the conference coming a week after the recent Forestry Health and Safety summit, a review of the issues relating to timber haulage was particularly timely. James Walls is Safety Manager (North) for UPM Tilhill and gave an excellent presentation on where responsibilities for health and safety lie. Employers and employees, contract managers and subcontractors, land owners, land managers and company directors cannot ignore their responsibilities and the outcomes and penalties for those who do, can be severe.

Chris Hetherington of CRH Transport Training took on the last slot of the day with an overview of the challenges ahead for the haulage industry in achieving the training requirements for drivers. Chris highlighted the opportunity for hauliers to work with training companies to develop the courses they need – in eco-driving, health and safety and emergency first aid – while achieving Driver CPC accreditation.

The Conference presentations and a pdf of the Road Haulage of Round Timber Code of Practice are available on the Timber Transport Forum website [www.timbertransportforum.org.uk](http://www.timbertransportforum.org.uk). The Code of Practice can be ordered in hard copy, free of charge from [roland.stiven@confor.org.uk](mailto:roland.stiven@confor.org.uk)

Alongside a number of presentations on issues relevant to timber haulage the conference also saw the formal refresh of the Timber Transport Forum's Partnering Charter and the launch of the [Road Haulage of Round Timber Code of Practice 4th edition](#).

Mark Stone wrote up the conference in an [article](#) for Forestry Journal [www.forestryjournal.co.uk](http://www.forestryjournal.co.uk)

The conference presentations are available for download below.

Alistair Speedie [Welcome](#)

Hamish Macleod [Keynote Address](#)

Andrew Harper and Richard Scott [Agreed Routes in Cumbria](#)

James Gilroy [Agreed Routes in North Yorkshire](#)

Kirsty Robb and Callum Robertson [TTMP in Argyll](#)

Colin Mackenzie [Timber Transport in Flow Country](#)

Alastair Evans [Timber Lorries and Type Approval](#)

Ian Maclean Vehicle Tracking Systems (not available)

David Sulman [Launch of Road Haulage of Round Timber CoP 4th Edition](#)

James Walls [Health and Safety in Timber Haulage](#)

Chris Hetherington [Driver Training](#)