

Volvo Trucks. Driving Progress



Frank Roach HITRANS

@TimberTransport



Wood you use rail?

- ▶ Frank Roach HITRANS 23.03.18



Wood you use rail?

- ▶ Research by HITRANS at the request of FCS
- ▶ Designed to measure the Scottish timber industry's enthusiasm for rail, following up on a question posed by Cabinet Secretary Fergus Ewing
- ▶ Forest harvesting, haulage and processing sectors were contacted to explore whether there is any potential interest, and people's views of the key hurdles or barriers
- ▶ Common themes were explored and next steps to take are considered



Current timber by rail

- ▶ Raw timber loaded at Carlisle for Kronospan at Chirk. The trains are operated by Colas who use KFA and KSA wagons which have a higher capacity than the traditional OTA wagon.
- ▶ OSB from Norbord daily, backloading up to 12 Tesco/Stobart curtain-sider swapbodies that are loaded at Morayhill and trucked to Inverness for lifting onto the DRS train at Needlefield Yard.
- ▶ BSW Corpach also load some sawn timber to rail. Three loads per day are trucked to Grangemouth in swapbodies for loading onto the Malcolm's train for Daventry.



Survey



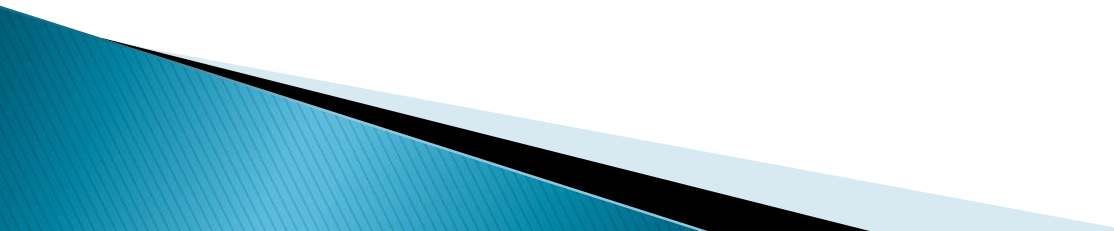
- ▶ The survey work was conducted in February 2018 in a series of phone interviews covering a range of harvesters, managers, processors and hauliers. Thanks!
- ▶ The interviews focused on catchment, destination and perceived barriers to using rail.
- Supply seen as a key issue – rail may be able to offer access to hard-to-get-to resource.
- Finished product: processors may move a variety of product to market: sawn timber in whole or part loads to a number of end users or distribution points; fencing and pallet material; biomass pellets; residues for other processors. There are also some inter-plant movements within the same owning group.

Interest in using rail

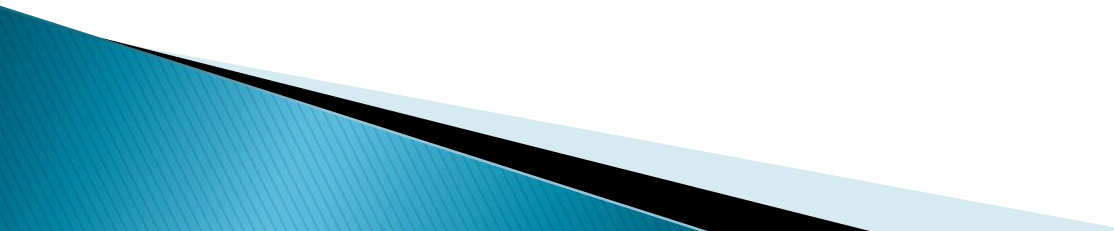
- ▶ Of 16 respondents only one said that rail was not really of interest, but admitted that their company might benefit if others source raw timber from further catchments by rail, freeing up more local sources of supply
- ▶ Only two featured as Low on the High Medium Low railability index assessing the chances of rail being used for in or outbound product
- ▶ Seven companies currently use rail, and others are considering it



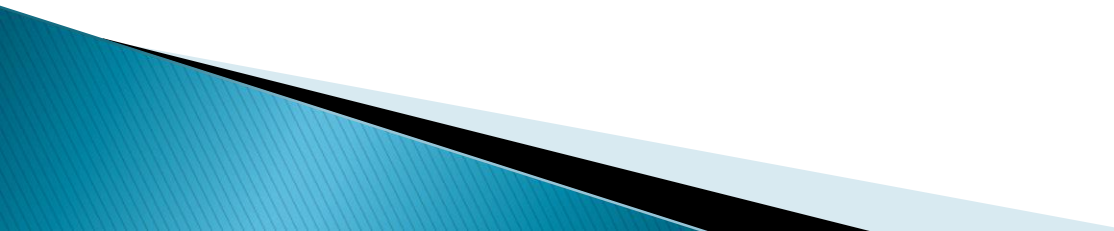
Barriers to rail

- ▶ Rail is seen as high cost, requiring specialist infrastructure and rolling stock
 - ▶ There is a need to avoid double handling
 - ▶ While it is seen as a 'green' alternative, that desire for greenness is diminished if it costs 20p/tonne more
 - ▶ Rail operators do not adequately market their services or the network
 - ▶ Network Rail is seen as not facilitating access to the network, being enthusiastic in the first instance but soon introducing barriers and costs
 - ▶ Rail's requirement for long-term commitment and collaboration runs counter to the timber industry's requirement to compete for supply and to shift harvesting activity within short timescales
 - ▶ Most plants are not rail connected but there are a number that are adjacent or near the railway. There is a need to provide information on rail routes, capability and terminals, investigating both the use of existing and the creation of new facilities
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Solutions?

- Sufficiently long term arrangements from a railhead/terminal or network of railheads/terminals that guarantee the rail operator traffic over a period
 - A template for the creation of new railheads/terminals provided by Network Rail and Transport Scotland
 - Timber hubs, operated by third parties which provide rail freight services for a number of processors
 - Open data on timber logistics that enables the planning of a Branchliner network, fulfilled for example by dedicated freight trains that provide a merry-go-round service, calling at a different processor or hub on a certain day/s of the week
 - Aggressive marketing by Network Rail and terminal owners to attract new timber flows
 - Joint working with other sectors as happens with Norbord and Tesco/Stobart
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Suggested Next Steps

- ▶ Provide information on the capability of the existing rail network
 - ▶ Detail existing and potential new terminals
 - ▶ Develop a template for the creation of new railheads/terminals
 - ▶ Explore interest in “timber hubs”, operated by third parties, which would provide rail freight services for a number of processors to move processed timber
 - ▶ Offer open data on timber logistics to enable dedicated freight networks to find savings through improved efficiencies
 - ▶ Encourage rail companies and Network Rail to be more proactive with potential customers, bringing together the timber industry with other rural sectors
 - ▶ Develop new ways of working to enable the timber industry to work co-operatively and to guarantee a rail operator traffic over a realistic time period
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HITRANS actions

- ▶ Organise meetings with Rail Freight Operators to discuss the findings
- ▶ Catalogue existing and dormant facilities that could be used for timber
- ▶ Identify terminals that can be reactivated
- ▶ Identify new terminal opportunities (Ayrshire, West Highland, Inverness) that could support cluster working



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