

MINUTES OF THE GRAMPIAN TIMBER TRANSPORT GROUP (GTTG)



17th December 2009

- Date:** Thursday 17th December 2009
- Location:** Grampian Conservancy, Forestry Commission Office, Huntly
- Present:** Johnny Morren - JM (Moray Council)
John Sutherland - JS (Scottish Woodlands)
Malcolm Christie - MC (Aberdeenshire Council)
Matt Young - MY (Forestry Commission Scotland)
Will Anderson - WA (Seafield Estates)
Andrew Nicol - AN (Andrew Nicol Chartered Forester)
Alastair Young - AY (Forest Enterprise Scotland)
Alasdair Cameron - AC (UPM Kymmene)
Bob Main - BM (Forestry Commission Engineering)
Bob Wilson - BW (Scottish Woodlands)
Emily Maclean - EM (Rural Development Initiatives)
- Apologies:** Jim Dewar - JD (Forestry Commission Scotland) (Chair)
Roland Stiven - RS (Timber Transport Forum)
Sandy Hogg (James Jones)
Rab Dickson - RD (NESTRANS)
Keith Stratton - KS (Moray Council)
Claire Glaister (Rural Development Initiatives)

1. Notes of last meeting on 14th September 2009

These were accepted by those present with no comments made. Matters arising taken in conjunction with subsequent agenda items

2. Timber Transport Project Officer Update

Majority of work has been assisting with C43M consultation processes. Approximate tonnages for area around C43M are estimated at 40,000 tonnes a year for next 15 years with approximately 10,000 tonnes a year travelling along C43M. Equates to 400 lorries per year or average 2 per day (4 including return loads).

3. STTS project update - C43M Muir of Fowlis to Kirkton of Touch

Consultation meetings have been held as planned, but with almost total objection from members of the public. A few positive responses from farmer and rural businesses. Local school representatives suggested use of interactive speed signs. Council required to work within road boundary and possibility of liaising with land owners to improve corner visibility. Area Committee will decide in January if the project can go ahead, but unlikely to get through.

MC suggests the integrity of ARM system is questioned if timber lorries can continue to use any desired route. Movement of timber wagons on C43M is west to east rather than supposed opposite which would take timber to Deeside. Unlikely to have much saving as only 4 mile difference, but traffic restrictions through Alford put drivers off. Useful to deliver message at haulier events of minimising impacts to residents.

5. Red diesel use in forestry

Current legislation has very grey areas and there are specific regional issues to be addressed in terms of definitions i.e. forest machine vehicles. Agree terms of reference first and then look at how and when the legislation can be used. Better to have something solid rather than working on misconceptions. Clarification of guidance needed between HRMC and industry. Definition of public road needs better clarification - in forest road allows use of red diesel, but unclear if private road would be eligible. Large number of scenarios means danger of being too prescriptive and at present there are too many options. Better to focus on half a dozen key areas and look at prime answers to focus discussions and remove ambiguity.

6. Haulier Liaison Day

Due to take place in Spring 2010 and focus on legislation and training requirements. Emphasise importance of responsible speed / due care and attention when driving through small villages. FES planning to hold seminar in Autumn 2010 to look at tickets, procurements and contracts. Council road damage should also be discussed at events and further promotion of CTi as alleviation to road damage. If such systems are made mandatory on certain roads under certain conditions then extra running costs need to be taken into account - approx 30-40p per tonne. Overall maintenance costs are greater than fuel savings.

7. Update from GTTG members

John Sutherland, Scottish Woodlands

New access for forestry currently requires full planning consent, but should not be required if application complies with legislation (unless there are major neighbour objections). Is there any way to fast track the system? I.e. get roads staff on board first and then note pre-consultation within plans. Get it right first time and involve appropriate agency: trunk road, Transport Scotland, BEAR or CNPA. Early design plans and consultation

8. AOCB

- Chair of GTTG currently due for renewal but no parties able to take on position at present.
- Rail Freight Consultation final draft to be circulated to Group

9. Date of next meeting

TBC - April/May 2010