

TimberTransportForum

delivering solutions for a growing UK harvest

Timber Transport Forum response to Consultation on Forestry and Land Management (Scotland) Bill.

The Timber Transport Forum welcomes the opportunity to respond to the consultation.

Our response will highlight areas where the bill may have implications for the haulage of timber from Scottish forests.

1. The Timber Transport Forum

The [Timber Transport Forum](#)ⁱ is a voluntary partnership organisation set up in 2000 to address the issues raised by timber transport in Great Britain. The Forum includes representatives of the forestry and timber industries, the local roads authorities and various national agencies and organisations, including Forestry Commission Scotland and Transport Scotland (freight).

Moving several millions of tonnes of timber each year on standard 44 tonne lorries (27 tonne load) across this minor road network can have impacts on the fabric, structure and drainage of the roads, and on neighbours, communities and other road users.

To keep this impact to a minimum the Forum promotes the following voluntary measures:

- [Agreed Routes Map](#)ⁱⁱ. The Agreed Routes Map covers around 10,000km of B, C and U class roads. This represents a sixth of all roads in Scotland. It sets out the hierarchy of roads for use timber traffic and a voluntary approach to liaison and partnership over use of public roads by the industry. The majority of roads are categorised as ‘consultation routes’ and this prompts those involved in the harvesting and transport of timber to consult the local roads authority (councils) to discuss the transport and agree appropriate voluntary management of the road and/or the traffic to minimise impacts on the road and disruption to other road users thereby sustaining the road network.
- [Timber Transport Groups](#)ⁱⁱⁱ. There are 7 timber transport groups covering 11 rural councils. The groups are a parallel local partnership of industry and roads authority representatives meet 2-3 times a year to establish good communications, discuss timber transport issues, highlight any concerns that have been raised and propose any changes to agreed routes maps or suggest traffic management measures that may be appropriate. The groups, and the GB Forum, are supported by part time project officers.
- [Good Practice](#)^{iv}. The Forum produces good practice guidance covering safe loading, load security, agreed routes, consultation with local roads authorities and other stakeholders and managing timber operations close to public roads. We have also produced technical guidance on lower impact lorry technologies which can help to reduce the impact of heavy lorries on the road structure. Some of the groups produce their own local good practice guidance and [protocols](#)^v.

Timber Transport Forum www.timbertransportforum.org.uk roland.stiven@confor.org.uk

Confederation of Forest Industries (UK) Ltd 59 George Street Edinburgh EH2 2JG

Tel: 0131 240 1418 Fax: 0131 240 1411 www.confor.org.uk

Registered in Scotland as Confederation of Forest Industries UK (Ltd). No. SC34467

This voluntary partnership is effective and has enabled the expansion of the Scottish timber industry over the last two decades adding value to our forest resource and helping this 'carbon positive' industry become a major driver in rural development and employment.

The voluntary partnership has also sustained the local roads networks without investing the huge resources needed to fully upgrade the infrastructure to suit modern haulage vehicles.

However, this approach obviously impacts on the efficiency of the supply chain and the tonnage that can be hauled daily.

2. Forestry and Roads

The Forum recognises that the development of the rural road network has not kept pace with changing forest cover, despite its long-term nature. The Forum regularly presents information to councils and to the Scottish Government on medium to long term timber transport requirements.

The Forum encourages Scotland's Land Use Strategy and National Transport Strategy to take account of the infrastructure requirements of modern rural land use and is working with other rural sectors to make the case for a step change in rural transport infrastructure investment to broaden economic opportunities for people throughout Scotland.

In the meantime, the forest and timber industries (unlike any other rural industry) continue to take voluntary measures to manage timber transport.

3. Our Response

Our response will highlight potential areas where the bill may have implications for the transport of timber from Scottish forests to timber processors.

3.1. The extent of compulsory purchase powers

The 1967 act included powers of requirements for haulage facilities which allowed for the making of 'an order that the owner and occupier of any land shall afford the necessary facilities, subject to payment by the person in whose favour the order is made of reasonable rent or wayleave and of compensation for any damage caused by the haulage'.

This provided a mechanism to prevent 'landlocking' of forest by ensuring access rights for the haulage of timber across 3rd party land to the public transport infrastructure.

The Forum is not aware of such orders being used but there are many scenarios where servitudes have been required over intervening land to reach the public road.

Most (all?) forests areas now have rights of access, but these do not always exit onto the most appropriate public transport infrastructure. A more sustainable solution (from the public perspective) may be an alternative access crossing 3rd party ground.

While we would see such issues as being best dealt with by negotiation we would ask that, as a backstop, the provision of suitable haulage facilities be included as a rationale for use of compulsory purchase powers.

3.2. Consultation

Permission for felling may have implications for the public transport infrastructure particularly where the haulage of timber is over minor or fragile public roads managed by local authorities. While the management of roads and road traffic are the subject of other legislation, FCS can, and does in some situations, make liaison with the relevant authority (e.g. the council roads authority) a condition of any felling permission. This has the effect of ensuring the wider impacts of haulage on society and the environment are considered by the relevant authority and prompts the use of the voluntary partnership approach espoused by the Forum.

The Forum would expect that the public transport infrastructure implications of a forestry strategy will be recognised by Scottish Government and addressed where appropriate through the Land Use Strategy, Forestry Strategy and its regulations and by integration where appropriate with other departments of government and with local government.

We would expect that the Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement (to which Scottish Ministers will have regard) will promote transparency of land and forest ownership and that this will encourage good communication between forest owners and their neighbours and local communities.

3.3. General powers of financial assistance

The Forestry Commission Scotland currently manages the Strategic Timber Transport Fund on behalf of Scottish Government. This provides funding for:

- The Timberlink Coastal Shipping public service contract which takes some timber traffic off the roads between Argyll and Ayrshire
- The Strategic Timber Transport Scheme which provides grant support towards infrastructure improvements to minimise the social and environmental impacts of timber transport.

The Forum would ask that such a mechanism continue to be enabled through Scottish Government.

The Timber Transport Forum would be happy to provide further information to this stage of the bill if required.

Roland Stiven
Timber Transport Forum
16th August 2017

ⁱ <http://timbertransportforum.org.uk/>

ⁱⁱ <https://timbertf.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=cd6737077f1044728a121c8e311d781f>

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://timbertransportforum.org.uk/groups>

^{iv} <http://timbertransportforum.org.uk/work/good-practice>

^v

<http://timbertransportforum.org.uk/attachments/article/87/STTTG%20Timber%20Transport%20Protocol%202013.pdf>