

**Timber Transport Forum Meeting
10.30 24th January 2020
Silvan House
Edinburgh**

Agreed Minute

Present

Alistair Speedie (Chair), Roland Stiven, Derek Nelson, Colin Mackenzie, Robin Pope, Jamie Farquhar, James England, Simon Stuart, Kirst Robb, Iain Catterwell, Crispin Thorn, Justin Huthersall, Julian Fryer, Jason Hubert, Claire Glaister

Apologies Neil Stoddart, Gillian Clark, Simon Oldham, Alex Murray

1. Welcome

Alistair Speedie welcomed Kirsty Robb back as Chair of Argyll TTG. He noted that both Neil Stoddart of JST and John Paterson of the NE England group were unwell (and John had been sent a card) and wished them both a speedy recovery.

2. Previous Minute

The minute of the previous meeting (11th **October 2019**) was agreed with minor corrections.

3. Action Points & Matters arising

3.1. Roland attended the Irish FITG seminar. Focus on skills and safety and strapping. The papers from the conference can be found at www.fitg.ie. Jamie Farquhar asked whether 46 tonne trucks from Ireland can deliver to N. Ireland mills.

3.2. A [case study](#) on developing appropriate consultation regarding Timber Transport was prepared with and for the Scottish Land Commission. And another SLC case study [covered the transport of timber from Eigg](#).

3.3. The Exit Point study contract is being delivered and has been extended to the end of January 2020. There has, to date, been a relatively poor response for a variety of reasons.

3.4. A letter was sent to the Cabinet Secretary to update him on issues raised in the February 2019 meeting.

3.5. **ACTION: Roland** to provide information on the scope and scale of opportunities from revision of the bulk Waterborne/ Coastal shipping Freight Grants to Transport Scotland. **This has been carried forward.**

3.6. **ACTION:** David and Roland to develop a draft revised version of the Road Haulage of Round Timber Code of Practice for circulation by Nov 30th. The [Road Haulage of Roundwood Timber Code of Practice](#) is being revised and a 5th edition draft has been circulated (in January) inviting comments by 31st

January. All effort should be made to complete and, if possible, print in time for a launch at the Conference. A stripped-down html version could be considered that would be more easily downloaded on mobile phones. Follow up endorsements from police, HSE and DVSA.

ACTION: Roland to Investigate Agreed Code of Practice Status.

ACTION: All encouraged to find photos for illustration of Code of Practice.

3.7. The Forum [responded](#) to the National Transport Strategy consultation

3.8. **ACTION: Roland** to investigate available literature on models for funding rural road infrastructure. **This is being carried forward.**

3.9. TTF Strategic Plan. This is on hold pending a wider review of the Forum,

3.10. ACTION: James England to prepare discussion paper on the circumstances and options for private sector contributions to public road improvement or repair. **This paper has been drafted and will be circulated for comment prior to next meeting.**

4. APF Exhibition September

It was agreed the Forum would take a stand with James Jones & Sons, Tireboss and Michelin at the APF exhibition at Ragley Hall 24th-26th September 2020

5. Conference 2020 Programme

5.1. The Conference online booking can be found [here](#)

The North Lakes Hotel offer a 10% reduction for conference attendees. To obtain this discount, call the hotel to book direct and let them know you are attending the conference. Book early to get the best rates.

The draft programme was discussed and revised (see below) subject to confirmation with speakers.

Traffic Commissioner Claire Gilmore will attend the dinner and conference and speak.

ACTION: Alistair to liaise with Traffic Commissioner and Martin Reid ahead of conference.

ACTION: Roland to finalise Conference programme.

6. FISA Haulage Working Group update

[Guidance on Managing Health and Safety in Forestry](#) has been refreshed and is now available to [download](#).

[FISA 806 Welfare Guide](#) has been finalised.

FISA Haulage Working Group is recirculating the road defect safety report with a view to finalising, so that this can be referred to in Code of Practice v5.

Working at height. The working group is looking at how the risk of work at height for the timber haulier can be better addressed, particularly when taking out/fitting pins on flats. Several of the WG members are directly designing & testing

systems. An example can be seen here <https://youtu.be/PV4GgieSbE8>. The Forum is fully supportive of industry efforts to find solutions to this issue.

The working group ran a well-attended and successful pilot HGV driver Forestry CPC training course on 30 Nov. Aimed at the professional HGV driver as part of their required CPC, it is also suited to forestry FWMs and the course could form a valuable part of their CPD. The aim is to roll this out to industry in 2020 – a draft flyer was circulated.

7. Funding

7.1. STTS 2019 The budget is fully committed with projects largely complete and preparing final claims. Most projects are local authority public road improvements. On inspecting works, in some localities, it is evident that STTS has contributed to a marked improvement in public road infrastructure over recent years.

7.2. STTS 2020 Recognising uncertainty over Scottish Government budget timing, Scottish Forestry has set an STTS deadline for submissions of 5pm on Monday 9 March 2020. The panel will meet to advise on allocations on 23rd April 2020. Scottish Forestry has proposed a budget continuing at similar levels to 2019, If actual budget was much reduced this may impact on intervention levels. Derek Nelson noted he would be retiring at the end of March 2020. The post will be filled and advertised externally. Andy Leitch is also moving to Confor in April 2020 to take on the Deputy Director role previously held by David Sulman who has retired. Andy will chair the 2020 STTS panel in this capacity.

7.3. Alistair Speedie noted that with these changes, it would be prudent to take stock of Forum resources and reinforce the Forum's identity and capacity. The Conference should serve to strengthen the Forum identity. Derek Nelson noted that the timber transport groups in Scotland were generally functioning well; well-attended with effective chairs and project officers and good group involvement, tackling many issues at a local level leaving the Forum with more strategic issues to deal with. Colin Mackenzie agreed that the Forum and groups have been very successful in addressing what were at one time really challenging issues. James England noted that Local Authorities continue to lose resources and experienced staff. Alistair noted the development of his own role as long-standing chair and with his retirement from D&G council, less involvement in day to day issues.

ACTION: Alistair to liaise with Scottish Forestry and Confor on the Timber Transport Forum resources and standing going forward.

ACTION ALL: Provide feedback to Alistair with ideas on strengthening the identity and capacity of the Forum for the future as timber volumes continue to rise.

7.4. England. Crispin Thorn noted that FC England budget is still to be confirmed but intention is to continue to support the Forum. The government's manifesto commitment for woodland creation is deliver a UK target of achieving 30,000ha of new planting per year by 2025 which would assume a marked increase in woodland planting in England – waiting to see how

that will be facilitated in practice. Important to ensure transport issues are integrated into new woodland planning.

- 7.5. FFG Justin Huthersall noted Transport Scotland has no confirmed budget yet but with modal shift still a priority, there is expectation of continuation. Much is likely to be allocated to existing projects but, new projects and new ideas are still invited.

8. Regional Updates

- 8.1. **Highland** (Colin Mackenzie) STTS projects are mostly complete with just a late-starting Glenelg project to improve the road through the village, and the work on Eigg, still in progress. Given the high cost of road works on the Isle of Eigg it was agreed with Scottish Forestry that the initial batch of haulage would be done prior to improvement works to ensure limited resources were best targeted. The weak road has held up remarkably well to the low impact haulage regime in place.

Confor is working with local companies and initiatives in Sutherland to look at opportunities for new planting and take account of the transport constraints. A recent meeting in Dingwall was well-attended and positive.

Highland Council was commended for finding dedicated funding to co-finance STTS projects. Robin Pope noted that Councils may be considering increases in Council Tax to allow more spend. Timber Transport Groups should be prepared to offer shovel-ready projects if this transpires.

- 8.2. **Argyll** (Iain Catterwell) STTS projects have been successfully delivered with competitive costs for materials allowing increased outputs. The weather has prevented white-lining which will be done in May. The landing craft bund on Loch Striven started late but is progressing. Marine Scotland permission took 111 days. A range of applications are expected for the 2020 round.

The many Timber Traffic Management Plans in Argyll tend to raise unrealistic expectations from communities who presume them to have more formal status than they do. There has been a recent FOI into the development and status of a particular TTMP. Iain is expecting to put more time into liaison with public groups and elected members where timber transport issues arise.

It has been recognised that the STTS supported WLATHR (West Loch Awe Timber Haul Route), when developed as a shared timber and windfarm road, did not make clear allowance for (relatively minor) third party use, which would have been beneficial. A solution has been found but future haul routes should be comprehensive in this regard.

- 8.3. **Stirling & Tayside & Grampian** (Claire Glaister) STTS projects are all complete and Claire has been involved in interim inspections. Proposals are being prepared for 2020 round though some councils wish to resubmit previously submitted low-scoring projects.

There has been considerable and ongoing community engagement on a TTMP in Stirlingshire. At another site there has been localised damage to a

road covered by a TTMP despite careful haulage. Discussions are underway about meeting the cost of repair.

Claire presented to the HND course at Scottish School of Forestry and there was very good engagement from students.

Claire is starting a part time post as Woodland Officer with Perth and Argyll Conservancy alongside her timber transport role with full support from her groups and employer.

- 8.4. **Ayrshire & South Lanarkshire** (Simon Stuart) STTS works in Ayrshire now complete and councils have plans for 2020 projects in North Ayrshire, Arran, and South Lanarkshire (where volumes will substantially increase in the coming decade from dispersed forests on consultation routes.) Consultation from forestry sector is going well using the consultation detail form.

The Ayrshire timber transport strategy is being finalised. A load of timber was shed from a strapped lorry on the public road near Barr, fortunately with no wider impact or injury. The relevant authorities are involved.

- 8.5. **D&G** (James England)
STTS projects (three public roads and one private) are now complete. Many plant health notices for Larch are requiring haulage from sites with difficult access on minor roads.

Several meetings with communities over timber transport issues have been challenging with heckling and ill temper. Some incidents have been complex and involved multiple parties and elected members – thanks to Derek and Conservancy for support and input.

An example of very poor (dangerous) roadside harvesting practice was reported and the group issued a safety alert, disseminated by FISA, highlighting the issues involved but not naming the company. However, the company involved has not responded positively.

All Forum and group representatives, Confor, and the wider sector, should report poor practice to the appropriate enforcement authorities – the police, Scottish Forestry, the council, HSE. Scottish Forestry maintain a 'non-compliance (of UK Forest Standard) register which highlights companies demonstrating poor practice to regulators. Project officers should be careful not to put themselves in the firing line recognising they have no formal powers of inspection or enforcement.

While the timber transport groups can help disseminate safety alerts they should be produced by an organisation with a corporate structure such as a forestry management company, council or by FISA.

- 8.6. **Scottish Borders** (James England)
An incident of very poor practice of roadside harvesting and stacking was reported and, in this case, promptly resolved.

STTS projects complete and further projects for 2020 being identified.

8.7. NE England

The group has not met for a while despite intentions to link up with the Cumbria group. Crispin Thorn will encourage progress in this regard.

8.8. North Yorkshire

Roland attended the November meeting where the group agreed an updated terms of Reference. They are expecting to meet annually as most issues are being dealt with by normal process.. The group has a new chair in Will Richardson.

9. Plant Health update (Jamie Farquhar)

More than 400 *P ramorum* sites are being checked.

Ash dieback is already a major issue in England where authorities are responding; Scotland will need to catch up. The disease can progress over several years showing a 'pom-pom' effect of bunched foliage. Where there is a focused inoculum source, the disease can develop fast with progression to being structurally unsound in one year. Given the scale and extent of the road-side ash resource (an estimated 4 million road-side ash in Scotland), councils will need to engage with landowners in identifying risk and mobilising resources to deal with dangerous trees. Ownership of and responsibility for roadside trees can be disputed. SCOTS is keen for guidance on this issue. Councils can undertake works and recharge to landowners. Competent contractors are busy and it may take a while for the contractor base to expand.

The Tree Council and Scottish forestry are leading and liaising with Confor and COSLA. The Tree Council has an [Ash Dieback Action Plan Toolkit](#).

APSE has produced a [briefing note](#). The briefing is an advisory note for use by APSE member local councils. Appropriate independent advice should be sought before acting upon any recommendations.

Timber Transport Groups can play a part in sharing knowledge with councils and landowners.

10. AOB

10.1. It was agreed the Forum should respond to The Scottish Forestry Corporate Plan consultation to reinforce the importance of the work of the Forum and groups and the STTF.

10.2. It was agreed the Forum would respond to the consultation on Safeguarding Scotland's Remote Rural Communities; A proposal for a Bill to enhance the consideration given to remote rural mainland communities by public bodies in Scotland

ACTION: All to comment on draft response to Safeguarding Scotland's Remote Rural Communities prior to submission on 31st January 2020

10.3. The Forum responded to a consultation by the Infrastructure Commission Scotland which has now produced **Phase 1 Key findings report: A blueprint for Scotland** which can be found on their website [here](#).

10.4. The Scottish Government is developing National Planning Framework 4 which provides an opportunity to [review permitted development rights](#). Jamie will respond on behalf of Confor regarding Forest Roads.

11. Dates of next meetings

- TTF Conference Dinner 19th March and Conference 20th March
- 26th June
- 9th October
- Also note [APF Expo](#) 24-26 September

Timber Transport Forum Conference 2020

9.30- 15.30 20th March 2020

North Lakes Hotel and Spa.

Revised draft PROGRAMME

Time	Item	
9.30	REGISTRATION AND REFRESHMENTS	
	Welcome to the Future	
10.00	Welcome	Alistair Speedie
10.05	Welcome to N England, Borderlands, Great Northumberland Forest, Climate change Planting Targets, Forestry in N England/ FIZ, Innovation	Keith Jones and Jim O'Neill Forestry Commission England
10.30	Informal Q&A	
10.45	Transport Innovation with Q&A	John Comer, Volvo
11.15	Break	
	Responsible Timber Haulage	
11.35	Launch of the Code of Practice	Alistair Speedie
11.40	Office of Transport Commissioner	Transport Commissioner Ms Claire Gilmore
11.55	Promoting quality timber haulage	Martin Reid RHA
12.15	Responsible land ownership	Kristy Tait, Scottish Land Commission
12.30	Consultation and Engagement	Doug Howieson, Scottish Forestry
13.00	LUNCH	Volvo lorry in car park
	Reducing the Impact	
13.40	FISA Update on Forestry Haulage CPD and workplace safety management	Sandra Boreland and Neil Stoddart
14.10	Managing in Forest Infrastructure	Mick Bottomley
15.00	Hydrogen Haulage	Maybe Fergus Tickell/ Liverpool company
15.20	Closing	Alistair Speedie
15.30	END	