

NOTE OF THE 18th MEETING OF THE UK BRIDGES BOARD.

Meeting held in Room H2, Great Minster House, London, 16 November 2005.

Present:

Richard Fish	CSS Cornwall CC (Chair)
Greg Perks	CSS/Northumberland CC
John Carpenter	SCOSS
Campbell Middleton	Cambridge University (BOF chair)
Gerry Hayter	Highways Agency
David Mackenzie	SCOTS
Dana Skelley	TfL
Bill Valentine	Scottish Executive
Tudor Roberts	Welsh Assembly Government
Paul Long	LB Hillingdon (LOBEG)
Brian Bell	Network Rail
Bob Flitcroft	Bolton MBC
Rod Howe	British Waterways
Jim Moriarty	London Underground
Graham Cole	Surrey County Council
Dave Ambrose	WATO
Ian Holmes	Department for Transport
Andrew Pitchford	CIRIA
Leo Mc Kibbins	Mott Macdonald
Chris Hudson	DfT RLTSF3

1. Apologies/New members

Apologies were received from Awtar Jandu, David Yeoell, Ronny Wilson, John Collins, Edward Bunting and Andrew Oldland. Awtar Jandu was represented by Gerry Hayter, John Collins was represented by Tudor Roberts.

The Board welcomed a new chair, Richard Fish of Cornwall County Council, whose election as chair was endorsed at the UK Roads Liaison Group meeting of 21 September

2. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

Minutes of last meeting/Matters Arising

Maintaining a Vital Asset is now available and an electronic version has been emailed to Board members, as well as to chief highway officers in English local authorities. [It has been noted that some people didn't receive the email due to technical problems. Paper copies are available from the Secretariat]

Network Rail Liaison - At the August meeting of the Board, Paul Long raised an issue regarding Network Rail's performance in London and asked for this to be recorded in the note of the meeting. It was, however, omitted. He and Dana Skelley had written to Kim Teager of Network Rail, on behalf of LoBEG and TfL respectively, voicing their concerns. Brian Bell replied that they hadn't written to the correct person in the organisation but that he had been delegated to reply.

New Code of Practice - Richard Fish congratulated all those involved in the launch of the new Code of Practice *Management of Highway Structures*, which took place on 6 September, at the East Midlands Conference Centre, Nottingham.

UK RLG Website - This went live on 17 November. The address is www.ukroadsliaisongroup.org. There is a link to all four Boards. It was emphasised that this website belongs to members of the Group and its Boards and that they should take advantage of the opportunity to put things onto it. They can do this via the Secretariat, by emailing to Chris Hudson.

3. UK Roads Liaison Group Feedback

The note of the 21 September meeting was circulated with the agenda. This was David Lynn's last engagement as chair of the UK Bridges Board and the Board re-emphasised its gratitude to him for his excellent work as chair, since the first meeting of the Board in September 2001,

4."People Process and Product: Ensuring Structural Safety"- Presentation by John Carpenter of SCOSS

John Carpenter gave a detailed presentation on the work of SCOSS and other related matters.

SCOSS produced their 15th Biennial Report in May this year. John Carpenter has since provided the web address for this project:

<http://www.scoss.org.uk/publications.asp>

A pilot scheme entitled CROSS was launched this year (<http://www.scoss.org.uk/cross>). This allows people to report matters relating to structural safety about which they are concerned, to the project director, under the strictest confidence. Such concerns are sent to a post box address

where they will be examined, logged and then destroyed, having been seen by only one person. A report is then made to a sub-group from SCOSS who then look for trends in the concerns raised. Neither the recipient of the communications nor the Sub-group they are passed to ever go back to the sources of the complaints/issues.

John Carpenter took questions and received comments from the Board. Brian Bell pointed out that Universities don't give sufficient acknowledgment to the fact that 50% of construction is *maintenance*, when teaching under-graduates. It was observed that practitioners were not easily recruited onto university staff as they did not tend to have the required research record. John Carpenter replied that a Sustainability Programme is coming to university courses. He added, however, that one must recognise that universities are there to teach, but it is for industry to *train*. He accepted, however that the principles of maintenance should be taught, hence the Sustainability Programme.

Campbell Middleton pointed out that there was continual pressure to add things to Civil Engineering degree courses, that academic staff were trying their best to take additions on board but that it was important to find a balance.

5. CIRIA Masonry Arch Bridge Guide - Presentation by Mott Macdonald

Andrew Pitchford of CIRIA and Leo McKibbins of Mott MacDonald gave this presentation.

The Masonry Arch Bridge Guide is in 5 chapters. It recommends a pro-active approach to the maintenance of this type of bridge. Bridge owners should be reactive, but should bear in mind that Masonry Arch bridges are not all the same and should be treated according to individual requirements. There are still 40,000 bridges of this type, in England, that need to be maintained.

Masonry Arch bridges frequently reach levels of decay where serviceability is affected. Prioritisation of needs is essential and the relevant information should be available to those concerned. Improvements are needed to visual data and historic, aesthetic and environmental aspects need to be brought together. More care needs to be taken regarding suitability of methods and materials. Engineers need to be aware of traditional repair materials. The long term implications of repair need more consideration.

The report highlights the fact that there is nothing in place to help engineers and builders in the construction of Masonry Arch Bridges. It was pointed out that these bridges can cost less to build than those that consist of steel and concrete.

The report is currently at the publication stage and should be ready within the first four months of next year. There will be a launch event nearer the time and

a seminar will take place in December 2005. More details about both of these events will be available soon.

6. CSS/Network Rail Liaison - Meeting of 17 June/Prioritisation of Bridge Strengthening Schemes

See also **BB 88/05**

Bob Flitcroft introduced BB 88/05 and particularly highlighted the recommendations from the CSS Bridges Group, that the proposed prioritisation tool be limited to cover Network Rail owned bridges only, and that it should be capable of use at any level.

The CSS/Network Rail Liaison Group will meet again on 22 November to progress the development of the prioritisation tool and to discuss the other CSS/Network Rail matters mentioned in the Board paper. A further progress report will be produced and this item will be on the agenda for the next meeting of the UK BB in February 2006.

7. Asset Management Decision Support Tool - Feedback from Working Group meeting held on 7 October

See also **BB 84/05**

WS Atkins are apparently prepared to work on a scoping document, free of charge. Brian Bell pointed out that Network Rail would not be prepared to contribute towards this project and that a study should be done by someone who wasn't personally implicated in the success of the project. In Edward Bunting's absence it was difficult to take the discussion any further and it was decided simply to discuss this project's place on the priority list under Item 8 (Research).

8. Research

8a. Progress on Current Projects

Dry Stone Walls - See **BB 86/05**

8b. Research Proposals 06/07

See also **BB 78/05 (A to D)**, **BB 82/05**, **BB84/05** and **BB 90/05**

It was agreed that **BB 82/05** should be put forward to the UK Roads Liaison Group, as a cross-board project, and not prioritised along with those projects

that were specific to the UK BB. The Board nevertheless registered its support for the scoping study to develop design and assessment standards for local authority roads.

It was decided that the development of a bridge engineer's decision support tool would be the Board's first priority among the projects put to be put forward to the UK Roads Liaison Group. This was considered unavoidable because of commitments arising from the structures Code of Practice *Management of Highway Structures* and the feeling that this subject was missing from it. It was decided that a clearer, more streamlined version of the project should be developed. Greg Perks will discuss this with Edward Bunting.

The final priority list for UK Bridges Board projects was as follows:

1. Development of a bridge engineer's decision support tool.
2. Revision of BS6779, Part 4 (design of Masonry Bridge Parapets).
3. Training and qualification of bridge inspectors.
4. Bridge deck slabs with non-metallic reinforcement.
5. Carbon composites for the strengthening of steel structures.

9. Bridge Owners' Forum Activities and Future Funding - Presentation by Dr Campbell Middleton

See also **BB 89/05**

The Board agreed that the Bridge Owners' Forum had served a useful purpose since its creation in 2000 and that it should continue along the same lines, with funding from the Department for Transport. The feeling was that, with the Forum concentrating on research and the technical side of bridge maintenance and management, the UK BB would be able to concentrate more on strategy and policy. This would also prevent work being done twice. It was acknowledged that there would inevitably be some overlap, but that it was important to know where the barriers were and that the two groups did not have the same agenda. It was also agreed that, in future, there would be better liaison between the secretariats of the two groups, so that meetings can be better co-ordinated.

Campbell Middleton suggested that in future, the Forum should present the UK BB with a prioritised list of research projects for putting forward to DfT Ministers.

It was therefore agreed that Campbell Middleton's request for funding of £30k per year, over three years will be taken to the UK Roads Liaison Group for approval. This will not form part of the bid for research funding as it comes under the heading of "Consultancy".

Action: DfT

10. Highway Measurement

See also **BB 83/05** and **BB 85/05**

The Board endorsed this work, without making any further comment.

11. Any Other Business

Gerry Hayter promised to forward Andrew Cook's report on the ESDAL project, which will be circulated with this note.

SCOTS and the Scottish Executive have arranged a seminar on *Management of Highway Structures*.

If Board members have comments on the Action Plan for the Board, they should send them to Chris Hudson, in time for the 14 December meeting of the UK Roads Liaison Group.

Bridges 2006 - This event will take place on 14 March, at the East Midlands Conference Centre, Nottingham.

David Mackenzie has since confirmed that the 14 June meeting of the UK Bridges Board will take place at the Highland Council headquarters, Inverness.

Date and Venue of Next Meeting

Wednesday, 1 February 2006, at Great Minster House, London

UK Bridges Board Secretariat
7 December 2005