

NOTE OF THE 19th MEETING OF THE UK BRIDGES BOARD.

Meeting held in Room LG4, Great Minster House, London, 1 February 2006.

Present:

Richard Fish	CSS Cornwall CC (Chair)
Greg Perks	CSS/Northumberland CC
Awtar Jandu	Highways Agency
David Mackenzie	SCOTS
Dana Skelley	TfL
Bill Valentine	Scottish Executive
John Collins	Welsh Assembly Government
Ronny Wilson	DRD (Northern Ireland)
Alan Dray	Network Rail
Bob Flitcroft	Bolton MBC
David Yeoell	City of Westminster/LoBEG
Jim Moriarty	London Underground
Graham Cole	Surrey County Council
Dave Ambrose	WATO
Paul Foskett	Department for Transport
Ian Holmes	Department for Transport
Edward Bunting	Department for Transport
Andrew Oldland	Department for Transport
Chris Hudson	Department for Transport

1. Apologies/New members

Apologies were received from Paul Long and Rod Howe.

The Board welcomed Paul Foskett, who is currently undergoing a period of "hand over" with Ian Holmes at DfT. David Yeoell was welcomed back after his recent illness.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

Note of the Last Meeting

The note of the last meeting was approved by the Board as accurate.

Matters Arising

A good effort is being made to promote *Maintaining a Vital Asset*, which was published in November last year.

The UK RLG website has now been up and running for nearly three months and it will shortly be time for Edward Bunting to meet the Service Provider for the 1st quarterly meeting. There may be feedback on this at the next meeting of the UK RLG on 8 March, in Belfast.

The CIRIA Masonry Arch Bridge Guide was launched recently. There will be an afternoon slot on this subject at the forthcoming Bridges Conference on 14 March (see Any Other Business). In the meantime, CIRIA are content for the Guide to be available on the UK RLG website. Board members expressed a desire to hold further presentations on Masonry Arch Bridges at future meetings of the Board.

The next meeting of the UK BB will not be held at the Highland Council headquarters as had been previously stated but at "**The Town House**", in Inverness. Full details of the event will be sent to the Board via the Secretariat, in due course.

3. UK Roads Liaison Group Feedback

The note of the 14 December meeting was circulated with the agenda.

Greg Perks raised the issue of Board members having access to the notes of the UK RLG and the other related Boards. These had, for the most part, been available on the previous website. Edward Bunting answered that these would soon be available on the new website.

It was suggested that a "Board-wide" newsletter, along the lines of that which the UK Roads Board has produced for some time now might be produced and made available on the new website. This suggestion will be flagged up at the next meeting of the UK RLG.

Action: Secretariat

4. UK Bridges Board Strategy

See Also **UKBB 01/06**

Edward Bunting emphasised that UKBB 01/06 is a "discussion document" re-writable at the Board's discretion and not to be interpreted as *the DfT view*. Preparation of the paper had taken account of the [few] comments received from Board members on the "action plan".

John Collins suggested that the document should have headings such as: "Policy", "Strategy" and "Programme". He suggested that the policy section should first set out the different areas of policy that affect the UK Bridges Board, i.e. Central/Local Government Policy, UK Law, and the policy requirements of Network Rail, London Underground and British Waterways Board so far as they affect the national highway network. The "Strategy"

section should bring the different areas together, setting out how the UK BB is to work towards the delivery of those policies.

David Yeowell said that London representatives would meet in order to get a "whole of London view" and feed this back to Edward Bunting. Graham Cole will do the same with the CSS Bridges Group.

Action: Board Members/Edward Bunting

5. Research

06/07 Research Update - The prioritised list of projects that was put together at the 16 November meeting of the UKBB, was presented to the UK Roads Liaison Group on 14 December, along with those put forward by the other Boards. The next stage involves scrutiny of the projects by the Department for Transport's Chief Scientist. It is not yet known when Ministerial decisions about the projects will be made.

There was some discussion on the subject of joint funding for projects. John Collins was concerned about money being allocated to the Welsh Assembly Government then being used as a contribution towards projects that are primarily aimed at England. Edward Bunting will look into the nationally agreed protocol concerning this issue and will report back. He did point out however, that a good example of mutually beneficial joint working could be found in machine based surveys for roads (SCANNER). Scotland has always been ahead of England in this area, but while England benefits from Scottish expertise, Scotland benefits from the extensive SCANNER research programme, which is taken forward and funded by the Department for Transport.

Ian Holmes pointed out that Department for Transport ministers are always keen to see projects that are supported and funded by outside bodies.

Dry Stone Wall Research - CIRIA have appointed Dr Myles O'Reilly (ex TRL) and Dr John Perry of Mott Macdonald to carry out this research, which began on 1 December. Since his appointment the steering group has met once (24 January), where the project was scoped out in terms of chapters and content. The group hope to have a first draft report available by April this year and to complete the project by December.

The consultants are interested in any photographs or examples of dry stone wall repair that may be available. These should be forwarded to Ronny Wilson. It is hoped that the project team can give a presentation at the next meeting of the UKBB in June.

Action: Secretariat to flag up a possible presentation at the June UKBB

Bridge Owners' Forum - The Forum met on 17 January. The afternoon consisted of a presentation/discussion on strengthening of Masonry Arch

Bridges. A key issue that arose during the discussion was the problems that can arise when information is disseminated without the consent of the "owners" of such information. After lengthy discussion it was decided that the UKBB should keep a close watch on this issue and retain it as an agenda item at the next meeting of the Board. The BOF will also discuss it at their next meeting.

The Bridge Owners' Forum have requested that the Highways Agency make the results of their previous research publicly available. The DfT was suggested as a suitable site on which this information could be placed.

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

There have been 2 meetings of the liaison group since the last meeting of the UKBB. The note of the first (22 November) were circulated to the Board. At the 25 January 2006 meeting Brian Bell of Network Rail was replaced by Brian Simcoe. Bob Flitcroft was concerned that the change in Network Rail staff attending liaison group meetings suggested a lack of commitment on NR's part and that the resulting lack of continuity hindered the group's progress. Alan Dray replied that Brian Simcoe is now in a position to take the project forward for Network Rail, that the previous Network Rail attendees had been temporary and that the continuity problem should now be resolved.

Prioritisation of Highway over Railway Bridge Strengthening Schemes - Bob Flitcroft will circulate a 2nd draft of the 22 November meeting, before the next meeting of the liaison group on 7 March. This will take on board comments made by Dr Garry Sterritt and UKBB members.

CSS/Network Rail Liaison Issues - Richard Fish pointed out that the CSS Bridges Group had recently been asked to consider level crossings as well as structures and suggested that this might also be an issue for the liaison group to consider. Board members should forward any contributions they may have on this to Bob Flitcroft.

7. Management of Highway Structures

Implementation Survey

Greg reported that CSS Bridges Group is currently surveying progress on implementation of the Code of Practice. Authorities have been asked to indicate what progress they have made against the "Milestone Actions" in the Code - for the definition of the milestone actions please see page 242 of the COP para 11.6.5.

They have also been asked to predict where they will be at the "Target Date" for each of the Milestones. Progress has been "scored" on a rating of 1 [low] to 5 [high] as set out in Table 11.1 [page 248] of the COP.

There have been 30 responses so far, yielding these average results :-

	<u>Current Position</u>	<u>Anticipated Position</u>
Milestone One	3 to 4	4 by March 2006
Milestone Two	2 to 3	3 to 4 by March 2007
Milestone Three	1 to 2	3 to 4 by March 2008

A further report will be made to the Board when more results have been received.

Code of Practice Review Contract

This has now been secured by Atkins who will conduct a Watching Brief on the three Codes (highways, structures and lighting), as well as those concerning asset management and highways liability. In the short term, issues that are considered to be "on the horizon" will be flagged up and those concerned will be informed. In the longer term, the Watching Brief will build up a body of issues, with the aim of knowing exactly when it is time to start working on revised versions of the different Codes of Practice. A period of 12 months would be needed between deciding upon a full formal rewrite and the publication of a revised Code. The Codes are considered to have a life-span of 3 to 4 years (this means that it will very soon be time to start working on a revised version of *Well-lit Highways*, which was published in Autumn 2004).

It was agreed to keep this item on the UKBB agenda, until further notice, even if there is nothing significant to report.

Action: Secretariat

8. "Making Measurement Work"

There have recently been three workshops to consider the measurement of "efficiency savings" in the delivery of highways services. Greg Perks attended on behalf of the Board at the events of 17 October 2005 and 12 January 2006 while Peter Brown [Oxfordshire & CSS Bridges Group] represented "bridges" interests at the meeting of 12 December 2005. The workshops dealt with general highway issues so there was no specific "bridges" input or discussion.

A revised "Toolkit For Highways Local Transport Efficiency Gains" - including costed examples of efficiency savings - will be submitted to ODPM for publication with other guidance to Local Authorities in mid February.

The Board agreed to invite Mark Kumar from the Highways Agency's Collaboration and Efficiency Team to give a presentation on this subject at one of their remaining meetings of 2006, as had originally been the intention this time round.

9. Any Other Business

Bob Flitcroft has very recently moved from Bolton MBC to a post at Lancashire County Council. It was agreed that he continue to sit on the UKBB as a CSS representative (the Board is entitled to include four CSS members), as he will no longer be representing metropolitan authorities. Board members were asked to let the Chairman know of anyone who might replace Bob in his previous capacity.

Greg Perks distributed programmes for the 14th Annual Bridges Conference due to take place on 14 March at the East Midlands Conference Centre, Nottingham.

The IHT Conference will take place on 9 May, at which Richard Fish and Graham Cole will be speaking.

Edward Bunting will contact Navil Shetty regarding the next meeting of the Design Support Tool Steering Group, which last met at DfT Headquarters in October 2005.

Action: Edward Bunting

Richard Fish will raise the matter of a UKBB sub-group responsible for Tunnels, at the UK Roads Liaison Group meeting on 8 March.

Management of Sub-Standard Structures (BA 79) - This project is now in its final stages. It is hoped to be able to publish the revised Standard (*BD 79*) in July this year.

Action: Richard Fish

10. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

Wednesday, 14 June 2006, in Inverness (full details of the venue to follow)

UK Bridges Board Secretariat
8 March 2006