

NOTE OF THE 22nd MEETING OF THE UK BRIDGES BOARD.

Meeting held at Great Minster House, London, 21st February 2007.

Present:

Richard Fish	CSS Cornwall CC (Chair)
Greg Perks	CSS/Northumberland CC
Dana Skelley	Transport for London
Gerry Hayter	Highways Agency
David Mackenzie	SCOTS
Paul Foskett	Department for Transport
Bill Valentine	Transport Scotland
John Collins	Welsh Assembly Government
Brian Bell	Network Rail
Ronny Wilson	DRD (Northern Ireland)
Paul Long	London Borough of Hillingdon
Rod Howe	British Waterways
Bob Flitcroft	Lancashire County Council
Graham Cole	CSS/Surrey County Council
Dave Ambrose	CSS Wales
Stuart Molyneux	Salford MBC
Andrew Oldland	Department for Transport
Chris Hudson	Department for Transport

Stuart Molyneux was welcomed by the Board. Although initially attending as an “observer” the Board agreed to accept him as a new member, representing TAG.

Martin Jones of DfT, Roads Strategy Division attended for the item on Vehicle Incursions.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Edward Bunting and Awtar Jandu (represented by Gerry Hayter).

2. Note of last meeting and matters arising

Dave Ambrose pointed out that he now represents CSS Wales and not WATO.

The October 2006 attendance list does not reflect the fact that Campbell Middleton attended the meeting to discuss research proposals for 2007/08.

Asset Management Sub-Group - Greg Perks has now prepared draft terms of reference. He will send a note to the Secretariat.

ACTION: Greg Perks

Decision Support Tool - John Collins pointed out that the note of the last meeting says "*Funding is being split 50:50 between DfT and Transport Wales.*" This is not in fact the case. The initial funding for this project has come from DfT. The remainder has yet to be agreed upon.

Tunnel Owners Forum - It was agreed that there would be an item on the agenda of the next meeting of the UKBB. The most recent meeting notes from this forum will be circulated with the agenda and discussed at the meeting. It was noted that Robert Ford has now been replaced by Martin Lynch.

Asset Management Sub-Group - It was agreed to await the outcome of the UKRLG Management Review before taking this sub-group any further. A LoTAG meeting is due to take place next week which will be able to inform the process. Draft terms of reference have been prepared and commented upon but not yet finalised.

Track Possession Seminar - Network Rail have offered LoBEG a seminar in March this year. When Paul Long has the relevant associated papers he will share them with the Board, via the Secretariat.

ACTION: Paul Long/Secretariat

Bridgeguard 3 - Network Rail wished to highlight some inaccuracies in the way that this issue had been reported in the minutes of the October meeting. They pointed out that the Category 1, 2 and 3 assessments (including the Category 3 assessment by an independent consultant) are carried out separately throughout the UK and not just in Scotland.

Also, the October minutes refer to some local authorities questioning Network Rail assessment results. Network Rail would like the word "questioning" replaced by "reviewing".

Bob Flitcroft offered to draft a new paragraph and agree this with Brian Bell. When agreed, this will be circulated by the Secretariat.

ACTION - Bob Flitcroft and Secretariat

3. UK Roads Liaison Group Feedback

The note of the last meeting and the papers relating to the UK RLG Management Review were circulated with the agenda. There was nothing further to report which is not covered by the separate item on the review.

4. UKRLG Management Review

UKRLG 17/06 (Review of the UK Roads Liaison Group) was circulated with the agenda.

Since the report was produced there have been three meetings (with DfT and Elizabeth Hopkins, the consultant who undertook the review) involving the chairs of the UK Roads, Bridges, Lighting and Traffic Management Boards.

There is significant support for the UKRLG and its Boards to continue, although it has not yet been decided whether the DfT will continue to provide the secretariat or exclusively chair the UKRLG. The possibility of a “rolling” chair (the chair being, perhaps, in place for one year’s worth of meetings) has been aired. In these circumstances, the DfT would probably continue to fund the group and its boards but others may wish to contribute.

In the meantime it is recommended that the terms of reference for the group and its boards be clarified and made more *outcome* focussed.

There are no proposals to change the membership of the UKRLG, but the boards may wish to add to their membership, taking in perhaps additional members from the private sector and/or other professional bodies.

There was concern expressed among the Board that objectives needed to be reviewed, that roles needed to be more clearly defined and that it was important to take a more business-like approach rather than focussing too much on issues such as who would provide the chair and the secretariat etc.

Richard Fish is hoping to prepare a response to UKRLG 17/06 in time for the 28 March meeting of the UK RLG. He will circulate this to Board members beforehand for their information and for any comments that they may have. Richard will also share the notes, following the meetings with Elizabeth Hopkins, with the Board.

ACTION: Richard Fish

5. Vehicle Incursions

Martin Jones of DfT Road Strategy Division arrived to present this item.

This matter has recently been picked up after having been somewhat abandoned after the publication of DfT guidance in 2003. Martin Jones is now in the position of having to inform Ministers as to DfT’s current position.

The identification of potential incursion sites is the responsibility of local authorities. DfT are considering how they can encourage authorities to undertake this work. One possible approach would be for DfT to write to authorities, another approach could be to involve CSS.

Funding has been provided to local authorities by DfT to deal with incursions, but this was not ring-fenced.

Brian Bell pointed out that money was very much an issue in resolving this problem. Network Rail contributed the agreed 50% of funds but have since found that local authorities were, in a lot of cases, not making the necessary funds available. Stuart Molyneux pointed out that Salford had done work on incursions but had not necessarily informed Network Rail. David Mackenzie said that this also applied in Scotland.

Paul Long was interested to know if information were available on how many incursion incidents had occurred since that of Great Heck. He added that LoBEG were not aware of very many but he was concerned that incidents may have occurred on low-ranking bridges, and therefore may not have been reported.

There was a review of the operating protocol in 2006.

It was agreed that information needed to be gathered to inform DfT as to what still needed to be done. John Collins suggested that the UKBB secretariat and not the CSS should be collecting this information.

6. Prioritisation of Highway over Rail Bridges

Richard Fish proposed that the Board ratify **UKBB 02/07** (the final proposal document). This was done and the document will appear shortly on the UK RLG website, under the title, *The Prioritisation of Highway over Railway Bridge Strengthening Schemes - a Final Proposal Document*.

It was agreed that more work would be done on **UKBB 05/07** so that information would be ready, in time for the next meeting, concerning the number of bridges involved, the estimated cost and the timescale.

Bob Flitcroft informed the Board that CSS and Network Rail had not met since the last UKBB meeting but that there was a meeting scheduled to take place in two week's time and the any comments from the Board would be welcome. The liaison between Network Rail and London stakeholders, begun by Dana Skelley is coming on very well. The Board were keen to see the London terms of reference.

Network Rail need the prioritisation tool in place to assist in their liaison process with authorities for prioritising work. Network Rail would be in favour of consultants being used if further work on the prioritisation document were necessary.

The issue of funding was raised, with the point made that authorities may find it difficult to fund the introduction of the prioritisation methodology from their highway maintenance budgets.

The timescale for introduction of the methodology was also mentioned - it was pointed out that it generally takes around two years to plan a bridge reconstruction.

The group set up to review the highways maintenance funding formula (chaired by DfT) have not included the bridge prioritisation issue in their remit.

7. Research

.Progress with current projects

Dry Stone Walls - The second draft on the project will be available to Steering Group members at the end of February 2007. It is proposed to have a meeting of the group in March to review this draft. It is hoped to hand over the draft to the publishing team at the end of May. The aim is to launch this report in August this year.

[Older] Metal Bridges - At the last meeting of the Steering Group the [latest] draft was found to be inadequate. A further draft is due at the end of this month, with publication likely to be in the late summer.

Decision Support Tool - John Collins circulated the Powerpoint presentation that he has put together for the proposed conference to mark two years since the publication of the Code of Practice for structures, due to be held in November this year. This document sets out where the Decision Support Tool project is at the present time. John Collins pointed out that there had been a considerable number of apologies at the meeting that was held shortly before Christmas and that the group would benefit from a larger membership (12 to 15 people in his estimation).

The tender documents for Stage 2 of the project will be presented at the next meeting of the group.

UK RLG Research Programme for 2006/07 - Edward Bunting was not present but communicated via Paul Foskett that work will soon begin on the projects concerning parapet strengthening and reinforced polymer (FRP).

8. Management of Research Projects

See also **UKBB 07/08** and **UKBB 08/08**.

Brian Bell emphasised that where joint funding was agreed for a given research project, there needed to be a standard contract in place to avoid the situation where one of the funding bodies had control over the project and the other or others were disadvantaged. Paul Foskett answered that DfT would have to discuss a matter like this with its procurement division.

It was mentioned that DEFRA had introduced tri-partite contract agreements in cases where projects were jointly funded. DfT agreed to enquire whether this type of agreement could be introduced for UKRLG research projects where appropriate.

ACTION - DfT

It was agreed that members would have until the end of the month to submit any comments that they may have on Richard Fish's discussion paper (**UKBB 08/07**). Richard would then put it to the UK RLG with any relevant recommendations added.

ACTION: Richard Fish

9. Implementation of Management of Highway Structures

It was agreed that, in future, at every other meeting of the Board, there would be an update on progress with this issue. There would also be a "reality check" regarding the milestones reached.

ACTION: Secretariat (to note for future UKBB agendas)

10. Management of Highway Structures - Conference to mark two years since publication

This, as mentioned previously, will take place in November this year. The conference programme has now been agreed. It will be headed by Charlotte Dixon (DfT). The day will include presentations on progress with implementation (Greg Perks); Asset Management (Dr Garry Sterritt); Application for maintenance planning (LoBEG); the Decision Support Tool (John Collins) and an item on the history of the management of structures. The conference will be hosted by the UKBB and Surveyor magazine.

11. Any Other Business

There is a possibility of DfT's TRANSEC division attending the next meeting. Further details may follow.

Date and venue of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the UK Bridges Board will take place on **20 June 2007**. A room has been reserved in Great Minster House, London.

RLTSF3/DfT
28 March 2007