

**UK ROADS LIAISON GROUP**

The Lighting Board is one of four boards of the UK RLG:

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**The UKRLG's members****are drawn from:**

Department for Transport,  
Highways Agency, the Scottish  
Government, Welsh Assembly,  
Northern Ireland Roads Service,  
Transport for London, local highway  
authorities, CSS.

**RLG news**

● The UK Road Liaison Group has been asked by the Secretary of State to review salt supply throughout the UK following the severe weather in February 2009. The RLG is due to report back its findings in July 2009.

● As a result of the severe weather there is evidence of deterioration in road networks; increasing running repairs to pot holes. The UK Roads Board is reviewing the implications for local authorities. The Roads Board is also looking at Flood Risk Management recommendations from the Pitt Report and the new Flood and Water Management Bill.

● Royal Assent is due soon for the new Disabled Person Parking Places (Scotland) Bill. The Network Management Board will be following outcomes including possible changes to regulations associated with marking on-street parking bays.

● The Bridges Board is considering how it can assist bridge owners with implementation of a suite of Eurocodes due to replace current standards in March 2010.

# UK Lighting Board: Striving for better practice

Street lighting as a sector of the highways industry is working to improve efficiency and current practices – with leadership and support where appropriate from the UK Lighting Board.

Local authorities are customers with as much right to a good consistent service from electricity suppliers as domestic consumers. Likewise, every tax payer deserves to know their highway authority or metropolitan, county or borough council is doing all it can to light streets and road signs wisely and efficiently.

Working to raise the game of street lighting and to represent authorities in an industry occasionally in need of a strong voice are Dana Skelley and her colleagues on the UK Lighting Board. They are not alone in trying to make streetlighting as an

industry more equitable and efficient. Board Chair Ms Skelley and her co members sit on other regional and national lighting groups and some of the Lighting Board's work involves supporting the efforts of the County Surveyors' Society, the Institution of Lighting Engineers and others (see box right).

The Lighting Board of the UK Roads Liaison Group (RLG) stands apart as the body coordinating the spread of new knowledge and best practice among all UK government and groups; and it has the clout and personalities for leading the streetlighting industry on a number of important issues.

For instance, authorities are experiencing inconsistent levels of service from their power suppliers, the District Network Operators (DNOs). Some DNOs are taking a hard line on statutory rules which state every new piece of equipment rated at over 500W must be individually metered.

The cost implications for authorities are enormous and so the Lighting Board is driving for clarification of the '500 Watt rule'. Ms Skelley's employer, Transport for London (TfL), is bringing a dispute with its DNO for resolution by Ofgem because the power industry regulator will only deal with specific cases.

"The Lighting Board is pushing for this because someone needs to and it is only groups like this that can. Our argument is that lighting equipment does have a predictable load and we are trying to set a legal precedent for the UK's lighting authorities," Ms Skelley says.

The Lighting Board's Chair has been in post since January after being urged to take the reins by her predecessor Roger Elphick and she will lead the board for at least another three years. Asked what she considers will mark success in three years time, Ms Skelley says: "To have demonstrated that we have made a difference; for getting authorities a fair deal and enabling them to persuade their elected Members that it makes sense to invest to save and that short term approaches do not work because they cost so much more in the long run.

"Capital investment up front is needed. Money should not be wasted on illuminating signs and we hope to get more acceptance that collaboration between authorities and suppliers and pragmatism with regard to rules are the ways forward."

All this is in addition to the Lighting Board members' responsibilities for their employers, which for Ms Skelley involves heading a department of 380, looking after a 580km road network and a total budget of £250M as director of road network management for TfL.

"All of us on the Lighting Board are driven and passionate about making a difference," she says. "The activity in response to an email enquiry is amazing and really helpful, although we have to balance desires for great change with those for none."



Chair of the UK Lighting Board is TfL's Dana Skelley

## The UK Lighting Board members are:

**Dana Skelley** – Chair, UK Lighting Board

**Paul Foskett and Edward Bunting** – Department for Transport

**Bijan Bassiri** – Transport Scotland

**David Cowell** – Highways Agency

**Tim Edwards** – London Technical Advisors Group

**Bryan Geeves** – County Surveyors' Society Wales

**Dave Johnson** – Transport for London

**Lindsay McGregor** – Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland

**Francis Miskelly** – Northern Ireland Roads Service

**Roger Morgan** – Ofgem

**Mike Parry** – Welsh Assembly Government

**Nigel Parry** – Institution of Lighting Engineers

**Glyn Williams** – County Surveyors' Society

**Matt Williams** – Technical Advisors Group

Image courtesy of NASA Visible Earth  
<http://visibleearth.nasa.gov/>



## Working to a new plan

Members of the UK Lighting Board meet three times a year for reporting and discussing progress with its business plan. This lists the board's 'tasks', which – led by a 'task owner' – involve contributing towards collaborative efforts and supporting other groups' work and events, or pushing forward the board's own initiatives.

The Lighting Board updated its business plan most recently in March this year. It is a very busy looking plan with 13 new or ongoing tasks, including the following selection:

**Well Lit Highways:** The Code of Practice produced by the Lighting Board in 2004 is due to be updated. The Department for Transport has taken ownership of the task and consultant Atkins has been commissioned to identify areas of the code to be revised in the updated version in 2010.

**Lighting Policy:** The Lighting Board is working with the Institution of Lighting Engineers to develop a best practice framework for local lighting policy – dovetailing with ILE's guidance on reducing light pollution. Transport Scotland is leading. A consultant is yet to be commissioned.

**Lighting Backlog:** Lighting inventory data has now been received and collated from every UK highway or lighting authority. The figures show a total of 7.4M lighting columns, with an annual energy cost of around £260M and an estimated investment backlog of £1.3Bn, assuming £1100 per replacement of each life expired column.

"The value of this information is huge for authorities and manufacturers and for planning investment. It is telling us about a lot more than just backlog of maintenance and on the back of this work the lighting sector can start applying everything in latest guidance and codes of practice," says Chair of the UK Lighting Board Dana Skelley.

**Invest to Save:** From the start point of ILE/Lighting Board advice note LB1 on the reduction or removal of streetlighting has grown the Invest to Save initiative. The research project of the same name was commissioned by CSS and is one of five to have grown as an offshoot of LB1.

All can be accessed via the TRL website under the search terms SL1 to SL5. SL2, Invest to Save, is key for increasing the efficiency of streetlighting.

The Lighting Board's role in the initiative is now one of promulgating the findings and principles. "We want to see wider interest in Invest to Save," says Ms Skelley. "Authorities are now persuading their elected Members of the benefits and building business cases for investing for payback, which can come straight away."

**Illumination requirements for traffic signs:** "The UK's highway authorities spend £1.3Bn every year maintaining traffic signs and close to £1Bn on illuminated traffic signs," says Ms Skelley. "Where is it all going?"

DfT has established a Traffic Signs Policy Review Group which among other things, will consider the requirement to illuminate traffic signs and the possibility of relaxing regulations.

The Lighting Board will seek to contribute, building on existing CSS research and guidance – SL5a and SL5b.

"The current regulations are too complex and proscriptive," Ms Skelley says. "This is all part of the lighting industry's challenge, of overcoming risk aversion that compromises innovation and wastes money. Why stick so rigidly to the Traffic Sign Regulations &

General Directions standard by having signs lit where modern reflective sheeting will suffice?"

**Competition in Connections:** The Lighting Board is encouraging District Network Operators (DNO) to respond better to authorities' requests for new connections to a power source. "In some parts of the UK getting a connection from a DNO is more straightforward than in others. There are monopolies in places and a good service should come easier," says Ms Skelley.

The Lighting Board has pioneered tripartite agreements between authorities, their contractors and DNOs to get more responsive service. Under the Competition in Connections heading, the board is now working on guidance documents for publication on the board's pages of the RLG's website.

"Bryan Jeeves in Cardiff has had success with this initiative and we are using the board's structure and links to tell others how it worked," Ms Skelley says.

**Xtra-info:** The UK Lighting Board's three year business plan is at [www.ukroadsliaisongroup.org/lighting](http://www.ukroadsliaisongroup.org/lighting)