

Paper UKRB 12/09

Minutes of the UK Roads Board 16/06/2009

Minutes of the 31st meeting of the UK Roads Board held at the Roads Service Headquarters in Clarencecourt, 10-18 Adelaide Street, Belfast

Present:

Matthew Lugg	CSS (Chair)
Edward Bunting	DfT
Phil Cadenne	CSS Wales/Cardiff
Chris Capps	CSS/ UKPMS/SCANNER
Pat Docherty	Northern Ireland Roads Service
Kevin Fuller	Footway Group Representative
Les Hawker	TfL
Richard Morgan	Welsh Assembly
Donald Morrison	Transport Scotland
Ken Morrison	SCOTS
Anthony Radford-Foley	TAG
Ramesh Sinhal	Highways Agency
Gary Warner	Bromley LB/LOTAG
Justin Ward	IHT (Secretariat)

In attendance:

John Smart (Presented item on TAP) IHT

1. Welcome, introduction and apologies

Apologies were received from Lester Willington. Matthew Lugg thanked Pat Docherty for hosting the meeting for the UK Roads Board.

2. Notes of last meeting and matters arising

a) Notes of last meeting

- Ramesh Sinhal noted work to follow up on the DEFRA report on Environmental Noise.
- Item 6. Revenue Support Grant – develop technical guidance for CLG - The board noted the importance of work on the Revenue Support Grant.

Action: Chris Capps to co-ordinate response through sub-group comprising CSS/LoTAG/TAG/TfL to look at the issue of the Revenue Support Grant by the end of the summer and report back to the UKRB in October allowing for a full response to Karen Sussex early in 2010.

Action: Matthew Lugg/Justin Ward – invite to HTMA to the October UKRB meeting.

- Item 13. Damage to Road Networks – Edward Bunting confirmed that the cut-off date for bids will be the end of the summer. Les Hawker confirmed that TfL would speak to the boroughs and get back to the DfT on this issue.

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- Highway Risk and Liability Claims – the Board noted the value of the guidance document and the resulting noticeable reduction in the cost of claims. The board noted that it would be useful to consider including a reference to this report within the Complementary Guidance for Well-Maintained Highways.

Action: Justin Ward to inform ATKINS for the suggestion of inclusion of reference to the Highway Risk & Liability Claims guidance within the Complementary Guidance to Well-Maintained Highways.

Action: Justin Ward to put a link to the Highway Risk & Liability Claims guidance document on the UKRLG website.

The Board express their concerns with the Alarm survey (i.e. it is based on anecdotal information and is not reliable). Kevin Fuller informed the board that the response times for claims has been reduced from 60 days to 30 days.

3. Feedback from UKRLG meeting 18th March 2009 and update

Matthew Lugg informed the board that John Dowie, Director of Regional and Local Transport Delivery, is now the Chairman for the UK Roads Liaison Group. He also noted the changes with the UK Bridges Board – following the retirement of Richard Fish, Greg Perks from Northumberland takes over as Chairman; and changes to the UK Network Management Board – Derek Turner from the Highways Agency takes over from Peter Brown, following Peter's retirement from TfL.

Matthew Lugg noted that the Severe Weather in February 2009 and that the subsequent review being steered by the UKRLG was a particularly significant item.

4. TAP presentation

John Smart gave a presentation on TAP – the Transport Advice Portal – and the Board agreed that this was a very worthwhile project. The TAP project grew out research commissioned by the DfT on knowledge/skills within the profession that identified that there was no centralised resource for people to use when managing the traffic on the network. Following this, DfT had commissioned IHT to develop a website that would assist people involved with planning, designing and operating the network. The site was launched at Traffex in April.

John Smart provided details of some of the features of the site – *recent documents* section informs users of the documents that have recently been updated; and *my documents* section gives the user a virtual library where they can keep documents relevant to them. Furthermore; to ensure the links all work – every weekend tests are carried out and any links that do not work are flagged up to IHT.

The site also enables an easy process for updating through the ability for new documents to be uploaded by *publishers*. As an organisation – commissioning or carrying out research - has the best understanding of the document coverage, relevance and links, they can upload it themselves: for example, the DfT could load documents directly onto the site. The TAP site therefore has the ability to bring in overseas publications and also Local Authority publications. The board agreed that the UK Roads Board publications should be made available on the TAP site. The board agreed that a one page summary from John Smart on the TAP project would be useful as briefing material for their respective organisations. John Smart informed the board that he was speaking with Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland to encourage them to become publishers.

Action: Justin Ward to make all the UK Roads Board's publications available through the TAP site.
Action: John Smart to develop a one-page summary on TAP for the UK Roads Board and Justin Ward to circulate round UKRB.

5. UK Roads Board Business Plan

The Board discussed some further changes required to complete the UK Roads Board Business Plan and agreed to finalise the plan by the end of June.

Action: All – feedback comments/changes to Justin Ward on the UK Roads Board Business Plan.

6. Feedback from sub groups

The Board thanked the sub-groups for their reports and it was noted that there was a lot of good work being achieved.

a) Asset Management

The board discussed the paper from the CSS/TAG Highway Asset Management Group (Paper UKRB 09/09) and agreed the following:

- Item 2 CIPFA –
 - The board noted the excellent progress achieved the sub-group on Asset Management
 - Valuation – the board noted progress in this area.
 - Condition data – the board agreed that clarity on the issue was important before any formal response.

Action: Chris Capps to clarify the situation with condition data prior to responding.

- Item 3 Flood and Water Management Bill – the board noted that the Asset Management group was well placed to assess the implications for asset management for the new draft bill and could respond but noted that this form part of a wider submission from the UK Roads Board (see item 7 below).
- Item 4 Synergies between boards – the board supported this.
- Item 5 Review of Codes -
 - the board agreed to the inclusion of the Asset Management Framework
 - the board noted that the UK Roads Board are the custodian of the Codes so this issue should sit with them

Action: Justin Ward to inform Atkins of the need to include this in the ongoing review of codes of practice.

The Board discussed some of the issues around the CIPFA timetable but noted that overall progress was good and that, by April 2010/11 a dry-run will take place and this should provide Local Authorities with time to prepare for the change.

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The Board discussed the promulgation of best practice following the bids to the DfT on Asset Management and what defined the 14 successful entries.

Action: Edward Bunting to pass HAMFIG note for Justin Ward to circulate around board members.

b) **Footways**

Kevin Fuller presented his paper to the board (Paper UKRB 10/09) and the board agreed that a consistency, single survey approach was worth aiming at; and that the Course Network Survey (CNS) was a good approach to aim for.

Action: Matthew Lugg to contact the Midland Group to identify the problems they have and encourage the use of CNS.

Ken Morrison suggested the word 'Network' should be replaced with 'Footway' – thereby calling the survey the 'Course Footway Survey' would be more appropriate. The Board agreed.

Action: Kevin Fuller - Change name of survey to 'Course Footway Survey' instead of 'Course Network Survey'.

The Board noted the progress on skid resistance and Ramesh Sinhal noted this would be important for the Highways Agency

Action: Kevin Fuller to pass onto Ramesh Sinhal details of the work on skid resistance.

The Board agreed that an All-Parliamentary Group – similar to the All-Parliamentary Lighting Group – would be useful for the Roads Board as it would help raise the profile of strategic issues with politicians as issues such as a review of the Highways Act 1980 is merited but possibly not high enough on politicians' radars at the moment.

Action: Matthew Lugg to speak to Roger Elphick about how this might be taken forward.

c) **Pavement Conditions**

Chris Capps presented his paper (Paper UKRB 11/09) to the Board and noted that a link to the PCIS would be useful (see section 7 on Communications below). Following discussion the Board approved the paper and noted that involvement with the private sector was important for discussion on issues and the best way to achieve this would be through the HTMA Trade Association for the industry.

Matthew Lugg noted the 2002 figure in Appendix B of the report might be incorrect.

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Action: Chris Capps - Remove data from 2002 from Appendix B in report.

Gary Warner noted that the original work for SCANNER RCI would be relevant to take account of for the indicators.

Action: Chris Capps – to check original work on SCANNER for the relevance to the updates to national indicators.

The board discussed the issues around the reporting – in England – of only the ‘red’ length (i.e. the length likely to be in need of maintenance soon) identified by the revised SCANNER RCI. Ken Morrison noted that in Scotland they report the ‘red’ and ‘amber’ for consistency over time. Matthew Lugg noted that changes to the red and amber sections of the network can lead to problems for consistency.

Matthew also noted that SCANNER has been excellent for maintenance but did have limitations as a performance measure. The Board agreed and supported his further suggestion of a performance indicator based around asset management could be beneficial and would help focus authorities’ attention on overall investment required to tackle depreciation.

Action: Chris Capps and Lester Willington to work together to clarify with CIPFA.

7. Communication

The Board agreed that the Sub-Groups would look at the sections relevant to their area and provide feedback to Justin Ward with changes required.

Action: Sub-Groups to provide feedback to Justin Ward on the UKRB website

Action: All – provide any general feedback.

Action: Justin Ward – Link to PCIS site on the UKRB website.

The Board agreed that the timing was good for the UK Roads Board to take up the next feature in Transportation Professional – in the October issue. The following items were noted as worth including:

- Commuted Sums
- Footway Survey
- Highway Risk and Liability Claims
- Carriageway Condition

8 Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS) Paper

Matthew Lugg introduced papers (UKRB Paper 06/09 and UKRB Paper 07/09) and the Board agreed that the briefing paper was useful and could be put on the UKRB website.

The Board also expressed concerns around the maintenance cost increase for SUDS – noting a couple of issues:

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- Additional maintenance costs of SUDS that will have to be funded by Highways Authorities.
- Clarity is required on who will be the SUDS Approving Body (SAB) for the motorway and trunk road network.
- The financial benefits from the transfer of private sewers to sewerage companies cited in the draft Bill only applies to County Councils and not Unitary Councils – how will the maintenance funding costs for SUDS be achieved for Unitary Councils?

The Board agreed that they would pull together a response to the Draft Flood and Water Management Bill but take account of the CSS response.

Action: Justin Ward to co-ordinate a response to the Draft Flood and Water Management Bill that takes into account the response from CSS.

9. Codes of Practice

The Board agreed to the new item in the Complementary Guidance to Well-Maintained Highways (update 2.3.21).

Action: Publish updated Complementary Guidance to Well-Maintained Highways on the UKRLG website.

10. National Road Conditioning

The Board expressed concern over the lack of progress on the DfT working groups on principal and non-principal roads and sought more clarity on the current situation with regard to reporting the condition of unclassified roads which CSS agreed to take on. CVI data has been received on 75% of the English network from 60% of highway authorities.

Action: Edward Bunting to inform the UK Roads Board on the membership and meeting dates for the work on principal and non-principal roads.

11. Commuted Sums

Matthew Lugg noted that Commuted Sums Best Practice Guidance had been discussed at the UKRLG in March 2009. He noted that the DfT had concerns about publishing it under their name and thought that it might be more appropriate under the banner of the CSS. Since then, agreement has been sought for IHT to publish it with the CSS. Edward Bunting noted that there had been written correspondence between the DfT and the Housebuilders' Federation on the issues involved with Commuted Sums. The Board noted that this guidance – once available – would be worth featuring in the Complementary Guidance to Well-Maintained Highways.

12 UKRLG research

Edward Bunting presented the current UKRLG research program. Ken Morrison noted that SCOTS had just completed research into sustainable drainage on the

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highway network and the Board agreed that, prior to commissioning further work, it would be worth taking stock of what has already been produced and see if an update for 'England and Wales' (i.e. to take account of the relevant legislation in England and Wales vis-à-vis a different legislative environment within Scotland) would possibly be more practical than commissioning new research.

Action: Ken Morrison to circulate 'draft' report on Sustainable Drainage on the Highway Network to the UK Roads Board.

Action: Edward Bunting to take account of the SCOTS research and consider an update to that Guidance as opposed to commissioning new research within this area.

The Board discussed Carbon Calculators and noted that there are sometimes inconsistencies in how these are calculated; however, they did agree that this was an important issue for the highway network and one that was important to move forward

Action: Edward Bunting to circulate research specification on Carbon Footprints and Chris Capps to assist with review progress.

12 Severe Weather Review

Matthew Lugg explained that the UKRLG Salt Review is currently progressing well and will issue the report to the UKRLG on July 15th 2009. The review has focused on stock and distribution of salt for the road network. The Secretary of State asked the UKRLG to conduct a review following the disruption to the road network caused by the severe weather in February 2009. A steering group had been set up which he chaired including Lester Willmington from the Roads Board. Atkins had been commissioned to help undertake the work. Work was progressing on time with a final report to be agreed at the UKRLG meeting on 15th July. The details of the report would feature at the Surveyor Cold Comfort Conference on 16th September in Cardiff.

13. AOB

14. Date of next meeting

Agreed next year's summer meeting would be held in Cardiff.