

Minutes of the 45th meeting of the UK Bridges Board held at the Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation on 2 October 2014

Liz Kirkham (Chairing the meeting on behalf of Dana Skelley)	ADEPT (Deputy Chairman)
Steve Berry	DfT
Nick Burgess	Transport for London
Graham Cole	ADEPT Bridges Group
Barry Colford	Large Bridges Rep/Forth Road Bridge
Robert Dean	Network Rail
Harvey Hamilton	Transport NI
Rod Howe	Canal and Rivers Trust
Richard Fish	Bridge Owners Forum
Satbir Gill	TAG/Ringway Hounslow Highways Limited
Wayne Hindshaw	Transport Scotland
Neil Loudon	Highways Agency
David Mackenzie	SCOTS, Highland Council
Stuart Molyneux	Metropolitan Councils
Stephen Pottle	Transport for London (Vice Chairman)
Elfyn Williams (for Jason Hibbert)	Welsh Government
Justin Ward	CIHT (Secretariat)

In attendance for item 1 to 2

Nic Ryder	Atkins
Steven Dennis	Atkins

Items to note by UKRLG

1. Welcome, introduction and apologies

Liz Kirkham welcomed everyone to the meeting. Liz explained that the new Chairman, Dana Skelley, passed on her apologies. Liz also said that she had been asked by Dana to be the Vice-Chairman of the Board. Additional apologies were recorded for Kevin Dentith and Jason Hibbert. Harvey Hamilton was welcomed to the group as the new representative for Transport Northern Ireland, replacing Willie Kerr.

2. Boundary issue

Steven Dennis outlined the scope of the project that Atkins had been given through a commission by the Highways Agency. Steven said that this work would build on the work previously undertaken by Parsons Brinckerhoff. Steven said that Andrew Lewis was the Project Sponsor within the Agency. Steven said that the next steps of the project involved two main elements: firstly, on the best way to engage with the sector on the issues; and secondly, what would be the best way to gain agreement.

There were a number of questions from Board members who expressed a number of important points for consideration:

Neil Loudon said that HS2 and the interfaces with the Highways Agency network needed to be considered and as this was a new scheme there was an opportunity to get things right with this.

Stephen Pottle asked who would be the owner of the document. Steve Berry said that this had already been agreed and confirmed that the policy document would be owned by DfT.

The Board members agreed that there were a set of complex and interrelated issues pertaining to boundary issues.

Action: UK Bridges Board members to outline specific or previous problems that remain unresolved and send to Atkins team on the boundary project

3. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

Matters arising.

Action: Stephen Pottle to explore options for LoBEG representation on the Board

The action on the Resilience Review had been superseded as the report was now published.

Action: Stephen Pottle to provide Rob Dean with examples of the TfL approval process that had led to difficulties

There was a discussion on the Bridge Inspector Competency Training scheme. Stephen Pottle explained that some training accreditation providers were interested but needed evidence of support.

Steve Berry said that the review of the Codes of Practice was considered as one avenue by which to do so. Neil Loudon said that the Highways Agency would also look to push support of the scheme through their inspection standards. David McKenzie said that SCOTS was already running a bridge inspector competency training scheme, based on the competencies.

Stephen Pottle suggested that the above points would be sufficient to emphasise the sector's interest in Bridge Inspector Competency Training scheme and said he would draft a letter outlining this. The letter could be reviewed by the new Chairman of the Board for onward circulation to interested sector scheme providers. The only additional point was that it was important to ensure that the NRA (National Roads Authority Ireland, who are jointly sponsoring the project) were briefed on progress.

Action: Stephen Pottle to draft letter on sector interest for Bridge Inspector Competency Training scheme and send to Liz Kirkham/Dana Skelley to move forward with the Bridge Inspector Competency Training [note – copy of letter to be sent to NRA]

4. Minutes of UK Roads Liaison Group

Steve Berry said that the main issue was the review of the Codes and HAMFIG support.

5. UK Bridges Board Business Plan

Liz Kirkham ran through a review of the UK Bridges Board business plan. Liz explained that there would be further work required on this, the intention was to make sure the existing plan was accurate, and then to hand over the plan to Dana to take forward as she saw fit.

6. DfT update

Steve Berry provided an update on three main policy issues:

1. Highways Funding

Steve said that Ministerial clearance was currently being sought on the consultation document for Highways Maintenance Funding for 2015/16 – 2020/21 for England. Steve said that this document would build on the work undertaken in the discussion document Gearing up for efficient highway delivery and funding (UKRLG news item: <http://www.ukroadsliaisongroup.org/en/news/index.cfm/gearing-up-for-efficient-highway-delivery-and-funding>). Steve said that the consultation document should be available shortly.

2. Transport Resilience Review

Steve then highlighted the Transport Resilience Review (TRR) (UKRLG news item: http://www.ukroadsliaisongroup.org/en/news/index.cfm/resilience_review). Steve explained that the DfT would provide a response to this review in October/November. Steve said that the Minister, Robert Goodwill, was keen to ensure that local highway authorities were prepared for winter and Steve said that a letter had gone out to Chief Executives highlighting the TRR and the need for authorities to take account of the recommendations from that review.

3. Road over rail incursions

Steve highlighted that the DfT was moving forward with the Oxshott Recommendations directed at the Department and would be drafting a guidance note to be published at the end of this year. Steve said that support from the UKBB would be most helpful to work on this and that the work by Graham Cole would be particularly useful in this regard.

Steve then said that DfT will be writing to all Local Authorities highlighting the RAIB reports (on Oxshott, Stonemarket, Aspatria). The letter would seek a reply within one month, with a supporting action plan for authorities with sites scoring 90 or higher (i.e. sites at a high risk of a vehicle incursion). Steve said that DfT would support the initiative by publishing a map on the gov.uk website listing every single incursion site, the scores and the supporting action plans (highlighting in a RAG system). Steve said that authorities could expect these letters in the next month.

Liz suggested that focusing on the 100 or higher scoring sites would be better. David Mackenzie asked how Wales and Scotland would be addressed and Steve Berry said that the Westminster Minister would write to his counterparts and it would be for them to decide how to progress. Wayne said that a consistent approach would be useful.

Steve also said that there was a view that the local resilience forums had a low awareness of the risk of vehicle incursion sites. Steve said that to address this, letters would be directed at them also highlighting the concerns.

Steve concluded by saying that the RAIB report recommendations on Aspatria directed to the DfT would be addressed through the establishment of a task & finish group.

Action: Steve Berry and Justin Ward to ensure UKRLG members are kept up-to-date with DfT progress on vehicle incursions

7. Transport Resilience Review (TRR)

The Board agreed that the update of the Codes of Practice (with a section on risk and resilience) and the update of the CIRIA Scour Guide would address the rather broad and wide ranging nature of the recommendation in the TRR - directed to the UKRLG - in relation to bridges:

Recommendation 28:

The DfT should use the UK Roads Liaison Group to undertake a review of all matters relating to the monitoring and maintenance of bridges.

8. Review of the Code of Practice

Stephen Pottle said that the first meeting took place on the 18 September.

Action: Stephen Pottle to send notes of first CoP Steering Group to Justin Ward for onward circulation

The Board agreed that members should take back to their own organisations (either direct or represented), discuss the issues relevant to the Codes and then pass on feedback to Stephen Pottle.

Action: Justin Ward to circulate the list of previously identified issues for the Structures Code of Practice

9. Network Rail liaison

Stuart Molyneux said that last meeting was in March and a note of the meeting had been produced.

Action: Justin Ward to circulate the note from Stuart Molyneux on the last Network Rail and ADEPT liaison meeting

10. Bridge Owners Forum

Richard said that the minutes were now being circulated to the Board members. Richard said there were still opportunities for improving the relationship of how the Board works with BOF, including the incorporation of BOF into the UKBB Business Plan.

11. Research

Liz highlighted the paper that had been circulated from Northern Ireland. Steve Berry highlighted the more general aspirations of the UKRLG around improving the horizon scanning of research undertaken (including within universities).

Wayne Hindshaw highlighted the Scottish Roads Research Board.

Action: Next UK Bridges Board meeting to have a focus on research: 1) Neil Loudon to present on Highways Agency research; 2) Wayne Hindshaw to present on the Scottish Roads Research Board

12. Any other business

Wayne raised three points of other business:

- 1) **Personal safety incidents at bridges** – highlighting the Chose Life work in Scotland <http://www.chooselife.net/> given that the issue was relevant to bridge owners
- 2) **De-icers and the effect on bridges** – Steve Berry suggested making contact with the National Winter Service Research Group (NWSRG)
- 3) **Heavier vehicles** – Wayne said that Finland was trialling heavier vehicles of 100/120 tonnes and that Board members might be interested in this.

13. Date of next meeting

2015, TBC