

NOTE OF THE 14th MEETING OF THE UK BRIDGES BOARD.

Meeting held in Room H5, Great Minster House, London, 10 November 2004.

Present:

David Lynn	Warwickshire CC/CSS (Chair)
Steve Pearson	CSS/Derbyshire County Council
Awtar Jandu	Highways Agency
Jim Irons	SCOTS
Ronnie Wilson	DRD (Northern Ireland)
Bill Valentine	Scottish Executive
John Collins	Welsh Assembly Government
Graham Cole	CSS/Surrey County Council
Steve Tart	Manchester City Council
Jim Moriarty	London Underground Ltd
David Yeoell	City of Westminster
Alan Dray	Network Rail
Frank Paine	LOBEG
Rod Howe	British Waterways
Greg Perks	CSS/Northumberland CC
Dave Ambrose	WATO
Andrew Cook	Highways Agency
Dana Skelley	Transport for London
Edward Bunting	DfT Traffic Management Division
Andrew Oldland	DfT Traffic Management Division
Chris Hudson	DfT Traffic Management Division

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Ian Holmes.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

Minutes of last meeting

Attendance - WATO was represented at the August meeting of the Board by Darren Thomas and not Dave Ambrose.

Network Rail Agreements - (Section 2 of the minutes). In the last paragraph "model agreement" should read "framework agreement".

Matters Arising

Maintenance Backlog - In his letter to the Chair of the Transport Select Committee, the Secretary of State set out the current position in relation to carriageway and bridge maintenance backlog, i.e. that DfT do not have a figure ready for publication.

Due to the fact that DfT may be required to give more information by the Freedom of Information Act, DfT are considering ways in which the current position on backlog calculation may be published.

New name for TM6

TM6 are joining Regional and Local Transport Strategy and Funding Division and will become RLTSF3 Branch.

HA Technical Project Boards

The HA have agreed to circulate the document on the function of the Technical Project Boards, when appropriate amendments have been made. There has been no progress on this since the last Bridges Board meeting.

August Meeting - The Board expressed its thanks to Steve Tart for hosting the August meeting in Manchester.

Issue of Papers - Greg Perks asked to be sent the papers that were issued by the Secretariat for the September meeting of the Roads Liaison Group.

Action - Secretariat

3. Last meeting of the Roads Liaison Group, 1 September 2004.

The note of this meeting has been circulated and should be found on the Roads Liaison Group website.

Gershon Review

Following on from David Holt's presentation at the September meeting of the Roads Liaison Group, Awtar Jandu circulated a short paper on the Highways Agency's implementation Plan in the light of the Gershon Review.

The Gershon Review recommended greater standardisation of requirements, leading to greater efficiency. The HA have agreed to assist in the development of appropriate measures to produce efficiency gains in local authority roads, by working with ODPM, the Audit Commission, the Office of Government Commerce, and benchmarking clubs. Some examples of this could be the standardisation of network operation and maintenance contracts. The HA may also be able to learn from local authorities in areas such as PFI and benchmarking.

It was agreed to invite David Holt (or a representative) to the next meeting of the Bridges Board, in order to give a presentation on this subject.

Action - Secretariat

Awtar Jandu will email the Highways Agency's consultation document to the secretariat, when it is ready, so that it can be circulated to the Board.

Action - Awtar Jandu

Welsh Assembly Government Best Practice

The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) have issued guidance to Welsh authorities on best practice for procurement. The WAG would be willing to share this with the RLG.

Traffic Management Act

A contract has been let for research into an equitable way of charging utilities for reinstatements. CSS funding will be made available for this.

Tunnels Directive

No new developments have been reported since the last RLG meeting.

4. A Strategic Plan for the Roads Liaison Group and its Boards

Edward Bunting presented **BB 60/04**.

The original idea for this came from the Roads Board who were concerned that the structure of their sub-groups might not be entirely correct because they hadn't settled long term issues or produced a firm underlying strategy.

It was pointed out that while the Bridges Board, unlike the Roads Board, doesn't have several sub-groups, it may nevertheless wish to review its Terms of Reference which is now three years old. The Board would like to strengthen its role in respect of policy making.

The Board decided to wait and see what will be decided at the next meeting of the RLG and then review its key tasks accordingly. Board members' views can be passed to the Secretariat and collated for discussion at the meeting due to take place in February 2005.

ACTION: Secretariat will circulate the Bridges Board Terms of Reference.

5. Research

a. Progress with current projects

Masonry Arch Bridges - No real progress to report. Next Steering Group meeting is to take place in December.

Bridges Code of Practice - The Code has now been sent to the "Reviewers" that were nominated after the August meeting. Comments were due back to Atkins on 12 November. Any Board member wishing to see the Code should contact David Yeowell.

The final draft should be ready by the target date of April 2005. It is now a case of finding a suitable launch. It will not be ready in time for the CSS Bridges Conference in March 2005, but will be mentioned at that event.

b. Research Proposals for 2005/06

The internal bid for DfT research funding will need to be made by TM6 before the RLG meeting on 8 December. If necessary, research proposals rejected by RLG will need to be retrospectively removed from the DfT bid.

It was decided that the following projects would be put forward by the bridges Board as priorities for funding:

BB 61S - Performance Indicators for Highway Structures

BB 61F - Assessment of Dry Stone Retaining Walls

BB 61G - The Management of Older Metal Bridges

The Performance Indicator project is considered the top priority as it is *needed* rather than desired. The emphasis, when putting projects forward to DfT Ministers will be on *what will happen if this project is not taken forward?*

It was suggested that the Performance Indicator project could be dealt with as "ongoing" work (i.e. funded from the 2004/05 budget). This would free up £20k from the 2005/06 budget, which could be used to fund other research projects. However, the Board decided that the project should remain top priority in the bid for 2005/06 DfT funding.

Action - Edward Bunting to investigate whether this project could be treated as "ongoing" work.

There is a possibility that CSS funding could be obtained for the Dry Stone Retaining Walls and Older Metal Bridges projects. However, it was decided to include these in the bid for DfT funding until a firmer indication is received from CSS.

BB 61B (Revision of BS 6994 Part 4 - Masonry Parapets) will be taken back to the Bridge Owners' Forum for further consideration. The Board agreed that the project has some merit, but needs a tighter brief and a better funding

estimate. Also, the Forum should consider whether funding contributions for this project could be obtained from other sources.

BB 61A (Carbon composites for the strengthening of steel structures) and **BB 61K** (Strengthening of bridges under live load conditions) were considered to be projects that would dovetail into the Key Performance Indicators project. However, these project proposals are insufficiently developed to be included in a current DfT funding bid.

DfT emphasised that the Bridges Board need to identify whether any project proposals from the Bridge Owners' Forum are being taken forward by the Highways Agency, or are receiving funding from another source, before the projects can be included in a DfT funding bid.

7. Asset Management

The HA has a contract with Atkins to review the HA's Asset Valuation model. There have been some difficulties in matching accounting requirements with the HA's business requirements.

Local authorities will be required to produce asset management plans from the start of next year's LTP round. Authorities are looking to central Government for further guidance on this.

8. Any Other Business

Abnormal Loads - A stakeholder manager, Dan Wright, has been appointed by SERCO for this project. SERCO will deal with the Bridge aspects of the project. Dan Wright is liaising with Tony Norfolk (CSS). Private Bridge Owners are to be represented by Keith Ross of Network Rail.

The Surveyor Bridge Conference is to take place on 1 March 2005 at the Business design centre in Islington.

Three Bridge design standards have recently been updated. They are:

BD 13/04 - Design of Steel Bridges. Use of BS5400-3:2000

BD 86/04 - The Assessment of Highway Bridges and Structures for the Effects of Special Types General Order and Special Order Vehicles.

BD 91/04 - Un-reinforced Masonry Arch Bridges

9. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board will take place on 9 February 2005 in Great Minster House, London.

UK Bridges Board Secretariat
7 December 2004