

MINUTES OF THE 17th MEETING OF THE UK BRIDGES BOARD.

Meeting held in Room LG5, Great Minster House, London, 17 August 2005.

Present:

David Lynn	Warwickshire CC/CSS (Chair)
Richard Fish	CSS Cornwall CC
Edward Bunting	DfT RLTSF3
Awtar Jandu	Highways Agency
David Mackenzie	SCOTS
Ronnie Wilson	DRD (Northern Ireland)
Bill Valentine	Scottish Executive
John Collins	Welsh Assembly Government
Paul Long	LB Hillingdon (LOBEG)
Brian Bell	Network Rail
Bob Flitcroft	Bolton MBC
Rod Howe	British Waterways
Greg Perks	CSS/Northumberland CC
Dave Ambrose	WATO
Navil Shetty	W S Atkins
Andrew Oldland	DfT RLTSF3
Chris Hudson	DfT RLTSF3

1. Apologies/New members

Apologies were received from Ian Holmes, Graham Cole, David Yeoell, Jim Moriarty and Dana Skelley.

The Board welcomed a new member, Bob Flitcroft of Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council. Bob has replaced Steve Tart (who left the Board in February this year) as the representative for English Metropolitan Authorities.

2. Election of new Chair of the UK Bridges Board

See also **BB 77/05**

David Lynn confirmed that, due to his imminent retirement from Warwickshire County Council, he would be standing down as Chair of the CSS Bridges

Group and consequently as Chair of the UK Bridges Board. He proposed that Richard Fish be elected as the new Chair and was seconded by Greg Perks. The Board agreed unanimously and Richard Fish will be put forward as the new Chair at the next meeting of the UK Roads Liaison Group on 21 September. Richard Fish will also be taking over as Chair of the CSS Bridges Group. David and Richard will both attend the next UK RLG meeting.

Action: UK RLG to confirm the Board's decision at their September meeting.

Greg Perks proposed a note of thanks on behalf of the Board for the excellent work achieved by David Lynn during his four years as its Chair.

3. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

Minutes of last meeting

Awtar Jandu asked that consideration be given to an amended version of the note of the May meeting of the Board, which he emailed to Chris Hudson in June. The amendment concerned the performance indicator project being carried out by W S Atkins. The point Awtar made was that he has extended the contract with W S Atkins to September 2005, but needs some guarantee of funding from DfT in order to extend it to April 2006.

Edward Bunting agreed at the last meeting to let Awtar Jandu know when DfT funding is available to extend the PI contract.

The meeting held in the Euston Tower on 10 May, to discuss management of sub-standard structures (application and development of BA79) was hosted by the Highways Agency and not by WS Atkins, as implied in the note. No further meeting was due to take place on 15 May.

Matters Arising

UK Bridges Board Terms of Reference - It was agreed that a section entitled "Resource Requirements" should be added to the annex of the Terms of Reference. Edward Bunting will find a form of words to flag up the Board's commitment to securing appropriate funding for tackling the bridge maintenance backlog. Otherwise the Board are content with the Terms of Reference.

Action: Edward Bunting to amend the Terms of Reference.

4. UK Roads Liaison Group Feedback

It was decided that, from 2006 onwards, the UK Roads Liaison Group and its four Boards will meet only three times rather than the usual four. A proposed meeting schedule for 2006 will be circulated shortly to Board Members. The UK Bridges Board Terms of Reference will be altered accordingly.

Action: Chris Hudson to circulate proposed meeting dates for 2006.

5. Launch of *Highway Structures Management - A Code of Practice*

David Lynn met the Code of Practice working group in June, at the WS Atkins office in the Euston Tower, where he formally signed off the new Code. Final touches to the document were made in August and it was sent to TSO for publication. The new Code will have 297 pages and will cost £24.

At the launch of the Code on 6 September at the East Midlands Conference Centre, Nottingham, Gerry Hayter (Highways Agency), Graham Cole, and Alan Dray will discuss the Code from their own perspective.

After the launch of the Code, WS Atkins are keen to hold seminars, around the country, explaining the document. David Mackenzie pointed out that a lot of people in Scotland and the North of England would not be able to get to the launch on 6 September and expressed a wish to involve Scottish Authorities in a similar exercise. Bill Valentine said that the Scottish Executive would be happy to host such an event, in Edinburgh. This matter will be discussed at the next meeting of the CSS Bridges Group on 6 October 2005.

It has been proposed that a consultant will be appointed to overlook the 3 Codes of Practice that have been produced over the last year. DfT will not go out to tender on this but will simply appoint a contractor who will conduct a watching brief, looking for developments that need to be incorporated into the different codes. This will also give a better idea of when the three documents have reached the end of their shelf life.

David Lynn thanked the Code of Practice Working Group, on behalf of the Board, for all the hard work that they have done over the last two years, in preparing the Code.

6. Maintaining a Vital Asset

David Lynn thanked Edward Bunting for preparing this document, with the help of Garry Sterritt and Mike Kendrick.

Bill Valentine suggested that the document was currently too local roads oriented and that there should be more emphasis on the fact that it is a *national* initiative. Edward Bunting pointed out that the document was really aimed at local authority elected members and that it should not therefore be

too detailed. He nevertheless agreed to consider Bill Valentine's suggestions and will look into the possibility of giving the document a more national slant.

Action: Edward Bunting and Bill Valentine will liaise further on this matter.

7 & 8. CSS/Network Rail Liaison - Meeting of 17 June/Prioritisation of Bridge Strengthening Schemes

See also **BB 74/05 & BB 75/05**

The Board approved the constitution of the CSS/Network Rail Group (see paragraph 9.1 of BB 74/05). It was felt, however, that the Group would need to meet more than twice per year, as is currently proposed (paragraph 9.2).

The CSS Bridges Group will need to debate the first three bullet points of Item 5 of BB 75/05 at their next meeting. The Board agreed that the system should not be limited to England but should include Scotland and Wales (fourth bullet point).

LOBEG Prioritisation Process - Paul Long will look into the LOBEG system, with regard to intellectual property rights.

Bob Flitcroft will find out how much it would cost to engage consultants to advise on a national prioritisation system and let David Lynn know by 29 September. There is a possibility of CSS funding if this does not amount to much money.

Representatives from Network Rail, LoBEG and TFL will arrange a meeting to address concerns about the issue of intellectual property rights if LOBEG's weighted criteria system is used, and also the suitability of using the LOBEG algorithms in a UK-wide system.

Action: CSS representatives to report back on Local Authority views.

9. Asset Management - Decision Support Tool

See also **BB 76/05**

Navil Shetty and John Collins presented their proposals for a Decision Support Tool for Bridge Management to the Board. They suggested that a steering committee be set up to develop the tool and that its development be funded by the Department for Transport. These suggestions were accepted by the Board.

Edward Bunting pointed out, however, that this project might sit outside the UK RLG research package and that it needs to be looked at from a DfT ministerial point of view. There needs to be a convincing argument that the commercial sector cannot produce this tool. Also, if public funds are to be used for its development, then ground rules and parameters that the commercial sector can work to need to be provided.

It was suggested that the project could be taken forward by Atkins as a development of the Code of Practice. This would only be a development of the specification for procurement rather than the procurement itself. As it would not be able to be done as an extension of the Code of Practice contract, it would mean that the specification work would have to be done in the next financial year, which would probably delay the project too much.

It was agreed that a steering committee be appointed to advise Atkins and funding would have to be secured for this. Navil Shetty said that Atkins would start the ball rolling.

It was agreed that DfT will co-ordinate a scoping meeting which will include representation from the Highways Agency, the Scottish Executive, the Welsh Assembly Government, the Northern Ireland Roads Service, the London Boroughs and the CSS. This meeting should look at what already exists in this area. Brian Bell offered to speak to Alan Dray on this matter and report back to someone who will be attending the Scoping meeting.

Action: Edward Bunting to arrange a meeting of the scoping group.

10. Research - Progress on Current Projects

Dry Stone Walls - CIRIA recently circulated advanced notice of this project. Mouchel Parkman, Halcrow and Mott Macdonald are interested. WS Atkins may also wish to participate but this is not confirmed yet. Tender documents are being prepared and it is hoped to have the project underway by late September/early October this year. A nine month contract period is proposed.

New Projects - There needs to be an item on the agenda for the November meeting of the Board in which research proposals can be gone through in detail and prioritised, so that they can be handed over to the UK RLG at their December meeting.

Action: Board members should submit any research proposals that they consider important, in time for the next UK Bridges Board meeting.

BB 81/05 (Revision of BS 6779) - This paper was circulated too late to be discussed properly. Board members were therefore asked to look at it and let Brian Bell have their views, as to what kind of proposal they are prepared to endorse.

Action: Board members

Brian Bell recommended that this proposal was developed independently, with UK RLG/UK Bridges Board endorsement, and not as a British Standard.

DfT will alert the Highways Agency about the possibility of a two year major funding exercise. HA's views will be sought as to its feasibility.

Action: DfT/Board members

11. Bridge Owners' Forum

The Bridge Owners' Forum has received £30k per annum from the Department for Transport, over the last three years, and would like to continue with this arrangement.

It was agreed, therefore, that Dr Campbell Middleton, the Chair of BOF, be invited to write a paper about what the Forum has achieved over the last three years and what is proposed were funding to continue. He is also to be invited to the next meeting of the Board to present his paper.

Action: Secretariat to contact Campbell Middleton.

12. Updating BA79/98 - Management of Sub-Standard Highway Structures

The final draft of the updated document should be ready before Christmas. The proposed publication date is May 2006. The document will have a new number: **BD 92/06**.

David Lynn congratulated the Highways Agency on the speed that this work has been done and on the progress made.

13. Any Other Business

The Board were asked to consider the possibility of holding a meeting outside London in the near future. David Mackenzie said that he would look into the possibility of hosting the 2006 spring/summer meeting of the Board at Highland Council Headquarters in Inverness. He will report back on this at the next meeting.

14. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

Wednesday, 16 November 2005 at Great Minster House, London

UK Bridges Board Secretariat
September 2005