

DRAFT Report to PCMG

UK Roads Board

Purpose

1. This paper reports on discussion at the UK Roads Board on 24th February 2009.
2. The following issues were raised by the PCMG following the PCMG meeting on 12th February:

Roads Board Advisory Group membership

3. Although we have a good spread of potential members from English local authorities, we lack any from the North West and South East regions and we only have one nomination from the North West and Yorkshire & the Humber. We are also rather short of TAG representation from Metropolitan and Unitary authorities. We are working to remedy this, but any suggestions would be welcomed.

There is a particular issue about the lack of representation from Wales on either the PCMG or the Advisory Group. We need to find some way to involve Wales and Welsh local authorities.

No progress on this issue (?)

Need to raise with Phil Cadenne at the next meeting (?)

4. TRL has proposed inviting the Highway Term Maintenance Association to nominate representatives of local authority service providers. The HTMA Improvements and Efficiency working group has proposed Dennis Parkinson (Ringway) and Eric Brangier (Colas – Ensign Portsmouth PFI).

There is a question of principle – if we have some companies represented, will others object? (Although all could have as many corresponding members each as they wished).

The advantage is having a wider perspective in the advice we receive.

The risk is that commercial issues may affect discussion.

Roads Board agreed that HTMA SHOULD be represented, and agreed the two would be valuable representatives, but suggested that they should not attend the first meeting, and should be invited to subsequent meetings.

Consequently TRL spoke to both, and has had cordial meetings with both, following the first RBAG meeting on 17th March 2009.

Roads Board task groups

5. The PCMG wondered about progress of the two proposed “task & finish” working groups on
 - a. The longer term strategy to gather information on the unclassified network and
 - b. What analyses would be most useful to include in the road condition statistics report in 2009 based on the SCANNER data

Both of these topics relate closely with the work of the PCMG, and would appear to overlap with it to a great extent. Therefore we think there needs to be very close liaison between these groups and the PCMG, and offer our assistance to progress the tasks.

This is a matter for the DfT.

Apparently TRL has been appointed to assist the DfT with developing the method to gather SCANNER data to report the condition of English classified roads, and this contract includes assisting the DfT run the two task and finish groups.

6. TRL has been gathering information from local highway authorities on behalf of the CSS Engineering Committee and would like to know

What number of authorities (or percentage of the network) would be enough for the Department of Transport’s purposes?

No feedback from the Roads Board.

Issue to be progressed by the PCMG (?)

Forward look - Resources

7. At its first meeting on 3rd November 2009, the PCMG identified two research projects which will be needed, irrespective of the conclusions of the Review of UKPMS core functionality. They are:
 - a. Employing geographic (GPS) referencing in condition surveys of local roads, and
 - b. Deterioration models for highway maintenance
8. Both were recommended by the Halcrow report, and the SCANNER “End of term” report, and Edward Bunting agreed that they might go ahead as a priority. Detailed specifications have been prepared.

It would be helpful to know whether the Department has secured the necessary funds for these projects to be started in the near future.

No response on this.

PCMG would like to know (what can Edward Bunting say at this point?)

9. The Department agreed to extend the current SCANNER accreditation, QA and audit contract by one year, to include 2009/10.

Thus providing time to review TRL's performance of the contract and to develop a specification and let a replacement contract by competitive tender. TRL's formal offer for the extension has been reviewed and is acceptable.

It would be helpful to know whether the Department has secured the necessary funds to be able to award an extension of contract.

The Department should also plan ahead and secure funding (at approximately the same level) for years beyond 2009/10, to ensure that SCANNER data are consistent and reliable, and fit for purpose.

No response on this.

PCMG would like to know (what can Edward Bunting say at this point?)

Chris Capps

12 February 2009

Comments added by Andrew Gallagher

26th May 2009

Notes of telephone discussion with CC 25th February 2009:

Princess Royal opening new offices today (IHT?)

EB guarded – working on deterioration specification + will share it.

CC additional stuff – functional review – yes + need to bid for it.

Task and finish Anna Heyworth has invited CC to join groups. Both on same day.

Who is it for? Les Hawker, Lester Willmington

Note from PCMG / PCIS was helpful.

Issues for us to pursue:

Representation on RBAG:

CSS Wales.

No one from Northern Ireland or Wales (on RBAG) – now we have Geoff Lester

Donald from Scotland – new man replacing David Arran

+ need to try harder on other areas.

HTMA OK after first one. + involve others through the HTMA . Keen to have links

Unclassified roads.

Updated % unclassified seems OK.

Potentially OK at 85% coverage. But not going to be used for DfT statistics? Need to check with DfT statisticians

Money for GPS and deterioration specifications. CC will speak to EB.

SCANNER EB agreed extension but has not yet signed. + is planning for a new contract.

17th March, CC has a dilemma. Can we explore moving RBAG to another date?

Andrew Gallagher

26th May 2009