

South East Freight Council Minutes

Tuesday 8th January 2019
Hermes House, St John's Road
Tunbridge Wells, TN4 9UZ

CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

- The meeting was chaired by Paul Goss from Southern Water
- Council welcomed Graham Russell and Bridget Clements from Highways England as guests to the meeting
- Members were advised of the code of conduct and guidelines at FTA meetings
- Roundtable introductions were made

PRESENTATION (via Video Skype)

Highways England - Operation Brock

- Members will be briefed on the latest plans for Operation Brock the traffic management scheme which will be used in place of Operation Stack if there are cross Channel disruptions after Brexit
- Details were given on the different elements within Operation Brock which includes queueing traffic at the Dover TAP, M20, Manston, A256 TAP and the M26
- In order to keep the M20 open members were updated on the plans to put the contraflow barriers between junctions 9-8. Installation to take place in mid Feb.
- Sequencing of Operation Brock is as follows:
 - Use buffers zones in Port of Dover and Eurotunnel
 - Use Dover TAP
 - Brock M20 – holding Eurotunnel and Port of Dover freight in coastbound carriageway
 - Brock Manston – If Brock M20 become full Port of Dover freight will be sent to Manston airport (Eurotunnel freight still queues on M20)
 - A256 TAP – freight filtering out of Manston will be held and released slowly into Dover
 - Brock M26 – If Brock M20 is full M26 will be closed in both directions and used to hold freight bound for Eurotunnel. Port of Dover freight will be unaffected and continue to Manston airport
- Members were informed that Highways England will be supplying this information in the form of a drivers leaflet. FTA is working with Highways England on the content and will be distributed to members as soon as possible
- Highways England will be producing a fly thorough video so that drivers can understand what Operation Brock will look like
- Highways England are conscious of the need to have Operation Brock communications translated into many languages
- In order to achieve compliance from freight a stamping system will be used at different stages of Operation Brock to ensure fairness
- Members were informed that Highways England is still awaiting the national strategic freight plan for DfT
- Feedback was given from the live test at Manston. Highways England were pleased and saw it as a success. It helped to establish how to filter trucks to Dover via the A256 tap and estimate congestion on the route.
- Highways England highlighted how important it is to keep the trucks flowing into the ports to ensure they leave with full capacity
- Members were updated on the driver facilities that will be available through Operation Brock
- Members asked about drivers hours exemptions and were informed that DfT are looking into this and Highways England will report back

UK COUNCIL UPDATE

- Members received an update from UK Council on 8th November 2017. The key items to note included discussions on changes to DVSA sift policy and HGV enforcement targeting; Maximum weights and dimensions of HGVs; priorities for legislative change; abnormal loads.

- On DVSA enforcement members agreed that to stop sifting away green operators was positive but were concerned about what the evidence base (the trial) was showing. FTA will be following up with DVSA to trying to establish if OCRS now providing any meaningful risk analysis
- For maximum weights and dimensions, it was suggested that FTA must be bold in making its proposals, generally it should pursue operation at vehicle design weight. In discussions members suggested the following reforms would aid in efficiency of the road freight sector
 - 52t GVW, 21m long on 7 axles
 - 44t on 5 axles
 - 48t GVW for road legs of inter-modal journeys

But it was noted that this does not mean FTA will discount other proposals

- Moving past Brexit members discuss the priorities for legislative change which included EU, domestic & Driver CPC (opportunity for domestic amendments as amending directive is transposed to UK law). In addition, items added by members through the freight council process were:
 - EU
 - Remove Whole Vehicle Type Approval – particularly for trailers;
 - Driver CPC – flexibility of module timings;
 - 'Car' driving test provides entitlement up to 7.5t;
 - Abolish paper plating certificate
 - Domestic
 - Increase weights and dimensions
 - Allow recording of domestic hours on smartphone apps
 - DCPC
 - Allow 2-year course approval;
 - Enforce DCPC from the electronic record;
 - Extend DCPC exemption for road test to allow technical assistant

SECRETARY'S REPORT

- Members were updated on the FTA's campaign on independent testing following the ministerial decision to postpone the consideration for independent testing until April 2020.
- Following a roundtable in October, FTA has learned that the DVSA expects to have sufficient numbers of vehicle standard assessors trained and in place by the end of December to meet the demands for testing in 2019
- Members were given feedback on the Immigration White Paper which noted that lower-skilled and unskilled migrants will not routinely be able to come to the UK and settle permanently. However, as a "transitional measure", people from "low-risk countries" in Europe and further afield will be able to come to the UK, without a job offer, and seek work for up to a year. A consultation on a minimum salary requirement of £30,000 for skilled migrants seeking five-year visas is to be announced
- Member were updated on the FTA's campaigning to streamline the requirements and reduce the red tape for hauliers by limiting the no. of transport operations covered by the proposed new rules to harmonise the minimum wage requirements across the EU
- On abnormal loads the FTA is calling for a fair and transparent approach to the movement of abnormally heavy loads to support the water preferred policy and avoid additional road congestion

REGIONAL ITEMS

Draft London Plan – Examination in Public

- Members received an update on FTA's work on Draft London Plan and in particular around the campaign to extend the remit of the Agent of Change principle
- As preparations are underway for the examination in public members were updated on the timetable for this process and how FTA will be representing members interests in committee hearings

TfL Freight Action Plan

- Members were briefed on FTA's interaction with TfL on the freight action plan and noted the change in language used by TfL as more positive towards freight
- Members will receive further updates as the action plan is launched in early 2019

Lower Thames Crossing

- Members were given an update on FTA's response to the Lower Thames Crossing consultation
- FTA continues to support the scheme and welcomes the changes made from previous feedback
- Members were given an overview of the consultation response which highlighted the lack of lorry parking facilities. FTA also opposes a road user charge but stated that if one was introduced it should be free flowing. FTA suggested that HGV should not be charged to incentivise freight to use the route and addressed the need to improve the road network that LTC connects including Bluebell Hill

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Vehicle operator licensing

- Members discussed what functions of the Vehicle Operator Licensing (VOL) online system should be priorities for future development
- Feedback was that most members used the online system and found it much easier than previous versions but felt more should be moved online. They would like to see VOL payments include company cards rather than cheques or postal orders
- Members also questioned how information is now policed as no financial summary sheet is provided and asked if this was a sufficient deterrent

Ultra-Low and Zero Emissions Roads/Zones

- Members are asked to decide FTA's response to the increasing numbers of local authorities considering small scale Ultra-Low Emission Vehicle (ULEV) and zero-emission schemes
- Members fed back that they are sourcing smaller vehicles to distribute freight in inner cities. More are looking at gas and electric, but the key issue is refuelling/charging, as well as the cost of vehicles
- Members had concerns that there wasn't a national standard and were concerned that this could lead to problems with fleets in the future
- Concern was also raised about charging fleets when vans are not necessarily returned to operating centres every evening. Many vans are parked near to the driver's home which might not have access to charging points
- Members are concerned that large organisations can mix fleets to bring in their low emissions fleets to certain areas, but this isn't always possible for smaller firms
- Members also questioned whether vehicle manufactures can produce enough vehicles to meet demand
- There was also interest from members to learn if there is a tool that can assist them identify which roads have a ban as some have been caught out without prior knowledge
- Finally, members were also curious to know what DVSA will be doing to ensure that foreign lorries will be meeting the requirements

Ports/Coastal Shipping

- Members discussed coastal shipping and the Department for Transport's (DfT's) broader Maritime 2050 agenda following members reporting persistent congestion problems at container ports
- During the discussion members asked about air quality in and around ports and how this will be managed going forward
- Some members were starting to use coastal shipping more frequently, but still see road connections to ports was very vital
- In order to facilitate a greater understanding of port connectivity in the south east, some members offer site visits and port tours to the FTA

Brexit

- Members were updated on the latest understanding of the situation regarding Brexit and its implications for logistics in the South East
- FTA took feedback from members on any preparedness work they have carried out and asked how the Association could help beyond advice already shared with members
- There was a mixture of experiences across the council. Some larger organisations had undertaken detailed studies of the impacts of Brexit whilst many smaller members had done little.
- There was concern amongst members that any cross-channel disruptions will impact drivers being able to get to work, particularly those based in the East of Kent.
- Some members had taken on more storage and additional warehouses and were aware that their customers are stockpiling
- All members were keen to receive Operation Brock driver leaflets as soon as possible and were keen to keep up engagement with Highways England through the Council. In addition, members want more information about drivers' hours during Operation Brock

AOB

- FTA's Head of Publications joined the meeting to meet members and collate views on the FTA Yearbook of Road transport Law. The consensus of opinion amongst members was that it was very useful and used regularly. Members would like to see an electronic version which is easier to share and search.
- Members were informed of the next UK Council on the 7th February and the chair and officers present were asked about their attendance
- Members were informed that the next South East Freight Council will be taking place on Tuesday 26th March 2019 at the FTA offices in Tunbridge Wells
- In accordance with FTA by-laws elections took place. Following two years as Chair Paul Goss stood down and Mike Sutton was elected as the new Chair. Glyn Slowly was elected as second Vice Chair. Other positions remain unchanged.

ATTENDANCE LIST

Chairman

Paul Goss Southern Water Services Limited

Council Members

Glyn Slowly	Tradeteam DHL
Bill Sedgeman	Reigate & Banstead Borough Council
Kelvin Hillman	South East Water
Sam Yates	Kent County Council
Mike Sutton	Lime Logistics
Ian Murdoch	Surrey County Council
Jon Williams	Kent Frozen Foods
Ian Humphrey	Newham Council
Chris Rodwell	Post Office
Gavin Horsfall	Nationwide Platforms
Ben Lloyd	Courier Express Ltd
Carl Leader	R Swain Group
Darren Chandler	Brakes
Michael Green	Inchcape Fleet Solutions
Bill Evans	Evans Training Llp
Ronnie Helen	Gravesham Borough Council
Ralph Wilcox	Oaks Plant Hire
Martin Taylor	Clancy Docwra Ltd
Tom Clubb	Watch It Come Down Group
Adam Drury	DRS Kent Ltd

FTA staff

Elizabeth de Jong	Director of UK Policy
Sarah Watkins	Head of Policy Publications
Heidi Skinner	Policy and Public Affairs Manager