

## East of England Freight Council minutes

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Tuesday 18 October 2022

10:00 – 12:30

Via Teams

### INTRODUCTION

- The meeting was chaired by John Burbridge from Turners (Soham) Ltd.
- The minutes of the last meeting were approved
- Members were reminded by the Secretary about the competition law compliance guidance and referred members to the full details on page 5 of the Policy Report.

### EXTERNAL PRESENTATION

- Katherine Beard, Head of Future Road Investment Strategy, and Simon Emery, Network Planning at National Highways briefed members on the Roads Investment Strategy 3 (RIS3) programme.

### Report back from modal councils

- Members received a report back from Road, Rail, Air and Water Councils

### Secretary's report

- Members were updated on other issues not on the main agenda including: category B derogation consultation; revised EU roadworthiness package; guide to maintaining roadworthiness; code of practice on load security; and Generation Logistics

### Future of Freight update

- Members were briefed on Government's Future of Freight Plan which was published in the summer.

### AGENDA ITEMS

#### A1 Driver licensing call for evidence

- The Department for Transport (DfT) launched a call for evidence, which could result in a change to the legislation governing driver licensing and training provision, as part of DfT's wider response to the acute driver shortage. The call looked at four different aspects of the licensing regime and members had the opportunity to express their views during Freight Councils.
- Members were asked if Category B licence holders should be automatically granted the C1 entitlement, and if so, whether there be any additional requirements such as age; length of time holding a Category B licence or passing an HGV medical test. Members were concerned by the high number of accidents among C1 vehicles, therefore they felt strongly that there should be a minimum age and/or period of driving experience at Cat B before C1 entitlement is granted. One member cited issues around the LL licence which allowed drivers to go straight to an artic from a car licence. It's not just about weight, but the size of the vehicle and many 7.5 tonners are of a similar size to the old 10/12 tonnes vehicles.
- Members did not believe that any purposes or groups of drivers of C1 vehicles should be exempt from Driver CPC requirements.

- Members supported the proposal for DVSA to manage a mandatory register of HGV instructors and publish their pass rates. They felt that it may help improve standards and allow those learning to drive to make an informed decision about what training provider to use, especially given the low pass rates and the high costs of licence acquisition. Pass rates should be linked to companies rather than individual trainers unless you are a one-person operator. However, concerns were raised about whether it would be a barrier to new trainers joining the profession. It was asked if grandfather rights should be applied to existing trainers. There was a lengthy debate around the issue of requiring an ADI qualified instructor to train category B licence holders. It was felt that established and professional LGV driver trainers should be allowed to train category B licence holders. It even excludes people who sell cars from teaching a customer how to use new technology and it isn't being enforced.
- Concerns were also raised about the lack of time spent on the reversing manoeuvre for C+E which has now been removed from the test. It was also commented that since COVID-19, many trainers have moved down to single occupancy training, so it's just the driving instructor and the trainee. But they have made the training periods too short and consequently, many employers are now doing significant additional training with new recruits before they are let loose on the truck on their own.

## **A2 Decarbonisation – skills & maintenance**

- As the second topic for the net zero standing agenda item at Freight Councils, Logistics UK sought feedback on the changing skill set needed to maintain new vehicles, vessels and aircraft due to developments in technology.
- Members highlighted two main barriers to developing these skills to support the transition to net zero: lack of clarity about the technology for zero-emission HGVs and the shortage of skilled staff to maintain their existing vehicles. An example was also given of a lack of trained repair engineers at main dealerships to maintain the new generation of Euro VI diesel HGVs, let alone electric or hydrogen vehicles.
- Members were asked about the steps they are taking to address these skills gaps. It was noted that a lot of main dealers had trained their staff early on electric vehicle technology. However, due to the delay in these vehicles coming to market, they are experiencing skill-fade and need to be retrained. Also, some of the technology has evolved since the training was conducted. One company reported that they are taking on apprentice engineers. However, they don't have the experienced technicians available to mentor the first-year apprentices. Fortunately, they have two third year apprentices, but the local college could not even run a HGV maintenance and repair course because they haven't attracted the required number of candidates.

## **A3 FORS Standard version 7 modifications**

- Logistics UK, as a member of the Governance and Standards Advisory Group (GSAG), sought members' views on the inclusion, or not, of a requirement to undertake an Operator Licence compliance audit as part of the specifications for Version 7 of the Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS) Standard, which is currently under discussion.
- Members said that the inclusion of an Operator Licence compliance audit might help give the standard more credibility and importantly, give confidence to operators that they are legally compliant. However, it is more than unwieldy as it is. It also needs to be noted that many FORS operators are not subject to Operator Licensing.
- Members raised concerns about the cost implications of this proposal.
- Members noted that FORS has improved safety and the achievements made by the scheme in this area should be recognised.

## **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- Attendance was confirmed for UK Road Council on 3 November
- Kevin Barcroft noted that JAUPT is now fully under the umbrella of DVSA. He asked if there are likely changes from this new branding as it has taken a week for him to get hold of them on the phone. This was fed back to Chris Yarsley.
- The chair flagged that the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership has launched a consultation on a proposed road user charge. Following the meeting, Natalie Chapman shared the consultation link with members and set up a Teams call for members with the GCP team to discuss the proposals. Logistics UK would be responding to the consultation and members were encouraged to respond directly. The consultation can be accessed here: [www.greatercambridge.org.uk/mc-2022](http://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/mc-2022).

## DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

- Tuesday 31 January 2023 09:30 – 13:00 (finishing with lunch) at Delta Hotels by Marriott, Hinchingsbrooke Business Park Kingfisher Way, Huntingdon PE29 6FL (PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF VENUE)
- Thursday 18 May 2023 09:30 – 13:00 (finishing with lunch) at the Bedford Lodge Hotel, Newmarket
- October 2023 (date TBC) at the Bedford Lodge Hotel, Newmarket

## ATTENDEES

### Chairman

John Burbridge                      Turners (Soham) Ltd

### Members

Gary Austin	Maritime Transport Ltd
Russell Avery	Grace Foods UK Ltd
Kevin Barcroft	CMS SupaTrak
Ed Barker	Agricultural Industries Confederation (AIC)
Gill Barrow	Agricultural Industries Confederation (AIC)
Andy Belcher	For Farmers UK Ltd
David Brown	MRCT Ltd
Ryan Clay	Factory Services UK Ltd
Philip Clifford	Fleet Management Consultant
Gareth Cox	J W Suckling Transport Ltd
Nick Drake	Norse Commercial Services Ltd
Lara Drury	West Suffolk Council
Michael	FlemingThe Logistics Partnership LLP
Karen Fox	European Metal Recycling Group
Chris Gatheridge	Explore Transport
Callum Greenall	Miniclipper Ltd
Paul Hutchings	Luton Borough Council
Ian McCann	Norfolk County Council
Lucy Mellish	Norfolk Council Council
Tim Smart	Frontier Agriculture Ltd
Richard Wadkin	Pellys Transport & Regulatory Services Ltd
Steve Williams	Truck (UK) Limited
Neil Woods	DS Smith Packaging Ltd

### Guests

Katherine Beard	National Highways
Simon Emery	National Highways
Desiree Li	National Highways

### Staff

Natalie Chapman	Head of Public Affairs
Kate Jennings	Director of Policy
Denise Beedell	Senior Policy Manager
Molly Brookes	Membership Relations Manager