

South East Freight Council agenda

Tuesday 17 October 2023

10:00 – 13:00

Salomons Estate, Broomhill Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN3 0TG

10:00 – 10:10 INTRODUCTION

- Chair gives welcome, and members introduce themselves.
- Previous minutes accepted. Actions for JF to send out minutes quicker.
- Competition law compliance statement read.

10:10 – 10:25 UK Modal Councils & Secretary's report

Report from the meeting of Road Council on 8 June and recent meetings of modal councils and working groups. Progress on other issues including the Autumn Statement and Direct Vision Standard

- JF read the UK Modal Councils and Secretary's Report.
- Members asked for DVS update and if there were any more meetings with TfL? Latest we have – they consider this has been consulted with industry and industry has approved it. But they only consulted with the association that fits the equipment. Chris Yarsley is on the case.
- Member attended a TfL meeting last week, one of the topics was that TfL that the N4 signage on the back of the vehicles was to be changed to A3 – cyclists to be aware of passing on the left side of the vehicles. RHA and CY hadn't agreed the sign – it was the fitters. This was a long way away from Freight Trade Associations agreeing with this. The trust ability of TfL in London is quite low. They have to get these things to work by hook or by crook. They have identified what they want – more sensors at the front will be required, also, they were asked about how it will be enforced. Could be Met Police or TfL staff – warnings and fines in most extreme cases. If we have an NCAP screen that shows 4 or 6 cameras working, but if driver puts a rag over the camera – this would attract a fine. This suggests the enforcement hasn't been thought through properly.
- TfL used to have a Freight team, but they haven't reinvested in the Freight Team and there are about 4-5 people who are being called the 'new Freight Team'. Lots of new people that don't have that corporate memory.
- If you have booked in for kit to be fitted, they are considering a 3 month grace period.

- Testing – question asked about whether this was undertaken in London- but there is no resource – so there has been no real-world testing.
- Sarah Bell – is the 3 months grace period just been plucked out of the air – or has it been looked into? Member comments that the issue is the lack of skilled people available to fit.

10:25 -10:55

EXTERNAL PRESENTATION

Traffic Commissioner, London and South East of England, Sarah Bell, will be in attendance to update members on the current priorities and considerations for Office of the Traffic Commissioner.

Sarah Bell gave an update on:

- FORS – meeting David Wells this week and happy to do what she can in the background, ER, TM – Kevin Rooney has already done one. Engineering focus around at the moment and he is an engineer. We have benefited from having him on our team.
- **Traffic Commissioner function:** there is compelling evidence the TC function is still required, but the framework might be different. Not suggesting the independence is removed, having the decision making independent of Government and London.
- There are seven of 13 recommendations that are long term – and will need legislation. This is third review in the last 10 years – nothing has materially changed. It needs parliamentary time – however at this time there are other more pressing things.
- We aren't ignoring it and are looking at what can be changed without legislation. We sit as a TC board and get together at least 4 times a year. TC8 meets every Friday. We have designed ourselves as a first-tier tribunal. HMCTS – we are the only one that sits outside and are under the MOJ.
- Biggest problem to any major reform is money – fees have never paid for the service. £13million in - £18million out.
- Not being scrapped – sorry. But we are taking on board what we can without legislation.
- Roads Policing Review: 2 years ago Government launched review of Road Policing. Joint DfT and Home Office initiative. England and Wales. Also, a Commercial vehicle review working group. Sarah Bell sits on this. PS Paul Diamond attends to give operational input. Biggest bugbear – a few years ago. National Highways announced figures about encounters with operators. Nothing happened to that announcement – 44 police forces. Most don't have much CV knowledge. This unit is looking to join up things. NPCC is led by Ch Constable of Sussex.
- CVWG are also looking at getting offences aligned.

- Driver card issues, new loading regulations.
- DVSA Strategic Intelligence Office are using a lot of sophisticated data.
- Member asks how ER is doing? SB Response: TC don't have a view. DVSA have always worked in the same way – green-green – leave alone but make sure they are being educated. Use the resources to go after the bad guys. ER was just one of those tools. It frees up examiners to go after the ones that need to be checked on. Nuts and bolt – no its just one of many ways that DVSA manages its resources.
- OCRS is too broad brush. Number of prohibitions issues to green-green was almost the same as non-green operators.
- Unannounced visits are much more targeted these days.

10:55 – 11:05

REGIONAL ITEMS

TfSE's 'Connecting The South East' Conference highlights importance of South East region

11:05 – 11:20

COFFEE BREAK

AGENDA ITEMS

11:20 – 11:40

Windsor Framework and Border Target Operating Model

A1

The Windsor Framework is an international agreement between the UK and EU on the movement of goods from GB to NI. The Border Target Operating Model (BTOM) (is a new UK border regime which will introduce new security and Sanitary and Phytosanitary controls on imports from the EU and rest of the world. Logistics UK will be providing an update to members on both of these and seeking feedback.

- None of the members present bring goods across the Short Straits or NI.
- Member explains that RHA sit on board in NI and have put in a lot to discussions. Logistics UK sits on the NI Business Brexit Working Group and are equally able to influence.

11:40 – 12:05

Parking restrictions

A2

Logistics UK is seeking feedback from members on the impact of new parking regimes and restrictions across the UK as we look to develop our policy position on this issue.

1. Have members experienced any examples of particularly onerous or prohibitive parking restrictions?

- £3k per month successful appeals of parking fines. Member now employs someone just to deal with parking tickets.
- Overnight parking – some van drivers take their vehicles home – good neighbour thing – sometimes you have to bend to a neighbour. Some people dislike vans being parked at the home. Of course, there can be Inconsiderate parking, so there needs to be common sense. Some members are charging EVs at depot, however home charging can be a quicker way of decarbonising the fleet.
- Often there restriction are down to aesthetics. Difficult to get the right audience to listen. LAs will have policies that will be set individually.

- Restrictions for number of vehicles working on new developments being built is challenge.

2. What is the impact of more stringent restrictions on your business?

- Park commercial vehicles on main roads – due to no CVs allowed to park on side roads. Some LBs allow parking on pavements.
- Deliveries – can get extensions and permits – even for lengthy stops.
- Using a local car park. Need to have some realism, especially with the NZ agenda.
- London Road Safety Council – didn't know OL existed. Might be an opportunity to get position heard.
- CLFQP - Chris Sturman – lots of issues with restrictions and work ongoing. Deliveries at kerbside getting harder and harder.

3. How should Logistics UK's position on these issues be refined to reflect current trends?

- Need to be taxed, mot'd, insured to comply with law.
- Join up with Institute of Couriers and others. Hard issue to address.

12:05 – 12:30

Statutory role for Fleet Engineers

A3

Logistics UK is exploring the future role of Fleet Engineers as vehicle technology develops and is seeking feedback on the concept of making the role a statutory requirement within the Operator Licencing Regime.

1. Do members broadly agree with the background and current situation as outlined in the report, and if not, why not?

- Depends on size of business. Can bring in specialist.

2. For members that do have a form of "fleet engineer" role within their business, believe that such a role adds value and aids compliance?

- All technicians are qualified ERTEC? – inspecting for road safety. As a fleet operators have 2 fleet engineers in the field. London. They do inspections and liaise, assess, trouble-shoot. Has been 2 years introduced and have seen improvement and would agree about the importance and value. Member which provided this insight had 250 vehicles.
- Other members agreed with the need to have a fleet engineer with more technical background to support the fleet manager. Adds to compliance of the fleet. Member that raised this had 550 artic vehicles and trailers.
- Member raise that Transport Managers looks after drivers, and Fleet Engineers looks after mechanics.

3. What are members' concerns at the proposed implementation of another statutory role within the operator licencing regime?

- Concerns about sending vehicles to main dealer – you go to another one if you have concerns.
- If you make it a statutory role need to identify what qualification would be required and what experience. HNC or dedicated TE qualification.
- From a fleet engineers' perspective – clear definition is required. Smaller operators wouldn't need a fleet engineer – it would be overkill. But if away for long periods that would be different. Member oversees administer the OL for the country – part of that role falls to me, and I also oversee 5 workshops. Different levels of fleet engineer. Inspect vehicles; oversees admin and legal aspects. Need to find the balance – every business is different. Some will require more compliance, others engineering.
- Our fleet engineer deals with specs, warranties, inspections, as well as DVI, quality control of outside workshops. Engineering section deals with EZones and other stuff. Someone else runs the internal workshops.
- **Action:** Circulate draft statutory role definition from Engineering Forum.
- Financial Directors making decision about things to do with the fleet that they shouldn't be making. Corporate responsibility and brand responsibility need to be taken into consideration.
- Someone will need to be responsible for making sure the power supply is right for the electric fleet. Also, for ensuring it's all safe, compliant and works for the businesses.
- We still need TMs – compliance, liaison with drivers, customer satisfaction – EM will be there to make sure the truck is available to use, legally and compliant that's it. The clever bit is getting the truck to the customer when they want their stuff. EM's doesn't want the TM role. It's about the team. We also need Financial Directors.
- Has there been a career path for the different engineering roles – not as much as it used to be. Very difficult for an engineer to call himself and engineer if he hasn't qualified as an engineer.
- Depends on company, sector, so to make a statutory requirement is difficult. There must be an element of engineering background if you are running vehicles. You can't abdicate responsibility to others.
- Perhaps include an element of statutory responsibility for this in your OL undertakings.
- Be a member of Engineering Institute.
- Some TCs will advise you engage Logistics UK VIS engineers. Some do it for peace of mind.
- The people that don't follow statutory requirements aren't in the room.
- Needs to be separate and independent – have framework in place.

12:30 – 12:50

Schengen immigration restrictions

Non-EU nationals are subject to Schengen immigration restrictions meaning they are restricted to spending 90 days in 180 days in the Schengen Area for work and leisure. As enforcement is expected to tighten in this area, Logistics UK will be providing feedback to the DfT.

A4

- No members operated on the continent.
- Very little member awareness of EES, which could potentially be coming at a time when there are a lot of coach trips on the Short Straits.

12:50 – 13:00

AOB and close of meeting

- Confirmation of SEFC Members attending the Roads Council - Jerry Ward (JLP) is attending Roads. **Action:** if any other members is interested in attending this Roads Council, let JF know.
- Members did not object to policy report format changes. **Action** for JF: Send out future policy report the week before.
- Members attending today are not in favour of moving online, more distractions – less focus.
- **Date of next meeting:** Tuesday 30 January 2024, time and location TBC.

Attendees

Paul Goss (Chair)

Thames Water

Josh Fenton (Secretary)

Logistics UK

Alex Parsons

Ferns Surfacing Ltd

Daren Chandler

Brake Bros Ltd

Warren Rowe

M Group Services Plant & Fleet Solutions Ltd

Carl Leader

R Swain & Sons Ltd

Andy Macrae

Lime Logistics Ltd

Peter Pearce

ADM Milling Ltd

Philip Marsden

C Brewer & Son Ltd

Jerry Ward

JLP

Chris Cassley

CPA

Denise Beedell

Logistics UK

Agnes Wills

Logistics UK