

LOWCVP BUS WORKING GROUP MEETING
Thursday, 02 October 2003, 14:30-16:30
TfL/London Buses, 172 Buckingham Palace Road, London

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

BWG-M-03-09

Present

Alan Irving - DfT
Alan Martin - Scania
Andrew Colski – DfT
Bob Bryson – Newbus
Brian Macey – Millbrook
Catherine Dove – LowCVP
Chris Wilkes – BP
Colin Copelin – CPT
David Lemon – TfL/London Buses
David Martin – ClearZones
David Wallis - LowCVP

Gerry Walker – Cummins Engine
John I Smith – Transbus/Chair
Kerry Vitalis – DTI
Konstanze Scharring – LowCVP
Nigel Standley – ENECO
Simon Brown - TfL
Steve Bell – EST
Steven Brown – Shell
Tim Morris (for Bob Davis) - SMMT

Apologies

Adrian Wickens – Volvo Bus Ltd
Alastair Dick – Newbus
Bob Davis - SMMT
Chris Dyal – First Group
Derek P Charters – MIRA
Hans Smits – Evobus UK Ltd
Jenny May – DfT
Kevin Middleton – Travel WestMidlands

Maurice Perl – Wrightbus
Mike Weston – TfL/London Buses
Myles Mackie – Coventry City
Council
Rayner Mayer – Sciotech
Richard Dyball – Arriva
Stephen Hart – EST

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed the Group. The minutes of the meeting of 7 August 2003 were adopted without any amendments.

2. Matters arising

The Chair raised the question about the DTI sponsored supply chain database. Kerry Vitalis reported that there was no progress to date and it was agreed this would be deferred to the next WG meeting. A limited number of copies of the Clear Zones / TransportEnergy publication “The Route to Cleaner Buses” were distributed to the WG. If members require further copies, these are available from the TransportEnergy hotline (0845 602 1425).

It was agreed Colin Copelin would seek to contact UITP to raise the issue of LowCVP's work, with a view to inviting them to a future Bus WG meeting. The Chair briefed the WG on the success of the Coach and Bus Show 2003 at the NEC. Very positive feedback was received from the Minister, Tony McNulty MP.

3. LowCVP Update – Director

David Wallis (DW) briefed the WG on the on-going activities of the LowCVP Working Groups. Of note were the presentations by two WG Chairs to the Board on 9 October: the Chair of the R&D WG will present the case for a Centre of Excellence on Low Carbon, whilst the Chair of the Passenger Car WG will present a paper on meeting the 2012 Low Carbon Target. A meeting was held with the Chairs of the WGs and the SG in September. Henceforth, the Chairs will meet with the Secretariat every two months. DW, Konstanze Scharring (KS) and other members of the Partnership, including Board members, attended the Coach and Bus Show 2003. DW reported that the event allowed for the profile of the LowCVP to be raised significantly.

Referring to the Communications Strategy, DW reported that the new LowCVP Brochure and flyer have been printed. Copies were distributed to the Bus WG. On 30 September 2003, DW and KS attended a fringe event on Pollution Free Motoring at the Labour Party Conference in Bournemouth, organised by the UKPIA at which DW spoke on behalf of the Chairman of the Board, Graham Smith. The Minister David Jamieson was also on the panel.

4. Low Carbon Bus Programme – Alan Irving

Minister Tony McNulty MP launched the Low Carbon Bus Programme on 23 September at the Coach and Bus Show 2003. The Government's aim is to have low carbon buses on the road by the end of 2004. The DfT document Call for Expressions of Interest was circulated to WG members prior to the meeting. Alan Irving (AI) briefed the WG on the main components of the Programme: The grant is in the amount of £3 million and will be handled in two stages. The initial Call for Expressions of Interest has been sent to operators and manufacturers forming consortia to run up to 150 buses (approx £20,000 per bus) and is designed to gauge interest level but is not intended to include development costs. The EST has produced a proforma application form to facilitate this and forms are available from the TransportEnergy website (<http://www.transportenergy.org.uk/lowcarbon.html>). Applications will be reviewed early in the New Year. The second stage would involve more detailed examination of applications. Grants should become available from mid-2004.

As the programme would run for two to three years, AI urged any manufacturers and operators to come forward now and apply for the programme, even if their product was not yet fully market ready. AI also highlighted that the devolved administrations might provide additional funding at a later stage. DfT were seeking to collate more CO2 data (Euro 3) to

establish an emissions baseline from which to work and to see whether further emissions testing would need to be sponsored by Government via EST.

ACTION: If any WG members have further CO2 data (Euro 3), please send them to Steve Bell (steveb@est.co.uk) by mid- to end of October.

ACTION: Brian Macey said Millbrook could provide EminoX data to the WG with EminoX' permission. KS offered to establish contact with James Hollingsworth of EminoX to release the data.

5. Next Steps Review

a) Clear Zones (Clean Bus Guide)

David Martin reported that following the publication of "The Route to Cleaner Buses" guide, there would be a meeting of the partners in a couple of weeks. It will be decided at the meeting whether they should defer to the LowCVP to establish the national view. The possibility of merging the Clean Zones group with the Bus WG was discussed as the two roles are converging in many respects. This remains under consideration. The Chair commended the report to the group as an excellent and instructive piece of work. It was agreed that it would be useful as a regular feature of WG meetings if member companies were to make presentations on their latest technological developments or best practice on low carbon, as in Clear Zones.

ACTION: The Secretariat would facilitate company presentations to the group and contact members in due course.

b) FTE/Local Authority awareness

DW and KS met with Councillor Tony Brown (TB). To create greater awareness and the engagement in the low carbon agenda, he suggested to develop a manifesto for Local Authorities, showing what they can do, inform them about their options and how LowCVP and its members can help them.

ACTION: It was agreed TB should be invited to the next meeting of the Bus WG.

6. Bus Operator's Grant – Chair

John I Smith (JIS), not in his capacity as Chair, spoke to the previously circulated paper on the issue of Bus Operators Fuel Costs and Subsidies (**BWG-P-03-009**). The paper was put together by JIS with the assistance of Steve Brown and Chris Dewey. It set out an economic case for removing the Bus Operator Grant's subsidy on diesel as part of a pilot trial under the Low Carbon Bus Programme, to level the playing field for all fuels and provide an incentive for operators to purchase low carbon buses by. Following JIS' presentation, the WG discussed at length the most efficient measuring stick which would be used within the Bus Service Operators Grant: fuel or mileage. DfT made clear that discussions on the bus operators grant were on-going as part of the review of the 10 Year Transport Plan and Spending Review 2004. Various variables had to be considered, and bus patronage and service levels played an important part in Government's considerations. DfT raised concerns that adding the fuel subsidy question to the low carbon bus programme would

make the programme too top heavy and dilute the outcome. It was agreed that recognising at this early stage that this may be a stumbling block to the adoption of low carbon buses was positive. However no conclusion was reached on the proposal.

7. Any other business and dates for 2004

- KS informed the WG that there would be a LowCVP AGM held on 21 January 2004 to which all WG members will be invited. The Minister is expected to be present and it is likely to be based in London.
- The dates for Bus WG meetings for 2004 were agreed as follows:
 - 5 February
 - 6 May
 - 5 August
 - 4 November
- DW suggested that in order to maintain the momentum and enthusiasm generated thus far, a work plan for 2004 should be outlined.
- KS reported that she attended a fringe event at the Labour Party Conference, organised by the IPPR on cleaner transport at which Transport Minister Tony McNulty, the Mayor of London and David Begg (Commission for Integrated Transport) were present. Discussion highlighted the desire by various PTEs and local authorities to gain regulatory control over transport and bus operations like in London.

**The next Bus Working Group meeting is scheduled for
Thursday 04 December 2003, 10.30am-12.30pm
Location tbc**