

Partnership Activities – Quarter 2 2005/6

This note provides an update on LowCVP activities to date during Quarter 2 2005/6 (July – September). The following highlights are identified:

- Development of a LowCVP position paper on sustainability assurance within the RTFO
- Roll-out car labelling scheme
- Jonathan Murray appointed as Deputy Director
- Meeting with Oliver Letwin (Conservative Shadow Environment Spokesman)
- Eleven new members

1. Renewable Transport Fuels Obligation (RTFO) Feasibility Study

LowCVP has been contributing to the Government's feasibility study into a renewable transport fuels obligation (RTFO) by specifically considering the role of carbon certification and sustainability assurance within the proposed scheme. A consortium led by E4Tech was appointed to conduct the feasibility study which was overseen by a LowCVP project steering group including representatives of all major interests. The work was jointly funded by LowCVP and DEFRA.

The study was considered by the Fuels Working Group at its June meeting following which the Secretariat prepared a LowCVP Position Paper on the issues raised. Following several rounds of correspondence the paper was considered by the LowCVP Board in July before being finalised in August. The paper has been sent to Government as part of their considerations concerning the RTFO.

2. Roll-out of car labelling scheme

Commencement of the roll-out period for the car efficiency label was marked by an event in Guildford with the SMMT. Minister for Transport Dr Stephen Ladyman gave the keynote address before visiting a number of showrooms displaying the new label.

Guildford was chosen as the result of an initiative between the local authority, SMMT and LowCVP to encourage dealers throughout the Guildford area to display the colour-coded label for the start of the roll-out period. The event attracted good media interest from, amongst others, local television news, BBC Breakfast news, FT and several radio stations.

The roll-out took place at new car showrooms nationally between July and September this year. A survey of car dealers in early September indicated that several brands had not achieved complete roll-out and these are now urgently rectifying initial difficulties. A further survey will be conducted in early October to evaluate the extent to which the label is displayed in showrooms nationally.

3 Jonathan Murray appointed as Deputy Director

Jonathan Murray has been appointed as Deputy Director and will be starting work on 13 September. Jonathan is a former Director of EST's Transport Energy Programme. Since 2003 he has been an independent consultant providing transport policy and strategy advice to clients including Vauxhall Motors, BAA and LPGA. He has extensive experience of the automotive industry having begun his career at Total Oil.

Jonathan is currently completing a project for DTI to produce a low carbon van specification that can form the basis of a procurement exercise (highlighted under the Innovation Working Group section). In view of the importance of this project to the Partnership, and so as not to delay his appointment, it has been agreed Jonathan will continue to be involved in this work after he commences work for LowCVP. Jonathan's primary responsibility at LowCVP will be to oversee and input to the work programmes of the working groups.

4 Meeting with Oliver Letwin

The Director met with Oliver Letwin – Conservative Shadow Environment Spokesman. The meeting ranged through a number of issues including: sales of low carbon cars in the UK and current incentives, the proposed RTFO and the potential for hydrogen vehicles. The Director was asked to forward a number of Partnership documents to Mr Letwin to inform his considerations on the climate change programme.

5. Membership

Membership of LowCVP continues to grow strongly as the result of the active programme of communications activities being pursued by the Partnership. Ten requests for membership have been approved since July:

- GoinGreen PCWG
- Voith Turbo Ltd
- Biofuels Corporation plc FWG
- Bedford CC PCWG
- Engineered Machine Products IWG
- Robert Gordon University IWG
- Datron Technology IWG
- EMP
- London Hire Ltd
- Eurobiodiesel Ltd FWG
- Cummins Westport BWG

These are in addition to another 9 successful applications in the first quarter. The Partnership now has c175 members. Membership of the following companies has ceased:

- MG Rover Group plc
- Jonathan Murray Consultants (Jonathan is to become the new Deputy Director)

6 Working Group Activities

6.1 Passenger Cars Working Group

The Passenger Cars Working Group met on the 9 September. Activities have primarily focussed upon the car fuel efficiency label roll-out. This includes on-going discussions with the Retail Motor Industry Federation about the possible extension of the label to nearly-new vehicles sold in showrooms and car supermarkets. The meeting on the 9th September also included:

- Update on the car label roll-out (see item 2).
- Presentation by Nick Owen (Ricardo) on research recently completed for DfT on the effect of the EU Voluntary Agreement on vehicle CO₂ emissions.
- Update and discussion of Partnership work programme activities concerning
 - National road pricing – LowCVP will prepare a position paper to help inform considerations regarding how the scheme may affect road transport CO₂ emissions and sales of low carbon cars
 - Local Congestion charging – LowCVP to prepare guidance on best practice concerning exemptions for low carbon vehicles
 - Low carbon car targets – LowCVP to review the appropriateness of the 10% - 100g/km target for low carbon cars within the Powering Future Vehicles
 - Vans – on-going programme looking at encouraging the market for low carbon vans
 - Influencing consumer attitudes –LowCVP will prepare a specification for a consumer study examining the influence of different policy measures on car buying behaviour.

6.2 Bus Working Group

The Bus Working Group will next meets on the 29 September. The Group is presently focussed on developing a road map to map and track progress in achieving the Powering Future Vehicles 2012 target. This includes how to encourage local authorities to take up opportunities to stimulate sales of low carbon buses.

6.3 Innovation Working Group

The Group will next meet on the 16th September. The meeting included:

- A presentation on the DTI EIU Public Procurement Exemplar project to procure low carbon vans
- Discussion of a proposed new project to assess the range of influences and processes that affect innovation of low carbon automotive technologies in the UK; and the extent to which they support or inhibit the development and commercialisation of these technologies
- Agreement to organise a technology “show and tell” event linked to a forthcoming conference of other activity in collaboration with EST and Cenex.

6.4 Fuels Working Group

The Fuels Working Group last met on 9 September. The meeting:

- Received a presentation from EST on the new Infrastructure programme
- Reached agreement on the proposed next steps in developing a biofuels sustainability standard
- Was briefed on a number of development including:
 - ECAs for biofuel plant
 - Hydrogen Coordination Unit
 - Euro WTW study
 - Biodiesel WTW analysis

6.5 Commercial Vehicles Working Group

A sub-group met on the 14 July to consider proposals to model CO₂ emissions from different powertrain options. A revised proposal has been resubmitted for consideration by the CV Group Chair which subject to his considerations will be discussed at a forthcoming Working Group meeting.

7 Communications Activities

7.1 Party Conferences

LowCVP will be participating in a range of activities during the forthcoming party conference season. At the Labour Party Conference in Brighton from 25-29 September, LowCVP is sponsoring a low carbon transport seminar organised with SERA (Labour environment group). On the platform will be Dr Stephen Ladyman, Transport Minister and Graham Smith, LowCVP Chair. The seminar takes place on Tuesday, 27 September from 12.30 to 2pm at the Sussex Arts Centre, 7 Ship Street, Brighton. Attendance is by invitation only.

The Liberal Democrats conference in Blackpool takes place from 17-22 September. On Tuesday, 20th September between 9:30pm and 11.30pm LowCVP is sponsoring a reception, organised in conjunction with the Centre for Reform, in the Neville Room at the Hilton Hotel, North Promenade, Blackpool. The reception will be addressed by Norman Baker (Shadow Environment) and Norman Lamb (Shadow Trade and Industry). The event follows a 'transport question time' debate sponsored by UKPIA, EST and Vauxhall. Partnership members attending the conference are welcome to attend the reception.

This year's Conservative party conference is in Blackpool from 3 - 6 October. LowCVP is sponsoring a reception, to be organised with the Tory Green Initiative, following a 'transport question time' debate at which Oliver Letwin (Shadow Environment) will speak. The debate and reception will be held on Tuesday, 4th October, 8:00- 10:30pm, at the Savoy Hotel, Queens Promenade, Blackpool. Partnership members attending the conference are welcome to attend the reception.

The Secretariat recently wrote to a number of Partnership members asking if they were willing to contribute towards the costs of these activities (it is not possible to use

public funding for party conference activities). The response to the funding request was disappointing and Secretariat would be grateful if any Partnership members willing to make available small sums for non-attributable sponsorship of these activities would inform Catherine Dove (Catherine.dove@lowcvp.org.uk).

7.2 Presentations

The Director has spoken at the following events:

- 12th July – All Party Motor Group – at an event organised by the SMMT. He outlined the progress being made to reduce vehicle CO₂ emissions and Partnership initiatives including car label and support for Cenex.
- 15th July – Road Pricing Conference, Manchester. The presentation illustrated the value of exemptions for low carbon cars in local congestion charging schemes for promoting sales. It also highlighted that the way in which proposed national road user charging schemes was implemented may have a significant impact upon road transport CO₂ emissions and incentives for low carbon vehicles.

The Chairman spoke at the Driven to Extinction Conference - How transport policy can save the World (12 September).

Partnership representatives will be speaking at a number of forthcoming events:

- Climate Change – The business forecast (5-6 October). The conference is being run by DEFRA as part of the UK G8. Attendance is by invitation only with invitations to be issued in due course to UK companies. LowCVP has assisted DEFRA organise two breakout sessions on low carbon transport. LowCVP chairman Graham Smith will be speaking and chairing one of the breakout sessions on low carbon car technologies.
- Environmentally Friendly Vehicles Conference (10-11 November). An international conference being run by the DfT as part of the UK's chairman of the G8. Attendance is by invitation only with most delegates from overseas. LowCVP Chairman Graham Smith is speaking at the conference on the role of partnership in promoting low carbon vehicles. The LowCVP Director will chair one of the breakout sessions. A parallel exhibition of low carbon vehicle technologies is being organised by the SMMT.
- Energy in Transport (23 November). The conference is being run by Sustainable Energy Ireland to consider options for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from road transport in Ireland. The Director will speak at the conference on opportunities to stimulate supply of low carbon vehicles.

7.3 Published articles

Articles concerning Partnership activities or views have been, or are awaiting publication in:

- Local Transport Today – Viewpoint (1 September 2005). Article focussed upon the challenge of changing consumer attitudes in favour of low carbon vehicles. It also highlighted the importance of the proposed Renewable Transport Fuels Obligation to stimulate supply of renewable transport fuels and achieve greenhouse gas savings.
- Transport Times - A day in the life of the LowCVP Director (publication date tbc). Insight into the activities of the Partnership.
- Petroleum Review – Accelerating the shift to low carbon vehicles and fuels (September 2005). Outlined the challenges of moving to low carbon vehicles and fuels and achievements of the Partnership in progressing the agenda.

7.4 Other communications activities

The Secretariat has updated the LowCVP brochure and pull-up stands used at events.

The Secretariat also produced and distributed a parliamentary briefing document about recent activities and achievements.

8 Staffing issues

Jonathon Murray has been appointed as Deputy Director of LowCVP and will commence work on the 12th September (see previous item).

The Secretariat wishes to thank Andrew Robinson and Stephen Hart of EST who since June have acted in the position on a part-time, temporary basis. Both staff are returning to their positions within EST - but it is hoped will remain involved in Partnership activities.

The Secretariat team was joined in July by part-time administrator, Rima Shah. Rima is providing support to Catherine Dove, who is spending more time working with Neil Wallis on communications activities.

9 Future Activities

Future LowCVP activities include:

27 th Sept	Seminar at Labour Party Conference
29 th Sept	Bus Working Group
3 rd Oct	Steering Group Meeting
4 th Oct	Reception at Conservative Party Conference
6 th Oct	Vans sub-group meeting
19 th Oct	Board Meeting
18 th Nov	Passenger Cars Working Group
24 th Nov	Fuels Working Group

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1 st Dec	Bus Working Group
7 th Dec	Steering Group Meeting
13 th Dec	Innovation Working Group.