

LOWCVP BUS WORKING GROUP MEETING
Thursday, 05 June 2003, 10.30-13.00
DTI Conference centre, 1 Victoria Street, London SW1

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

BWG-M-03-06

Present

Steve Bell – EST
Steven Brown – Shell
Bob Bryson – Newbus
Derek Charters – MIRA
Andrew Colski – DfT
Colin Copelin – CPT
Terry Davies – UWE
Chris Dewey – BP
Alastair Dick – Newbus
Chris Dyal – First Group
Jon Hoy - DfT
Brian Macey – Millbrook
Myles Mackie – Coventry City Council
Jenny May – DfT

Jon Maytom – DTI
Kevin Middleton – Travel West Midlands
Konstanze Scharring - LowCVP
Hans Smits – Evobus UK
Nigel Standley – Eneco
Gerry Walker – Cummins Engines
David Wallis - LowCVP
Adrian Wickens – Volvo/Acting Chair

Apologies

Simon Brown - TfL
Bob Davis – SMMT
Alan Martin – Scania
Maurice Perl – Wrightbus
John I Smith – Transbus/Chair

1. Welcome & apologies

Adrian Wickens as Acting Chair welcomed participants to the meeting and passed on the Chair's apologies.

2. Matters arising

The minutes of the last WG meeting were adopted. The Chair presented a chart of the CO₂ performance of trams that he had drawn up. Members could obtain a copy of the chart from him directly.

3. LowCVP update

The Director gave a general update on progress in establishing the Secretariat. A PA/partnership co-ordinator, Catherine Dove, had been recruited and was due to start in late July. The LowCVP offices should be ready by the end of the month. A passenger car working group had been established on 21 May. Chaired by Paul Everitt, SMMT, the group would look into the Passenger Car Target, the European CO₂ agreements and a potential target for ultra low carbon vehicles by 2020. The R&D Working Group had drafted a first outline proposal for the Centre of Excellence for Low Carbon and Fuel Cell Technology, developed a matrix to identify priority areas for demonstration projects and started a benchmarking exercise on UK low carbon R&D performance in an international context.

4. Early low carbon bus questionnaire - feedback

Konstanze Scharring presented the results of the LowCVP questionnaire on early low carbon buses, sent out by SMMT on behalf of LowCVP. The questionnaire had been sent to 11 leading bus manufacturers. The results would be treated confidentially and passed on to the Department for Transport. Only the following limited information was shared with WG members.

At the time of the meeting five replies had been received. Three manufacturers said they intended to produce early low carbon buses by 2004/05, one would possibly do so, the fifth respondent envisaged producing low carbon buses on a production basis by 2012. Four companies said their bus was likely to have an electric or hybrid electric driveline, one did not specify the technology used.

The group emphasised that the important message from the questionnaire was that more than one manufacturer would be in a position to produce a low carbon bus by 2004/05 and that it was most likely that diesel electric hybrid/electric technology would deliver low carbon results in the given timeframe.

It was suggested that a repeat of the questionnaire exercise in around six months time would be useful to capture the moving image and that the responses to questions on envisaged CO₂ reductions should go into the minutes of this meeting (see below).

In discussion some doubts were raised over whether diesel electric hybrids could deliver a 30% reduction in CO₂ emissions. They would deliver something significant but to achieve a 30% reduction on conventional diesel technology a combination of a low carbon fuel and engine/driveline was needed.

[Questionnaire - CO₂ reductions: Estimated overall carbon savings (question 3) were quoted in different ways by the respondents. Setting aside those answers which mentioned bio-diesel or fuel cell, the savings quoted ranged between 5%, 10-15%, 30%, 30-50%, and 50%+. CO₂ savings from fuel cell technology were described as between 100% and 30%, depending on how the hydrogen was produced. Savings from bio-diesel (RME) were given as between 20-30%. LowCVP Secretariat]

5. LowCVP Board – Bus WG Interim Report

The Bus WG Interim Report was thoroughly examined in wording and content by the group. General comments were made. The importance of operational cost should be given more emphasis, comments on the fuel duty rebate needed to be clarified, Local Government's role should be increased in the report and a reference to pure electric drivelines should be added. It was emphasised that the data used in report was illustrative, based on existing testing results and not in compliance with the tests the report advocated. These tests needed to be established first to provide such hard data.

On the question of a suitable low carbon bus testing regime, the EST, Millbrook, MIRA and others were conducting parallel discussions. They raised the issue whether the door should be left open for test cycles other than the London 159 route, potentially with a higher load and/or higher speed. Those involved in the discussions would report back on further progress at the next meeting.

Detailed comments on the Bus report were collected by Alastair Dick who would incorporate them in the final report. As further responses to the questionnaire were expected over the coming week, the report would not include any aggregate information on responses. These would instead be provided orally at Steering Group and Board level, and all returned questionnaires would be handed over to the Department for Transport.

After adoption by the LowCVP Board, the report would be officially communicated by LowCVP Chair, Graham Smith (Toyota), to Transport Minister David Jamieson MP, who chairs the Ministerial Group on Low Carbon.

6. Outstanding issues related to other LowCVP working groups

The interaction between the Bus WG and other LowCVP working group was briefly discussed. Bob Bryson and Chris Dewey had been partly involved in the R&D working group. Bob could provide a link to their work. On supply chains, a DTI sponsored database on current and potential low carbon suppliers and capabilities in the UK would be finalised by MIRA within the next month. It would provide the basis for assembling a LowCVP supply chain working group.

7. Bus & Coach Exhibition (NEC, 23 – 25 Sept 2003)

It was expected that there would be a few early low carbon buses on display at the show. The group expressed its hope that the Secretary of State for Transport or the Transport Minister would be present to open the Bus & Coach show and to comment on or endorse the LowCVP Bus Working Group's recommendations and work. Members would like to use the exhibition to demonstrate their LowCVP involvement and educate operators of the aims of LowCVP. The LowCVP Secretariat was asked to look into options for suitable LowCVP information material or displays at the exhibition.

8. Any other business

The group discussed how they wanted to take their work forward with the finalisation of recommendations. There were outstanding questions on the testing regime, the funding of tests, and on how to engage operators, local authorities or passenger transport executives in the early take up of low carbon buses, should Government respond positively to the Bus report. A full discussion of these issues and the future of the Bus WG was deferred to the next working group meeting.

**The next Bus Working Group meeting is scheduled for
Thursday 07 August 2003, 10.30-13.00
SMMT, Forbes House, Halkin Street, London SW1X 7DS**