

LOWCVP BUS WORKING GROUP MEETING
Thursday, 07 August 2003, 10:30-13:00
SMMT, Forbes House, Halkin Street, London SW1X

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

BWG-M-03-08

Present

Simon Brown - TfL
Steven Brown – Shell
Bob Bryson – Newbus
Bob Davis – SMMT
Chris Dewey – BP
Catherine Dove – LowCVP
Alan Irving - DfT

David Lemon – TfL/London Buses
Myles Mackie – Coventry City Council
David Martin – ClearZones
Jenny May – DfT
Maurice Perl – Wrightbus
Konstanze Scharring – LowCVP
John I Smith – Transbus/Chair
Kerry Vitalis – DTI

Apologies

Steve Bell – EST
Derek P Charters – MIRA
Andrew Colski – DfT
Colin Copelin – CPT
Terry Davies – UWE
Alastair Dick – Newbus
Chris Dyal – First Group
Richard Dyball – Arriva
Brian Macey – Millbrook

Alan Martin - Scania
Rayner Mayer – Sciotech
Kevin Middleton – Travel West Midlands
Hans Smits – Evobus UK Ltd
Nigel Standley – ENECO
Gerry Walker – Cummins Engine
David Wallis - LowCVP
Mike Weston – TfL/London Buses
Adrian Wickens – Volvo Bus Ltd

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed participants to the meeting and asked the new members to introduce themselves: David Lemon and Alan Irving (DfT).

2. Matters arising

The minutes of the last WG meeting were adopted. The Chair raised the question about item 6 of the minutes, the DTI sponsored supply chain database. Kerry Vitalis informed the group that this was being finalised and should be completed by October. It was agreed this should be raised again at the next WG meeting. It was also agreed that Konstanze Scharring circulate an e-version of the Bus WG report in its final state to all members.

3. LowCVP update

Konstanze Scharring referred the WG to the LowCVP Progress note (**BWG-P-006**) which had been circulated. Catherine Dove was introduced to the meeting as the new

Secretariat Team Coordinator/PA. There remained one additional hire to complete the Secretariat Team. 17 Queen Anne's Gate would be the new premises. Members were asked to continue to volunteer meeting rooms for WG sessions as part of their in-kind contribution, as the new office space could not accommodate large meetings.

Konstanze reported that the LowCVP Board met on 18 June 2003. The Board was very positive about the working emanating from the Bus WG and adopted the Bus Report which was subsequently presented by Board representatives to the Chair of the Ministerial Group on Low Carbon, Minister David Jamieson, during a meeting of the Group. Once the LowCVP website was migrated to the EST, Board and WG minutes and any reports would become available for download from the site.

4. Bus Working Group Report

The Chair congratulated the WG on the rapidity of work undertaken thus far as well as the success of the report. Alan Irving of the DfT then addressed the WG regarding the Minister's feedback and the next steps. The Minister was delighted with the Report and considered it to be the first major success of the Partnership. In order to move matters forward the Call for Proposals: Powershift Programme Low Carbon Bus Project needed to be finalised by early September, as DfT was keen to make an announcement at the Bus and Coach show in late September. A draft had already been circulated (**BWG-P-007**) to the WG. Alan Irving was requesting urgent comments by Thursday, 14th August from WG members. He would call on a sub-section of the WG for more detailed adjustments once this first re-draft was complete. He could be reached at alan.irving@dft.gsi.gov.uk.

Maurice Perl raised a concern regarding the practice of isolating the move to low carbon from that to improved air quality. The current emphasis seemed to be on CO₂ despite the fact that standards had yet to be set and the two were intertwined. The group discussed the question and Alan Irving assured the Group that the Minister was aware of the diversity of issues involved, as suggested in his letter to Graham Smith. He also indicated that DfT would ensure EST was clear on the criteria for arriving at a balance between the CO₂ and air quality.

5. Bus and Coach Exhibition (NEC, 23 – 25 September 2003)

Konstanze Scharring informed about current plans to publicise the LowCVP work in the bus field. She would liaise with the EST about use of their stand at the show for distributing LowCVP information. New LowCVP communication materials were to be prepared in time for the show. Tony McNulty MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, would be attending the show and WG members were requested to let KS know which stands might be exhibiting low carbon buses so that an appropriate tour could be arranged for the Minister. Maurice Perl was unsure if a Wrightbus hybrid bus would be present but would check on this and the possibility of using a demo for a short ride for exhibit attendees, thus making the benefits much more apparent. The audience at the show would be predominantly professionals and enthusiasts, including local authorities and the trade press.

Konstanze agreed to follow-up with the CPT as show organisers on their plans for the Ministerial visit. KS would contact members to ask for input and pictures that could be used in the new LowCVP materials. Chair to provide contacts to trade press.

6. Next Steps for the Bus Working Group

The Chair reviewed with the Working Group's Terms of Reference (**BWG Remit, Bullet points**):

1. *Identifying and recommending ways of removing barriers to the introduction of low carbon buses in UK* - This was under way. The next step was to get the buses into service in order to conduct an evaluation.
2. *Creating wider awareness of the opportunities for the UK presented by low-carbon buses* - It was important to get a demo ready for the Bus and Coach show in order to raise the awareness of the public and the press attending the Show. Alan Irving added that the Minister's announcement would assist greatly in heightening the profile. Myles Mackie recommended that local authorities should also be made aware of the low carbon alternative, as currently they were more concerned with the issue of air quality. To address this, Konstanze Scharring and David Wallis would meet Councillor Tony Brown, a LowCVP Board member, in early September. Maurice Perl raised the question of how the performance and balance between CO₂ and air quality could be measured. The Group discussed this point and agreed with a suggestion by the Chair that the Group could make recommendations on how this might be done.
3. *Providing guidance on achieving the Government's target of 600 or more new buses to be low carbon by 2012, defined as 30% below current average carbon emissions.* – The Group agreed that in producing the Bus Report significant steps had been made in advising Government on meeting its low carbon target.
4. *Advising on policy, fiscal and regulatory instruments that will help the UK to achieve and move beyond the 2012 target, by taking into account wider European and global developments .* - The WG agreed with the Chair's suggestion that the group would look ahead and identify the next steps beyond 2012. This should be priority for 2004 and might need a change in the constitution of the WG.
5. *Identifying low carbon bus demonstration and pilot projects and creating opportunities for stakeholders to participate in such projects* - The group recommended this be a point for immediate focus. Konstanze Scharring pointed out that there were links with the R&D working group. A potential demonstration project envisaged by the R&D group was a small buses based on a small commercial vehicle.
6. *Providing feedback on the progress and effectiveness of Government R&D programmes relating to low carbon vehicles, with particular reference to buses* - The WG is on the cusp of providing this feedback to Government.

The Chair stated that overall the Group was on track. For 2004 the focus should be placed on objectives not yet fully completed as well as looking beyond 2012. This was unanimously agreed by the WG.

7. Any other business

- John I Smith, not in his capacity as the Chair, raised the issue of the bus operators' grant and the higher cost of alternative fuels for bus operators. He saw the current design of the grant as a distinct barrier to the move to low carbon and suggested a different form of government subsidy might be needed to address this. He asked whether the pilot routes chosen under the call for proposals for low carbon buses could also work under a different subsidy regime, based on distance rather than fuel. The Group agreed to work on a proposal on the fuel subsidy to the relevant minister at the DfT. The matter should be raised as an agenda item at the next meeting.
- David Martin informed the WG that ClearZones were working with the EST on a guide for local authorities on clean buses to be ready for the Bus and Coach Exhibition. He would circulate copies of the final guide proposal to the WG via the Secretariat in late September.
- David Lemon raised the issue that Iveco indicated that in future they would not guarantee the use of 100% RME in their vehicles but only in 5% blends
- Konstanze Scharring mentioned the EU's Civitas II programme (**BWG-P-008**) which focused on clean transport and local communities. Konstanze would liaise with the Local Government International Bureau to see whether any local authorities were interested. She informed the group that Rayner Mayer would also like to give a presentation on a recent study on electric vehicles, including buses, at the next WG meeting.
- As Bob Davis was unable to attend the next WG it was agreed that the SMMT fuels manager would participate in his place.
- Alan Irving suggested a change in the title of the Bus Working Group's "Interim" Report. As the group might produce other reports in the future, it was agreed that the report would be numbered as 'Report No. 1'. It would be labelled as such on the Low CVP website.
- European contacts with the UITP would be sought to raise awareness of the LowCVP work and gain information on UITP's work on the Commission's High Level Group on Hydrogen.
- Bob Davis asked the Group for clarification on the matter of whether fair and equal access was available to all manufacturers to the low carbon bus grant that Government was to make available. Following some discussion and input on the DfT's position from Alan Irving, the WG agreed that market forces would take care of the issue. Government would take a decision following a competitive process.

**The next Bus Working Group meeting is scheduled for
Thursday 02 October 2003, 14.30-16.30
TfL/London Buses, 172 Buckingham Palace Road
(adjacent to Victoria Coach Station)**