

Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership

Bus Working Group Meeting

Wednesday, 23 January 2008, 10.00 to 13.00

Department for Transport, Great Minster House, Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DR

BWG-A-08-01

MINUTES

Attending

Bob Bryson (chair) – ADL
Derek Charters – MIRA
Colin Copelin – CPT
Robin Haycock – Arup
Andrew Everett – TSB
Jonathan Murray – LowCVP
Stephen Powton – DfT
Phil Margrave – Go Ahead
Adrian Wickens – Volvo Bus
Frank Messenger – Arriva London
Andy Morris – London United
Alan Ponsford – Capoco Design
Greg Young – Cummins Westport
Malcolm Noyle – STS
Allan Edmondson – ODA

David Lemon – STS
Paul O’Sullivan – DfT

Apologies

Greg Archer - LowCVP
Kevin Middleton – TWM
Myles Mackie – Coventry City
James Rossen – Traction Technology
Chris Walsh – Cenex
Maurice Perl – Wright Bus
David Martin – Ecovector
Nigel Standley – Green Urban
Mike Winter – TfL
Lucy Ahad – DfT
Rayner Mayer – Reading University

1. Welcome & apologies

The Chair welcomed the Bus Working Group, thanked the DfT for hosting the meeting and a apologies were noted for the record.

1.1 Election of Chair

Bob Bryson, the current chair of the Bus Working Group, was re-elected with unanimous support.

2. Minutes and Matters arising

The Minutes (BWG-M-07-11) were accepted as a true record of the previous meeting and it was noted that there were no outstanding actions.

2.1 Euro Bus Expo 2008

Jonathan Murray reported that following the previous meeting he had discussed the involvement of the Partnership, and specifically the BWG, in the Bus Expo 2008 with Mark Griffiths. It was proposed that the BWG would not hold a meeting at the Bus Expo 2008 however, the Partnership would assist in the delivery of a seminar on sustainability. The seminar would be held on Wednesday 5th November between 2pm and 4:30pm. It was proposed that the Partnership take responsibility for developing the agenda, proposing a Chair person and speakers. The event organisers would run the event and provide the room and facilities.

Action: Jonathan Murray and Bob Bryson to draft agenda and circulate for comments.

Bus Expo 2008 also offered a stand space for the Partnership should this be required. LowCVP will need to decide whether to take this up by the next BWG meeting.

3. Secretariat Update

Jonathan Murray provided the group with an update of the Partnership's activities during the previous three months, this is detailed in BWG-P-08-01. Highlights include the following;

- Greg Archer, the Director of the LowCVP was appointed to the Board of the Renewable Fuels Agency which would ensure the Partnership had an on-going input to the RTFO. This post is part-time.
- The work of the Partnership on the RTFO Carbon & Sustainability Reporting Guidance had been completed and submitted to the Government.
- The LowCVP had co-operated with Waterfront to deliver a successful low carbon car conference in the autumn to which Prof Julia King, Michael Roberts of the CBI.
- The Partnership had provided evidence both written and verbal to EAC biofuels sustainability and labelling inquiries.
- The Partnership played an important role in providing guidance on the development of Low Carbon Public Procurement Programme.

CPT reported problems experienced in cold weather by bus operators using B5 which consisted of biofuel with more than 15% palm oil content. The fuel was reported to leave waxy deposits in the fuel filters, requiring them to be replaced. It was suggested that a fuel specification be developed which limited the level of palm oil in biofuel.

Action: Jonathan Murray to report problem to FWG.

3.1 Membership fees update

Jonathan Murray provided an update on membership fees detailed in paper BWG-P-08-07. It was reported that at the last Board meeting the Secretariat had been asked to conduct a second survey of members to ascertain whether a lower level of fees would secure a greater take up of members. This survey had now been completed although the results were not available yet. These would be presented to the Board at the next meeting on the 7 February.

It was asked whether trade associations would be charged a membership fee separately from their members. JM reported that it was intended that trade associations would be charged a separate fee but that there was still some debate in relation to how fees would be assigned to trade associations and their members and that this was a area to be discussed by the Board.

4. BSOG Review – discussion document

Paul O'Sullivan, from DfT, gave the group an update on DfT's thinking in relation to their review of the bus subsidy. He also provided a presentation which is available on the LowCVP website as paper BWG-P-08-02.

PO had hoped to present a discussion paper setting out various changes being considered but it had now been agreed that a full public consultation would be undertaken. The consultation would be published by the end of February 2008. DfT would expect to make a decision on how to proceed by early summer.

Bus subsidy has grown dramatically over the last decade, due partly to fuel duty and partly due to fuel consumption. A number of revisions are being considered which would potentially see an adaptation specifically for low carbon buses this year, a number of specific adaptations within 12 months and a full reform of BSOG by 2011.

DfT requested LowCVP respond to the consultation and in particular provided answers and evidence in relation to the following issues:

1. Is the definition of a low carbon bus, i.e. 30% WTW below Euro 3, still relevant?
2. If low carbon buses got a distance based subsidy, what level should it be?

Action: BWG to be formed to develop response to consultation.

5. Fuel economy delivered by Infinitely Variable Transmissions

Ian MacPherson provided an overview of flywheel and mechanical energy storage devices and their application to buses. IM is contributing to the revision of the Technology Road Map being conducted by Foresight Vehicle and co-ordinating evidence from a number of other technology specialists. If there is interest from the BWG he would be happy to provide further presentations at future meetings.

Action: BWG to consider if future presentations would be useful.

6. Forward commitment feasibility study update

Jonathan Murray provided an update of progress with the Low Carbon Bus Procurement Feasibility Study, details of which are provided in paper BWG-P-08-04, which looks at the feasibility of using a forward commitment strategy for procuring low carbon buses, in particularly outside London. The project will be completed in March, having suffered a short delay due to problems in securing a venue for a workshop in December which was then postponed till January. Thanks were expressed to TfL and Mersey Travel who had greatly assisted in the project, and to those who had attended the workshop on the 18 January.

6.1 Primary research and preliminary conclusions

David Lemon & Malcolm Noyle of STS, presented the outcome of the workshop and the preliminary conclusions drawn to date, these are detailed in paper BWG-P-08-05 which is available from the LowCVP website.

DL outlined progress in developing a low carbon bus specification. The key issue is that there appear to be two clusters of technologies capable of delivering a 20% or a 40% reduction in WTW CO₂ emissions. Consequently a two tiered approach was being considered. It is hoped to stay as close as possible to the work being conducted by TfL, however TfL have adopted a tailpipe baseline for CO₂ using Euro 4, whereas the currently definition of a low carbon bus is based upon Euro 3 well-to-wheel CO₂ for which there is the largest data set available.

Issues still being considered include:

- Drive cycle – MLTB considered most appropriate for UK, but not widely recognised outside UK. Engine out test cycles not representative of real world.
- In service fuel consumption will need to form part of the requirements.
- How to incorporate air quality and potential need to go beyond Euro 4.
- Include an option for zero emission mode.
- Noise, interior and exterior, to be included using TfL approach.
- Decision to keep WTW basis for CO₂ in order to be technology neutral.

MN outlined the policy and contractual issues raised at the workshop and in discussions with stakeholders. The key points and issues include:

- There is considerable interest amongst PTEs and PTEG in the concept and in low carbon bus procurement generally.
- With regard to existing powers there is a number of interpretations as to the extent of the powers local authorities and PTEs have, which needs to be explored further.
- Energy efficiency and low carbon could be separate policy issues from PTE and local authority point of view.
- Further investigation into level of interest in procurement of low carbon buses is needed nationally.
- Cost effectiveness from a policy point of view should be conducted based upon life cycle analysis BS1540 and Defra values, used by all Govt.

Action: The final report will be issued before next BWG, so a sub-group would be asked to review the report.

7. Work programme review

Chair and Jonathan Murray outlined a number of work programme options for consideration by the Group. These are set out in detail in paper BWG-P-08-06. Five work items were proposed which take forward the work on procuring low carbon buses which were;

1. Survey of interest in procurement of low carbon buses
2. Cost effectiveness of low carbon buses
3. CO2 per passenger/km of different modes of passenger transport
4. Participation in COMPRO project
5. Follow-up to the Bus Forward Commitment study

In addition the DfT had made the group aware that they intended to issue a consultation on the bus subsidy which the group confirmed it would respond to.

It was concluded that items 2 & 3 could be incorporated into a single task and a sub group formed to agree data and methodology. It was also agreed that item 1 would be important in arguing a case for inclusion of the low carbon buses in the Low Carbon Vehicle Procurement Programme. Item 4 was also agreed as this would help promote a common low carbon bus specification in Europe and requires little resource.

Action: Secretariat and Chair to develop work programme and establish sub groups to take forward.

8. AOB

8.1 Proposed European Directive

DfT informed the meeting that the EC had published a proposal for a directive on the promotion of clean and energy efficient road transport vehicles. The DfT would present its position for comment to the Group at its next meeting.