

EAST MIDLANDS REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

Regional Freight Group

Tuesday 07 March 2006, PERA Offices, Melton Mowbray

Minutes

1. Attendance/Apologies

Name	Organisation	Present	Apologies
Liz Aspray	<i>emda</i>	✓	
Jim Bamford	Notts CC	✓	
Ian Barnes	Boots	✓	
Liam Boyle	RHA	✓	
Ian Brooker	Peter Brett Associates		✓
Rueben Brown	Derbyshire CC	✓	
Paul Cullen	Food and Drink Forum	✓	
Barry Davies	East Midlands Regional Assembly	✓	
Keith Day	Northants CC		✓
Alan Johnston	NEMA	✓	
Mike Freeston	Port of Boston		✓
Stephen Kelly	FTA	✓	
Steve Harley	<i>emda</i>		✓
Neil Harvey	British Waterways	✓	
Colleen Hempson	NEMA		✓
David Hern	East Midlands Regional Assembly	✓	
Mike Hewitt	GOEM	✓	
Richard Iggulden	Network Rail	✓	
Bettina Lange	EMTAR	✓	
Cath Lee	FSB	✓	
Allen Marsden	EWS		✓
Don Morgan	Gazeley UK Limited	✓	
Jim Nelson	Northants CC	✓	
Roy Parker	British Waterways		✓
Martin Parkes	CILT		✓
Yvonne Peach	Atkins Consulting	✓	
Mike Salmon	RHA		✓
Garry Scott	Leicester City Council	✓	
Stuart Sinclair	Robin Hood Airport	✓	
Roger Summerton	Institute of Directors		✓
Mike Sumner	Highways Agency	✓	
Keith Taylor	Food and Drink Forum		✓
John White	Institute of Directors	✓	

Item Subject

2. Welcome

Barry Davies welcomed everyone to the inaugural Regional Freight Group (RFG) being held in the PERA offices in Melton Mowbray. Roundtable introductions were then made and apologies noted.

3. Introduction and Background to the Regional Freight Strategy (RFS)

Barry Davies introduced the group to the background of the RFS and initially outlined the regional planning background. The 2002 'State of Freight' report fed into the draft Regional Planning Guidance, and the subsequent Panel Report

highlighted the need for a RFS as an important issue.

The draft RFS was launched in February 2005 and underwent extensive public consultation before the final Strategy was published in July 2005. Barry stressed that the RFS is a key 'daughter document' to the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) and the new Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) which has replaced RPG8.

Barry also noted that the RFS has provided an important steer to the production of the second round of Local Transport Plans (LTP2's) as well as informing schemes and strategies of national transport agencies such as the Highways Agency (HA), Network Rail (NR), and British Waterways (BW). It also provides guidance to the Airport Master Plan process, developers and transport operators.

4. Draft Terms of Reference for RFG

Barry briefly outlined the draft Terms of Reference (ToR) for the RFG, running through the broad principles and key details and Barry asked if any comments could be made as soon as possible so that a final version could be produced.

Bettina Lange asked about research and Barry confirmed that £20k had been allocated within the EMRA budget for freight and agreed this should be reflected in the ToR. Don Morgan queried in the light of the ongoing RSS review the likely review date for the RTS and Barry commented that although Transport did not form a key element of the present partial review of the RSS that a Transport Seminar was being held on May 16th to look at relevant issues. Barry reiterated that the RFS was a key daughter document to the RTS.

A number of comments and suggestions were made regarding the core membership and these were acknowledged by Barry, although it was also agreed that some potential members could form part of a Wider Reference Group. Barry noted that whilst EMRA was happy to initially chair the Group and provide the Secretariat any offers to help share the responsibility would be welcomed. Finally, Barry highlighted the proposal for a Regional Freight Officer within the RFS and asked for any thoughts or comments on this suggestion.

- **RFG members to comment on draft ToR asap and feed back to EMRA**
- **BD to produce final version of the ToR for the next RFG meeting**

5. The Regional Freight Strategy

Barry Davies then gave a brief synopsis of the final Regional Freight Strategy document itself and reiterated that EMRA still had copies that were available for distribution to members of the RFG. In particular Barry highlighted the importance of the various Key Policy sections and the detailed lists of Action Plans contained within each of the eight Key Policies.

- **RFG members to contact EMRA for additional copies of the RFS**

6. Progress on Implementation of the RFS Action Plans

Barry Davies then moved on to a brief presentation which highlighted progress made on the RFS Action Plans since the publication of the document in July 2005,

including of course establishment of the RFG itself which was an important element of Key Policy 1.

With regard to Key Policy 2, 'Freight and the Environment', there were queries regarding the recently introduced 'national productivity' element to the Transport Innovation Fund (TIF), with the response being lead by *emda*. It was noted this could offer a way to deliver particular schemes but it also seemed to be ignoring the recently completed Regional Funding Allocation (RFA) work which had included a comprehensive assessment and recommendations on regional transport priorities. Barry broadly agreed with these concerns but was also able to confirm that not only were *emda* using the same consultants as for the RFA work but that EMRA was being consulted as part of the response process.

On Key Policy 3, 'Roadfreight: Improving Distribution Efficiency' Barry highlighted linkages to the ongoing RSS Review as well as input into consultation exercises on Highways Agency schemes. Barry also noted the recently launched consultation process on the draft Master Plan for Nottingham East Midlands Airport (NEMA).

On Key Policy 4, 'Opportunities for Water-Borne Freight', Barry again noted the linkages in planning terms to the RSS Review as well as ongoing work by Nottinghamshire County Council to develop an inland port on the River Trent. Finally, whilst no formal date had been confirmed an announcement on the National Ports Policy Review was expected shortly.

The RSS Review also provided linkages with Key Policy 5 on modal shift to RailFreight whilst work was still ongoing on investigating the possible intermodal freight terminal at Toton. EMRA was also working with Network Rail on possible freight gauge enhancements into the 3 Cities area as well as engaging with High Speed Rail lobby groups.

The NEMA Master Plan work was the main feature of the progress Key Policy 6, on Air Freight issues, with Master Plans for both Birmingham and Robin Hood Airports also of interest to the region. NEMA was also at the heart of the developing 3 Cities land use and transportation model, (PTOLEMY), whilst *emda* had recently completed a study looking at the value of the Express Freight sector.

On Key Policy 7 looking at Pipelines, Barry confirmed EMRA had spoken representatives of the industry and they had been invited to take part in the RFG and that again Pipeline issues would feed into the RSS Review.

Barry then ran through Key Policy 8, looking at linkages to other key policy areas, such as the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) and the Regional Waste Strategy. Don Morgan raised concerns that the RSS Review would not produce a Regional Plan document that was not detailed enough and that it could fail to offer planning authorities sufficient guidance for their Local Development Frameworks (LDF's) in the absence of the County Structure Plans. This point was echoed by some other group members and Don reiterated the need to make these comments to both the ongoing RSS and RES reviews.

Finally, Jim Bamford noted Nottinghamshire were willing to participate in a local Freight Quality Partnership if operators were interested, but equally were happy to liaise via the regional forum if this was felt more appropriate.

- **EMRA to report to next RFG with updated Progress on Action Plans and suggested areas of focus for future RFG activity**

7. Presentation by Don Morgan, Planning and Development Director, Gazeley UK Ltd (part of Wal*Mart) - Developments in sustainability in the logistics sector

Don Morgan then made a detailed and instructive presentation on developments in the logistics sector before taking questions. In his presentation Don highlighted the key facts and drivers for change within the industry and noted the importance of the East Midlands to the Logistics sector. Unit sizes have continued to increase whilst overall costs have continued to fall.

Don then went on highlight some of the growing environmental concerns that are reflected within the sector, in particular in terms of CO2 emissions, energy and water usage, as well as through utilising recyclable materials in site construction. Don finished by reiterating the need for regional planning to recognise the significance of the sector, provide clear land use guidance for local planning authorities and infrastructure support.

Barry Davies noted this last point and accepted the need for greater reflection of the logistics sector with regional planning. Bettina Lange commended some of the highlighted on-site environmental initiatives but also commented that it would be useful to see more emphasis on sustainable distribution as well. Don noted in response that site construction and building maintenance actually carried a greater ecological footprint than the movement of goods itself, however there were possibilities through more efficient vehicles and backloading to reduce the transport impact as well. Don undertook to supply some information on this.

Jim Bamford noted the trend to greater depot size gave railfreight a better chance to compete, which highlighted the need for greater reference to rail infrastructure and confirmed that rail access always needed to be retained as an option. Don agreed in part that parts of the supply chain were well suited to rail, but reiterated that it was very likely some element of the journey would still need to be by road. Richard Iggluden echoed this citing both congestion and gauge clearances as issues of concern on the rail network, but also noting that this could be an issue for the productivity TIF to address. A key trend was the growing trade with the Far East, directly through the East Coast ports or Southampton, or via Rotterdam/Antwerp.

8. Round Robin – Freight Developments in the Region

Bettina Lange queried whether the Freight on Rail group had been informed of the RFG session. Barry confirmed they had been invited, but at this stage expressed a preference to maintain separate contact.

9. Next Steps for the Regional Freight Group

Barry Davies briefly summarised the session and emphasised that all feedback, comments as well as suggestions for future areas of development and involvement were welcome. The next steps were to identify priorities for action and to formalise the Group's structure and make-up. Finally, Barry asked if any ideas for future presentations highlighting areas of interest could be sent to EMRA.

John White suggested it would be useful for a presentation on the work of the RFG to be given to the Business community, and he would investigate this further.

- **RFG members to contact EMRA with any suggestion for future presentations or areas of interest**

10. AOB

Jim Nelson suggested a regular newsletter could be useful in providing an update on the work of the RFG and progress on implementing the RFS. This would be particularly useful for informing the Wider Reference Group and could also be used for disseminating best practice. John White echoed this suggestion and noted a version targeted at the business community could be very useful, and would assist in the engagement process required to make implementing the RFS a success.

11. Dates of Future RFG meetings

10am, Wednesday 7th June 2006, Conference Room, EMRA Offices, Melton Mowbray.