

## HEAVY TALK

Issue 10 September 2007

## COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

The HTA Committee elections took place at the AGM on 17th May. Several new Committee Members have been elected. Dick Walmsley, who was to take over from Tony Lovell as Treasurer, is sadly unable to take up the position. If anyone wishes to apply for the position, please let the HTA Secretariat know.

The HTA would like to thank Tony Lovell very much for his years of dedicated and hard work as Treasurer. Tony has agreed to continue to act on the Committee.

## Association Officials:

President:	The Earl Attlee	
Chairman:	David Collett	
Vice Chairman:	Rolf van Apeldoorn	
Secretary:	John Dyne	
Treasurer:	to be appointed	

## Committee Members:

Alan Lewis	Tim Wayne	David Purslow
Hugh Wilson	Tony Lovell	Sadie Emery
John Rodell	Eric Crosby	Tim West

## ABNORMAL TRANSPORT GUIDELINES

The European Best Practice Guidelines for Abnormal Road Transport are now available in English and French at the following link:

[http://ec.europa.eu/transport/roadsafety/vehicles/best\\_practice\\_guidelines\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/roadsafety/vehicles/best_practice_guidelines_en.htm)



## HIGHWAYS AGENCY SELF-ESCORTING MEETING, BIRMINGHAM ON 14TH JUNE 2007

As a measure to increase safety during operations, the HA agreed to look into amending the Code of Practice (COP) to allow for signage, both front and rear, to indicate the type of load being carried i.e. 'WIDE LOAD' or 'LONG LOAD'.

The HA is also looking into the possibility of permitting a strip type light, as currently used in Europe, which illuminates an arrow indicating oncoming traffic should keep to the left or right (as the case may be).

HA has made clear that to introduce stop and direct powers requires primary legislation and due to the cost, lack of parliamentary time and general lack of support from ACPO this was very unlikely to happen.

It was agreed, in principle, that the HTA and RHA would produce a training manual for escorters of abnormal loads that would be accredited by the HA.

It was considered that the Courts would accept compliance with the manual as evidence that the operation was being carried out in accordance with best industry practice.

Non-compliance with the COP and lack of accredited training would similarly put the 'cowboy' element at a distinct disadvantage in the eyes of the court.

Scottish police do not recognise the escorter as being an attendant and it was noted that a prosecution is currently in progress. The HA is to liaise with its counterparts on the matter as it would be a major set back for the escorting of abnormal loads if another attendant was needed to attend STGO loads alongside the escort vehicle driver.

*Tony Buckland, HTA Committee*

## REPORT ON HIGHWAYS AGENCY/INDUSTRY LIAISON MEETING, BIRMINGHAM, 21ST JUNE 2007

The meeting was attended by HA representatives Craig Bedson (Chairman), Andy Redford, Chris Cottrell, Fiona Kelly and Sara Wall. Also present were Paul Jonks & Alan Buckley (National Traffic Control Centre), Alec Murray, Steve O'Connor (Warwickshire CC), Jim Parkinson (RHA), Stephen Kelly (FTA) and Colin Wood (CPA), Johnny Maran (Scottish Highways), Hugh Wilson (HTA) and Chief Inspector Donald MacMillan of Strathclyde Police (ACPO).

Issues discussed were:

### Water Preferred Policy:

Andy Redford (AR) stated that only 1 or 2 applications a year are now required to fill in a pro-forma. He stated that he and other HA staff would assist with route planning. The HA have finally produced draft guidelines (after 3.5 years), which are available as a booklet or on the HA website. The consultation period is until 28th August and after comments have been made there will be a further period to assess these and respond before finalising.

### Strategic Road/Water Site:

There are 9 sites under review: Nottingham, Rotherham, Ryall, Selby, York, Stourton, Salford, West London and Sharpness. A site towards Liverpool is also possible. Hugh Wilson (HCW) enquired whether the government had the capital to develop these sites. AR replied that the government had invested heavily with the financing of two vessels.

HCW was minded to comment that with no money to invest in docking facilities, having the vessels was "akin to buying a ferry to cross a river with no place for it to land at either side." HCW also pointed out that in the case of the Manchester ship canal the opening bridges were all over 100 years old and deteriorating, so had reliability of operations been considered by the HA. No answer was given.

### ALL Process Review:

Deloitte's are still advising the HA about streamlining applications and again the subject of putting VR1's down the same path as Special Orders come up. HCW and others again stated that it was vital to continue processing VR1's with the quicker speed and this should take precedent over internal procedure. It was agreed that no rash decision would be made.

### Congestion Research:

Craig Bedson reported that the HA have now had a base year (2004/5) to measure congestion on the HA network, and the HA was duty bound to take reasonable action to contain congestion for 2006/7 and subsequent years. He said they were looking at abloads to decide whether larger, more awkward loads should travel at night only. Alec Murray quickly pointed out that because of HA roadworks taking place at night and some motorways being reduced from 3 lanes to 1, it was very difficult to route abloads at night.

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## DATES TO REMEMBER: HTA GENERAL MEETINGS 2007

### Thursday 20th September 2007, 6 pm.

Pembroke Arms Hotel, Wilton

Fastrax, Wiltshire is kindly hosting the meeting and members will have the opportunity of viewing and driving an HET vehicle at Bulford Barracks from 2.30 pm.

### Thursday 6th December at 6 pm.

Cedars Hotel, Stowmarket, Suffolk



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HCW added that with all the other constraints on the time of loading and unloading abloads, the hire of cranes and the constraints on drivers hours, he was afraid that restricting abloads to night moves only could be the next big disaster to hit the industry. Craig Bedson acknowledged the point, but it was felt that he would probably introduce night moves if he thought it was necessary anyway.

#### **Weigh Testing:**

This was said to be well underway and would be rolled out when ready. No further comments were made.

#### **Speed Limits over 150 tonnes:**

AR said this was being closely looked at with TRL and that some increase was fairly imminent i.e. in line with STGO to 20 mph and possibly 25 mph. However, they worried that if they made a hasty decision bridge engineers would reduce available weight limits because of increased dynamic forces, and the last thing the industry wanted for was existing routes to be closed off.

#### **High and Heavy Load Route:**

Large sections of the old 1974 routes had now been re-instated and the HA welcomed any new routes which could be added.

**ESDAL:** (see ESDAL news release)

#### **Strategic Routes:**

HCW, quoting routes to Felixstowe and Harwich as an example, asked how progress was on identifying and keeping these open. He received no straight answer, but AR did volunteer that there are now plans (no date set as yet) for the railway bridge at Huntingdon to be by-passed by the A14 Fen Ditton improvement.

*Hugh Wilson, HTA Committee*



*Moving house in New Zealand! Isu Hyd swanneck lifting house - photo courtesy of Mike Ponsonby*

## **PROGRESS CONTINUES TOWARDS THE FIRST ONLINE NOTIFICATIONS FOR ABNORMAL LOADS**

Work to launch the second phase of a secure, free-to-use web portal that will streamline the planning, management and notification of Abnormal Indivisible Load (AIL) movements by road, is progressing well.

Phase Two takes a huge leap forward with facilities for hauliers to make Special Order applications for those loads which are very large, heavy and/or wide, online. In conjunction with the necessary updates to the Hauliers, Police and Structure Owners Portals, Phase Two development also involves the creation of a brand new and unique SORT (Special Order Routing Tool) desktop facility for the Highways Agency's Abnormal Load Team to aid the efficient processing of Special Order applications.

Both the Highways Agency and Serco, who designed and operate the system, have been determined that the delivery of this extremely complex phase of ESDAL should meet with the highest possible quality standards and should incorporate extensive Stakeholder involvement. These factors have had some impact on the original expected delivery date but a huge amount of work and effort is being put into ensuring ESDAL is as robust and user-friendly as possible. Feedback from hauliers who have seen demonstrations of the Phase Two system have been very positive and progress toward the launch of Phase Two is moving forward with Pilot Trials scheduled to start in September 2007.

Eventually, through the delivery of Phases Three and Four, ESDAL will allow hauliers moving all AILs, not just Special Orders, to use a 'virtual postal service' when making notifications resulting in a more efficient, less complex system for all parties involved.

ESDAL uses the latest information security methods to ensure that any commercially sensitive information stays private. To make this happen, Hauliers who wish to start using ESDAL, need to register their details online by visiting the website at <http://www.highways.gov.uk/esdal> or by e-mailing [register@esdal.com](mailto:register@esdal.com). All a Haulier needs to use ESDAL is a PC with internet connection, there's no need for specialist software.

Any general enquires can be made to Fiona Steele, ESDAL Stakeholder Manager, 07718194115 or to the ESDAL helpdesk on 01642 636789.

## WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

The HTA has been recently joined by:  
**FULLERS HEAVY HAULAGE, KING'S LYNN**  
(contact: Mark Fuller)

**MDF (GREAT YARMOUTH) LIMITED T/A MDF TRANSPORT,  
GREAT YARMOUTH**  
(contact: David Farrow)

## WATER PREFERRED POLICY

The HTA response to the questionnaire 'Consultation on the clarification of the Water Preferred Policy Guidelines for the movement of AILs' can be downloaded from the HTA website ([www.info@hta.uk.net](mailto:www.info@hta.uk.net))



## ADVERTISEMENTS

If anyone wishes to advertise in an issue of Heavy Talk, please contact Katharine Narici on 01829 771774 or by e-mail ([info@hta.uk.net](mailto:info@hta.uk.net)), for details

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