Scottish Freight and Logistics Advisory Group, Freight Scotland Website Sub-Group Meeting Held on 18 June 2012, 10:30am, IBI Group Offices

Present: Michael Cairns (Tactran)
                     Peter Cullen (Transport Scotland)
                     Caz Thomson (IBI Group)
                     Graham Nichols (IBI Group)
                     Phil Flanders (Road Haulage Association)
                     Dan Cathcart (Road Haulage Association)
                     Robert Boyter (Transport Scotland)

The purpose of the meeting was to review what is needed from the Freight Scotland website and to consider if it can be integrated into the Traffic Scotland website.

Peter Cullen

- Opened the meeting by giving a background on the Freight Scotland website. Pam Stott had enquired whether it could be integrated into Traffic Scotland website.

- Asked IBI the web designers to do a cost benefits analysis and outline the practical implications of having all the Freight Scotland content Traffic Scotland including the avoidance of duplication of effort and cost from the existence of two websites with overlapping content.

- PC indicated that investment in the Freight Scotland Website has not kept pace with Traffic Scotland due largely to budget pressures and the need to focus on key priorities. Both in terms of the design and the technology the Freight Scotland website had fallen behind Traffic Scotland and needed substantial investment to bring it up to the same standard.

- The current Freight Scotland website features, freight best practice, specialised data layers such as lorry parking, restriction on bridge heights and weights etc. and allows the freight community to provide content through a content management system. However, the CMS has not been much used for that purpose.

- Advantage of integrating Freight Scotland content into the Traffic Scotland website, is that you could maintain all the existing content and functionality, to ensure it is more resilient, takes advantage of wider developments such as an improved mapping solution and have more visibility because of the high brand awareness of Traffic Scotland.

- The proposal would be to take a similar approach as the Traffic Scotland mobile service by allowing users to select or deselect data layers relevant to users. The Traffic Scotland 3 year development strategy recognises there is too much content on the Traffic Scotland desktop website and therefore the danger is of information overload for users. The proposed solution is to move to more personalisation of content, making it easier for users to choose just the information they need.

- Traffic Scotland has a higher usership/profile, therefore offers the potential for more engagement with the freight community.

- There is recognition that there is an issue of keeping freight information up to date and having a way of tapping into feedback from users and other stakeholders allows this to happen including the use of social media.

- On the mobile app there is "What's Near Me" function which geolocates the user and populates information about road conditions and content based on that. The internet Traffic Scotland Radio service is already integrated into the app and by August this will give users the chance to select regional feeds. In the evening the radio output is much more freight orientated.

- Indicated he is still waiting to find out the budget for the programme of works for the website. Depending on the budget, this will impact on what progress we can make with integration.

Phil Flanders
- Concern about hauliers being able to access freight information and other haulier issues easily if moving to the Traffic Scotland Website.

- Hauliers are not keen on spending money on lorry parking. A major issue is secure parking for valuable loads. Therefore it is important to have information on lorry parking up to date. Lorry parking report – will speak with Pam/Jim. Seems to be user dependent on getting information updated.

- Any new system that is going to help industry, has to be a good thing.

Dan Cathcart
- Seasonal information needs to be available in advance, rather than last minute.

- It is important to have on any system on how far away is the next stop to allow drivers to plan ahead.

Graham Nichols
- Users have to be taken into consideration when making any changes to make it easy to navigate.

Caz Thomson
- Speaking with hauliers, it seems some are using Traffic Scotland rather than Freight Scotland site for information.

- Gave a demonstration of the new system with smartphone voice alerts currently under development.

- Any new system will be on a development server before going live.

Michael Cairns
- Issue is getting information to drivers rather than the logistics companies.

- Suggestion of surveying operators.

- With the new system it would be useful to base this on the ultimate destination and display information by the journey corridor – e.g. truck stops en route.

- The ideal would be to have something in place in advance of the winter.

- Important that information on any system is kept up to date

- It is vital to keep everyone in the loop.

Next Step
- To set up a meeting with John Mitchell in order to do a demonstration and make any changes as required.