

**UK ROADS LIAISON GROUP**

The Lighting Board is one of four boards of the UK RLG:

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**UKRLG Board Chairmen**

**Roads:** Matthew Lugg

**Lighting:** Dana Skelley

**Bridges:** Greg Perks

**Network Management:**  
Derek Turner

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This article is one of a series profiling RLG and its boards. The Lighting, Bridges and Roads Board's have already featured in previous issues of *Transportation Professional*. Further news from the UK Roads Liaison Group will follow in April 2010.

**RLG news**

● The UK Roads Liaison Group will shortly publish revised winter service elements of Well Maintained Highways as an 'essential' update to the Code.

● **UK Roads Board:** Industry and local highway authorities should be aware of Defra's current consultation on noise action plans to be implemented through the EC Environmental Noise Directive; [www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/noise-action-plan](http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/noise-action-plan)

● **UK Lighting Board:** OFGEM has launched a consultation on Guaranteed Standards. For the first time local authorities have a time frame for requesting changes to energy supply services. The Board is writing case studies on Invest to Save, Competition in Connections and LED trials.

● **UK Bridges Board:** The UK RLG partners and the Republic of Ireland have stepped in to ensure adequate funding for development of bridge inspection training and accreditation.

# Technology central to Network Management Board

The UK Network Management Board is driving and sharing best practice in operation of highway networks – led by Board Chairman Derek Turner.

Derek Turner (FIHT) has more than a side interest in the growing role of technology in managing road networks. As head of Street Management at Transport for London, he led development of the practicalities of London's congestion charge – deployed without hitch in February 2003.

Then after a brief stint working for himself and Colin Buchanan & Partners, Mr Turner was head hunted by the Highways Agency in 2005 to take up the key position of director of Traffic Operations – subsequently Network Operations including the agency's lead planning role. This was at a time when the agency was reinventing itself as a network operator rather than just a builder of roads. Its subsequent mantra of 'safe roads, informed drivers and reliable journeys' has manifested in Traffic Officers, Regional Control Centres (RCCs) and this year, roll out of the technology based managed motorways programme.

Mr Turner took over as Chairman of the UK Roads Liaison Group's Network Management Board early this year from his predecessor, TfL's chief operating officer for streets Peter Brown.

"My knowledge and experience of using technology for managing traffic fitted well with the Highways Agency's objectives and this is one area that distinguishes us (the Network Management Board) from the UK Roads Board," Mr Turner says.

He admits to an initial reluctance to take on the Network Management Chair, due to the Board being about all roads. "The Highways Agency serves as the national highway authority for England, but the Network Management Board concerns all UK roads authorities with a view to sharing best practice on an equal footing," he says.

Nonetheless, Mr Turner was asked to take the Chair for the next three years in recognition of his work and role within the highways industry. He is a leader with a belief in the potential for technology to better the way networks are operated – and to improve drivers' experiences of road transport. Mr Turner has embraced the Network Management Board's objectives and will be driving its business plan forward with collaboration very much in mind.

"This will be very important," Mr Turner says. "All authorities will have to do more with less funding in coming years. We will have to use technology to a greater degree and be smarter about what we do, and procure services collaboratively for driving efficiency and getting better value."

Technology already in place includes local authorities' Urban Traffic Management & Control (UTMC) systems. Collaborative work is making UTMC interoperable with motorway and trunk road RCCs. Information and demand management measures are being joined up across networks.



The Chairman of the UK Network Management Board is Derek Turner (FIHT)

"We have got to adopt an end to end approach to managing journeys and it is important that we recognise that this is about treating drivers as customers," Mr Turner says.

"Highways Agency surveys of road users have shown reliability of journeys is important for the public and commerce, which needs reliable deliveries. The agency has shifted to being an operator of its road system and some local authorities are doing the same. For some others the nature of their networks makes the change less pressing, but public expectation for a better service is becoming more vocal everywhere."

Technology is key for improving reliability and what drivers experience on road networks, Mr Turner says. "Intelligent Transport Systems are no longer discussed as an innovation that is coming. UTMC and Sat Nav have arrived and we need to fully understand the implications and opportunities for networks," he says. "The development will be interoperability and a change to getting information from the car, to the roadside and back to the car."

"We are getting good at VMS (Variable Message Signs) and websites for providing information, but we need to get more of this into cars to allow drivers to make informed decisions."

There are issues surrounding operation of non regulated Sat Nav on continuously changing road networks and in fluctuating traffic conditions. Government is unlikely to impose regulation, so industry should recognise the



Collaborative work is making local authorities' UTMC systems interoperable with trunk road Regional Control Centres

## The Network Management Board:

Chair – Derek Turner

Spencer Palmer and Ray Gercans – Department for Transport

Andrew Winstanley – Highways Agency

Roy Brannen – Transport Scotland

Neil Fenby – Transport for Wales, Welsh Assembly Government

Roy Gordon – Department for Regional Development Northern Ireland

Yim Kong and Mike Ashworth – CSS

Martin Low – TAG

Cliff Woolnoth – LoTAG

Dean Memory – Association of Chief Police Officers

Mark Kemp – National Traffic Managers' Forum

Richard Workman – CSS Wales

challenges and self regulate, Mr Turner says. He also believes the technology is converging towards a tipping point where authorities' hardware will work with privately operated Sat Nav and digital radio frequencies to update drivers and the technological infrastructure simultaneously.

This is all adding to the size of networks and revenue expenditure, but again Mr Turner is bullish. "Contracts have to be appropriate for continuously updating technology and authorities have to be careful with regard to maintenance, but with collaborative procurement and greater volumes, prices will come down."

"Managed Motorways are increasing demands on RCCs and operational costs and the danger is to ignore them," Mr Turner adds. "But we are looking at buying a service rather than hardware, similar to how people buy a mobile phone service with free upgrades."

### Xtra-info:

[www.ukroadsliasongroup.org/traffic](http://www.ukroadsliasongroup.org/traffic)



A key development will be communication between SatNav and highway authorities' technology

## Promoting better network management

The UK Network Management Board (NMB) has a broad remit to promote safe and efficient road network management, 'seeking a better understanding of congestion and the impact of interventions on the network, by encouraging innovation, adoption of good practice, co-ordination between stakeholders and information exchange'.

Highlights of the 2009-2012 UK NMB Business Plan include:

**Traffic Signs Policy Review** – the NMB has recently been involved in contributing to the traffic signs policy review, helping to maximize the scope for improvement in the urban environment by minimising sign clutter, improving road user information and ensuring more effective enforcement.

**Transport Advice Portal** – the NMB is assisting with development and

promotion of the IHT hosted Transport Advice Portal to ensure that the resource is up to date, comprehensive and widely used.

**Traffic Management Act Permit Schemes** – introduction and operation of permit schemes are being monitored through an annual report of approved schemes, their key components and performance indicators.

**Appropriate routing of HGVs** – the board is exploring ways of addressing the current lack of a reliable Sat Nav routing information system for HGVs (with weight and height restrictions etc). Options for digital map based updates of Sat Nav systems for road hauliers are being considered with recommendations for encouraging updating of databases by authorities, suppliers and users.