

## **MINUTES OF MEETING**

**Friday 29 September 2017 – 9.00 am  
Teleconference**

### **Attending**

- Bruce Conaghan  
Transport Technical Services and Design Team Leader, Vertical Capital Delivery and Professional Services Unit, City Services Group, Christchurch City Council
- Joanna Towler  
RATA Project Manager, RATA-Waikato
- Eddie Cook  
Project Engineer Level Crossings, KiwiRail
- Alison Cashin  
Property Team, KiwiRail
- Stephen Howard  
Rail Development Manager, Rail Services – AT Metro
- Glenn Bunting  
Network Manager, Safety and Environment, NZ Transport Agency
- Wayne Newman  
Executive Officer, RCA Forum Research and Guidelines Steering Group

### **Apologies**

- Alan Stevens  
Technical Manager, Civil Contractors New Zealand Inc.
- Dawn Shannon  
Strategic Asset and Performance Manager, Hamilton City Council
- Tom Simonson  
Principal Regulatory Advisor, Local Government New Zealand
- John Price  
Senior Traffic Engineer-Signals, Wellington City Council

### **Actions**

**a. Joanna Towler** will draft a reminder notice in liaison with Eddie Cook that can then be circulated from the group to all RCAs regarding raising the levels of service in the contracts for vegetation control and markings renewal to ensure the work is done more frequently.

**b. Glenn Bunting** will identify the priority for a review of Part 9 of the TCD Manual in light of the new guidance material designed to replace it and analysis of the implication of new material for

existing reliance on ALCAM, which the new material has actually moved away from.

**c. Bruce Conaghan** and Eddie Cook to liaise on a letter to be sent to the relevant RCA for each of the 18 identified sites with low clearance for long vehicles to ask the RCA to assess the long section profile of each of the identified level crossings as a priority.

**d. Bruce Conaghan** to draft a letter to be sent to KiwiRail setting out RCA concerns at the failure of KiwiRail to develop a 3-year works programme able to align with RCA plans for the next three years and reminding KiwiRail that unplanned works will have no budget provided for them and KiwiRail would be accepting full liability for the cost of works not properly notified, consulted on and included in the programme. The draft to be cleared with Tom Simonson regarding legal check and signatory.

**e. Wayne Newman** to ensure KiwiRail's works programme and Track representatives' contact details are readily accessible on the RCAF website and to arrange for advice to be circulated on RCAF social media posts.

**f. Joanna Towler** to provide to Wayne Newman fuller details of the present technical limitations for pavements at level crossings and where research might deliver better design as a possible research project to be referred to Tom Simonson to be proposed by Local Government for inclusion in the Research Programme.

**1. Minutes of 21 July 2017 and Actions Arising**

- a. Bruce Conaghan shared with the group comments that he had provided to Glenn Bunting on ALCAM and LCSS and Eddie Cook provided comments in response.
- b. Alan Stevens shared a presentation made by Dr King to the Royal Society for Railway Engineers. This compared the safety regimes being applied to roads and road transport against those applied to rail. Eddie Cook noted that rail is subject to higher levels of scrutiny.

**2. Auditing of level crossing road approaches**

Eddie Cook explained that he had noticed on site visits that approach signage or markings was frequently absent or obscured. Joanna Towler noted that every RCA should already have contracts in place for vegetation control and markings renewal. This is a matter of raising the levels of service in the contracts to ensure the necessary work is done more frequently.

**Action:** Joanna Towler will draft a reminder notice in liaison with

Eddie Cook that can then be circulated from the group to all RCAs.

**3. Level Crossing Risk Assessment Guidance**

This item and item 4 were taken together.

**4. Level Crossing Active User Design Guidance**

Eddie Cook explained that NZTA, KiwiRail and the RCAF have worked together to produce new guidance that takes a new approach to risk that is a more holistic approach than that taken by ALCAM, which itself takes a more holistic approach than taken by Part 9 of the TCD Manual. He explained that it is intended that the new guidance would supersede Part 9.

Glenn Bunting noted that Part 9 is one of the more recently reviewed Parts and the working group that carried out the review would need to consider the new material. There has been heavy historic investment in ALCAM and all references remain to ALCAM, so the investment team within NZTA would instinctively look at any new guidance in terms of its fit with ALCAM, which the guidance material has actually moved away from.

**Action:** Glenn Bunting will identify the priority for this work and the packet of associated or consequential work with the review group.

**5. Level Crossing Trials**

Eddie Cook explained that KiwiRail has been undertaking a trial of active “EXPECT TRAINS” signs. These are expected to be beneficial on tourist routes and at passive level crossings with obscured visibility. They would have no benefits where short stacking limited the reaction time available to drivers. KiwiRail is also undertaking a trial of LED studs in the footpath for active modes crossings where automatic gates are impractical. This is not a Gazetted TCD trial, as the devices are intended to be used only inside the Rail corridor.

A trial of a GPS-based tracking system to send a notice to an app of an approaching train is being considered, but it would have a controlled and limited release, because normal safety protocols would still need to be followed as the app would not be failsafe.

**6. ‘Low Ground Clearance’ signs**

Eddie Cook explained that KiwiRail has been told to identify locations where there is a high risk of a long vehicle grounding. KiwiRail’s track inspectors visually identified 18 locations as being at risk of longer vehicles grounding out. Possible use of a sign warning of the risk at these locations was discussed. Any sign would need to be approved after the required consultation and trial process was completed.

As this would not alter the risk, it was agreed that getting the low clearance fixed should be a priority. Getting the local RCA to assess the long section profile of each of the identified level crossings should be progressed without delay.

**Action:** Bruce Conaghan and Eddie Cook to liaise on a letter to be sent to the relevant RCA for each of the 18 identified sites.

## 7. **Communications for Track renewals**

Eddie Cook explained that Hamilton City had been invoiced for a track renewal task that it was unaware of. This is an issue with many Councils which is not improving. Although KiwiRail has sent out a programme for works, not all works will necessarily be on the programme. RCAs should contact their local Track representative to discuss the track renewal programme.

In response to a comment from Eddie Cook that KiwiRail was seeking to become an Approved Organisation in respect to level crossings, which might lead to it developing an AMP able to fit the NLTP timeframe, Glenn Bunting noted that this would require a change to the Act and KiwiRail would need to convince the MoT that this was required in order to deliver better asset management of crossings.

Bruce Conaghan noted that there was no reason why KiwiRail could not develop and implement a 3-year works programme now. KiwiRail needed to align its works programme with the RCA plans for the next three years. Furthermore, KiwiRail needed to grasp that unplanned works will have no budget provided for them and KiwiRail would be accepting full liability for the cost of works not properly notified, consulted on and included in the programme.

**Action:** Bruce Conaghan to draft a letter to be sent to KiwiRail setting out RCA concerns. The draft to be cleared with Tom Simonson regarding legal check and signatory.

Wayne Newman to ensure KiwiRail works programme and Track representative contact details are readily accessible on the RCAF website and to arrange for advice to be circulated on RCAF social media posts.

## 8. **Other business**

Joanna Towler noted that current approaches to pavement repairs at level crossings were inefficient and unsatisfactory. The arbitrary attribution of costs are misaligned with levels of service and a One Network approach. There are also technical issues as a result of the way the pavement is constructed. The substrate

cannot be properly compacted and the pavement inevitably fails within a very short time. Research is needed into a better design for pavements at level crossings to achieve superior asset management for RCAs.

**Action:** Joanna Towler to provide to Wayne Newman fuller details of the present technical limitations and where research might deliver better design as a possible research project to be referred to Tom Simonson to be proposed by Local Government for inclusion in the Research Programme.

Meeting closed: 10.35