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Response to TEN-T Green paper

This response is made by the Transportation and Logistics Task Group of Hampshire Economic Partnership (HEP). Hampshire is a sub-region of the South East of England.

HEP was established in 1992 and brings together business and local government to influence government policy and support the economic prosperity of Hampshire and its cities by:

- identifying and championing the needs and priorities of Hampshire business,
- providing an authoritative economic voice for business, and
- ensuring that the best decisions are made to deliver sustainable economic prosperity for the area.

Where HEP makes a real difference to the regional economy is through the important work that takes place in its 8 direct trade sector task groups. The Task Groups are led by some of Hampshire's leading business experts representing industry sectors across the county and ensures that HEP plays a vital role in addressing the priority issues required to build stronger and sustainable economic performance for the region.

HEP has been represented at several European events where TEN-T has been subject to discussions and has had the opportunity of visiting some of the projects funded by the TEN-T programme. We feel that we are therefore in a good position to represent the business view of the TEN-T programme. Our response to the questions is as follows:-

Q1. Should the Commission's assessment of TEN-T development to date take into account any other factors?

HEP believe that the programme should assess if the proposed programmes can be achieved within the planned timescale and budget and meet a detailed business case. It is important that Sovereign states political ambitions are not allowed to outweigh

the economic and environmental benefit to both business and the wider public, nor should one specific business group or organisation be able to sway investment e.g. the rail lobby over the road lobby.

We do however believe that the TEN-T process should be more transparent, flexible and as simple and straightforward as possible for those seeking funding to access. These goals also meet the current UK approach to Delivering a Sustainable Transport System.

Q2. What further arguments are there for or against maintaining the comprehensive network, and how could the respective disadvantages of each approach be overcome?

HEP believes that the comprehensive network programme should be maintained but with the incorporation of a priority network. However, there needs to be a clear set of goals so that benefit is derived as early as possible from any successfully funded programme.

Q3. Would this kind of priority network approach be better than the current priority projects approach? If not, why not and what are the particular strengths of the latter? If so, what (further) benefits could it bring, and how should it be developed?

HEP believe that the priority network could bring greater benefits than currently achieved. We need to ensure that climate change is taken into account in its widest sense, in some cases there may be a short-term disbenefit that leads to a longer-term gain. For instance the London Cross-Rail programme that will link East and West London and London airport by rail which will cause local disruption during construction but will give short-term employment and longer-term capacity for passenger traffic.

Model three of the proposal would better suit the foreseeable needs of member states.

Q4. Would this kind of flexible approach to identifying projects of common interest be appropriate for a policy that, traditionally, largely rests on Member States' individual infrastructure investment decisions? What further advantages and disadvantages could it have, and how could it best be reflected in planning at Community level?

HEP believe that this type of approach would allow better use of restricted resources whilst responding to those projects that require early adoption. For instance, the development of road infrastructure to allow easier access for freight traffic when developing a strategic growth area, reducing congestion and pollution in the surrounding areas whilst construction is in progress.

Q5. How can the different aspects outlined above be best taken into account within the overall concept of future TEN-T development? What further aspects should be taken into consideration

It is important that any TEN-T proposals also meet the Commission's existing initiatives such as E-Freight, Freightwise etc. The use of intelligent transport systems is seen as a way forward in maximising the use of current infrastructure and work is currently underway in the UK under the auspices of the Technology Strategy Board to increase the understanding of what can currently be achieved and what needs to be achieved in the future. This work also looks at the need to change user perceptions of the need to travel.

Q6. How can ITS, as a part of the TEN-T, enhance the functioning of the transport system? How can investment in Galileo and EGNOS be translated into efficiency gains and optimum balancing of transport demand? How can ITS contribute to the development of a multi-modal TEN-T? How can existing opportunities within the framework of TEN-T funding be strengthened in order to best support the implementation of the ERTMS European deployment plan during the next period of the financial perspectives?

See response to question 5, on the previous page.

Q7. Do shifting borderlines between infrastructure and vehicles or between infrastructure provision and the way it is used call for the concept of an (infrastructure) project of common interest to be widened? If so, how should this concept be defined?

A core network is needed with clear European objectives and the highest priorities in the field of transport and other EU policies taking into account: Internal Market, Cohesion, Sustainable Development and Climate change.

A “reduce, manage and invest” approach should be adopted, ensuring that capacity increases are focused on those locations most critically in need, while ensuring that existing transport infrastructure is used optimally. A reduce, manage and invest approach is not necessarily a “low-cost” approach but is more like a “value-for-money” approach, where maximum benefit is achieved for utilisation of minimum resource. This is the approach being taken by the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire's delivery body: Transport for South Hampshire.

Q8. Would this kind of core network be "feasible" at Community level, and what would be its advantages and disadvantages? What methods should be applied for its conception

A core network based on the strategic national networks of each Member State should be the logical starting point. The advantage is that a core network would provide a framework for considering the areas for attention, within the strategic framework, whether these be entirely within a Member State or of pan-European significance, or where they are cross-border in nature with the more “traditional” connectivity focus of previous TEN-T funding provision.

Q9. How can the financial needs of TEN-T as a whole – in the short, medium and long term – be established? What form of financing – public or private, Community or national – best suits what aspects of TEN-T development?

Q10. What assistance can be given to Member States to help them fund and deliver projects under their responsibility? Should private sector involvement in infrastructure delivery be further encouraged? If so, how?

Q11. What are the strengths and weaknesses of existing Community financial instruments, and are new ones needed (including "innovative" instruments)? How could the combined use of funds from various Community resources be streamlined to support TEN-T implementation?

Q12 How could existing non-financial instruments be improved and what new ones might be introduced?

HEP are not specialist in the funding of EU projects however we support any moves to make funding more transparent to meet the needs of the member state. It is possible that some initial capital funding would be required for larger infrastructure projects where member state governments and /or private sector partners do not have access to sufficient funding to allow a vital piece of infrastructure development is required. The access to these funds should clear and unambiguous and should be linked to outputs and not to undefined longer-term benefits.

Possibly a fund should be available for member states to bid for as a “pump priming” facility to get vital projects started.

POSSIBLE OPTIONS FOR FURTHER TEN-T DEVELOPMENT

Having reviewed the three options detailed for further TEN-T development HEP believes that option 3 is the most realistic and achievable as detailed in our responses above. It clearly fits with the UK’s aspirations for a Sustainable Transport System and our concept of reduce, manage, and invest currently in use within our sub-region. It also allows for the use of ITS to maximise use of existing infrastructure.

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30th April 2009