

# Freight Action Plan Summary

“A Catalyst for Change”

The Regional Transport Strategy for the west  
of Scotland 2007-2021

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# Purpose

This Freight Action Plan is one of a series of action plans developed as part of the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS), approved by Scottish Ministers. This Action Plan sets out the key issues, objectives and recommendations for freight transportation in the SPT area. It summarises work undertaken in analysing the issues and challenges for freight transport, and is intended to set out a clear programme of action to improve the movement of goods throughout the region.

## Issues, Constraints and Opportunities

The following issues, constraints and opportunities were identified following analysis by SPT and consultation with the Strathclyde Freight Quality Partnership, SPT member councils and other external stakeholders as part of the RTS development process.

### *Road Freight*

- Increasing fuel prices, the EU Working Time Directive and competition from non-UK registered hauliers cause financial problems to Scottish road hauliers
- High traffic levels and limited road capacities cause congestion on the road network and this reduces the productivity of the road industry and prevents fast and reliable distribution of freight
- Curfews on night-time deliveries prevent spreading HGV movements to periods when traffic flows are low
- Trend to a higher proportion of vans for deliveries to meet just-in-time requirements and the demand for internet deliveries
- Lack of secure overnight parking facilities
- Potential to improve urban delivery arrangements, i.e. loading/unloading, curfew restrictions
- Scope to investigate land bridging opportunities from Northern Ireland

### *Rail Freight*

- Lack of capacity and also reliability, particularly during engineering maintenance works, both in Strathclyde and on the network between Strathclyde and England
- Required investment in upgraded infrastructure, i.e. rail gauges, junction and signalling capacities, freight train lengths and wagon maximum weights

### *Sea Freight*

- Lack of capacity at sea ports particularly for container traffic brought by modern shipping requiring deep-sea berths
- Lack of capacity for increased road and rail traffic from port facilities at Hunterston

### *Air Freight*

- Lack of competitiveness of some Scottish air freight companies due to the majority of air freight having to be routed through Heathrow and other airports in England

## Objectives

The vision for the Freight Action Plan is to:

*Develop and maintain a safe, efficient and integrated sustainable freight transport system which supports the economy whilst taking account of the environment and improving quality of life in the region.*

The objectives are to:

- maximise the efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and services balancing freight and passenger requirements in order to support the region's economy
- identify opportunities for new infrastructure to improve overall connectivity
- support the development of intermodal hubs and connections to those hubs in order to improve accessibility and support the competitiveness of the freight industry
- reduce the impact of congestion on freight transport
- take account of the inter-relationship between land-use planning strategies and freight transport
- encourage the transfer of freight from road to more sustainable modes such as rail and water
- minimise the adverse environmental impact of freight transport on the region
- enhance the accessibility of rural and remote areas.

# Recommendations

The following recommendations have been developed in partnership with the Strathclyde Freight Quality Partnership, member councils and other key stakeholders. These actions were approved by the Strategy and Programmes committee on 25 January 2008.

## *General*

- establish partnership working to take forward initiatives to achieve the regional freight objectives;
- improve information on goods movement by mode and market sector for analysis and forecasting purposes and set target percentages for freight by mode;
- Use the improved information to develop action plans for freight movement in each market sector; and
- encourage the use of rail freight and waterborne freight grants;

## *Road freight*

- invest in improved capacity and journey time reliability on key routes including the A70, A71, A77, A78, A82, M74 and M8, and review the case for an orbital route between the Erskine Bridge and the M74;
- encourage Transport Scotland and local authorities to improve road maintenance and management and to accelerate the programme of bridge checking and strengthening;
- review curfew restrictions using the FTA toolkit and develop a best-practice guide for night-time delivery in sensitive areas;
- review current delivery/collection arrangements in town centres and identify the opportunities for revising loading restrictions, and providing inset and kerbside loading bays and off-street delivery areas to achieve appropriate delivery/collection locations for all premises;
- study the opportunity of introducing consolidation centres and their financial viability;
- study the need to provide daytime parking areas and overnight parking areas and facilities for freight drivers in Strathclyde and identify suitable locations;
- Review signage to direct hauliers onto the most appropriate routes; and
- review the opportunity for increased use of cleaner fuelled vehicles;

## *Rail Freight*

- encourage the implementation of solutions to known rail capacity constraints including rail sections between Newton on Ayr and

Mauchline, and between Irvine and Kilmarnock and the signal spacing on the Glasgow and South Western line;

- encourage the implementation of gauge clearance improvements to the East Coast Main Line and to the Glasgow and South Western line;
- encourage the standardisation of loop lengths on the West Coast Main line to allow freight operators to work more efficiently;
- Support the development of a deep-sea port at Hunterston and associated improvements to road and rail feeder links;
- review the opportunity to make more train paths available for freight;
- study the existing capacity and constraints of the current rail terminals and the potential to develop former rail freight sites

#### *Sea Freight*

- encourage the further development of coastal shipping and of Greenock Ocean Terminal and King George V dock

#### *Air Freight*

- encourage airport owners and airfreight operators to improve services to increase the proportion of airfreight generated in Scotland that uses Scottish airports
- encourage the sourcing of more goods locally to reduce the need for freight movement.

## Target

To develop a programme for the implementation of the Freight Action Plan through SPT's Business Plan

## Monitoring

Monitoring of the agreed programme will be incorporated within SPT's Business Plan monitoring process.

## Further Information

Related reports are available on our website [www.spt.co.uk](http://www.spt.co.uk) and further information is available from [rts@spt.co.uk](mailto:rts@spt.co.uk) or by contacting:

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