

TAYSIDE AND CENTRAL SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP**17 OCTOBER 2006****NETWORK RAIL SCOTLAND ROUTE UTILISATION STRATEGY
CONSULTATION RESPONSE****Report by Director**

This report seeks the Partnership Board's approval of a response to consultation by Network Rail on the Draft Scotland Route Utilisation Strategy.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Partnership Board :-

- (i) approves Appendix B, amended to reflect any additional comments the Board wishes to include, as TACTRAN's response to Network Rail's Draft Scotland Route Utilisation Strategy; and
- (ii) agrees to copy the response to neighbouring Regional Transport Partnerships and Passengerfocus, for their interest.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At its meeting on 26 September 2006 the Partnership Board noted the launch of a consultation by Network Rail on their Draft Scotland Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS) and agreed to receive a report on responding to this consultation at its meeting on 17 October (Branch 8 refers).
- 2.2 Comments on the Draft RUS are sought by 16 November 2006. As was reported on 26 September, the consultation document and associated technical appendices can be viewed on the Network Rail website www.networkrail.co.uk.

3 DISCUSSION

- 3.1 The Scotland RUS is one of a series of route strategies which are designed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the rail network, by assessing current capacity and anticipated passenger and freight demand. The Draft RUS sets out proposals for investing in maintaining and improving the capacity of the rail network over the next 10 years, to 2016, including implementation of committed and planned major projects. It also sets out 44 options for developing the railway in Scotland, and identifies proposals such as platform extensions, longer trains on key routes, additional services and linespeed improvements etc., which Network Rail plan to progress between now and 2016. These are summarised in the extract which forms Appendix A to this report.

- 3.2 Main issues and proposals of specific interest to the TACTRAN area are :-

- (i) scope of the RUS, specifically omission of detailed consideration of the sections between Inverness – Perth and Dundee – Dunblane;
- (ii) omission of existing proposals, such as the Tay Estuary Rail Study, and need to take account of these and other proposals likely to emerge from Regional Transport Strategies;
- (iii) potential enhancement schemes, including Perth Station Interchange, Bannockburn Park & Ride and Dundee station;
- (iv) proposals for enhancing capacity at Glasgow Queen Street and between Glasgow and Dunblane;
- (v) proposals for fast, limited stop services between Edinburgh/Glasgow – Fife – Aberdeen and a new “semi-fast” service between Edinburgh – Dundee;
- (vi) proposed enhanced hourly service between Perth – Edinburgh;
- (vii) proposals for addressing current and future capacity constraints at locations such as Larbert – Stirling and Montrose;
- (viii) future of lightly used stations;
- (ix) review of Central Belt car parking provision and policy at busy stations;
- (x) opportunities for increased transfer of freight from road to rail and other inter-modal opportunities – e.g. rail to maritime.

3.3 A draft response, addressing the above issues is set out in Appendix B to the report. The Board is asked to approve submission of this response, amended to reflect any additional comments the Board wishes to include.

3.4 On 26 September it was noted that a meeting of Regional Transport Partnership lead officers was to be held on 29 September, to discuss cross-boundary aspects of the RUS. At that stage initial views on the issues raised were exchanged. Most Partnerships are still developing their responses and it was agreed that a further meeting would be held on 11 November, to share views on responses. It is proposed that a copy of TACTRAN's response is forwarded to neighbouring RTP's for their interest. Any issues emerging from the meeting on 11 November will be reported back to a future meeting.

3.5 The rail passenger users group Passengerfocus has requested details of RTPs' responses to the RUS consultation. It is proposed that the TACTRAN response is forwarded to that group, for their interest, and that the Director contacts Passengerfocus, with a view to seeking their support for the additional enhancements set out in the draft response at Appendix B.

4 CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 This report has been prepared in consultation with officers of the Partnership's constituent Councils.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report has no direct resource implications.

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Director

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NOTE

The following background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (and not containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above Report.

Network Rail Scotland Route Utilisation Strategy Draft for Consultation