

TAYSIDE AND CENTRAL SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

24 JUNE 2008

FREIGHT QUALITY PARTNERSHIP

REPORT BY DIRECTOR

This report asks the Partnership to approve the creation of a Regional Freight Quality Partnership.

**1 RECOMMENDATIONS**

1.1 That the Partnership:-

- (i) Approves the creation of a regional Freight Quality Partnership; and
- (ii) Agrees the Terms of Reference for the Freight Quality Partnership, as shown in Appendix B.

**2 BACKGROUND**

2.1 The Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) states that TACTRAN will establish “a Regional Freight Quality Partnership that will help to deliver cost effective packages of freight-related interventions. Early supportive work will include investigations into possible improved road links and rail freight facilities at the ports of Montrose, Dundee and Perth”.

2.2 Guidance has been produced by the Scottish Executive on establishing Freight Quality Partnerships (FQP). This states that FQPs should aim to provide safe, efficient and environmentally-friendly solutions to freight transport issues at a regional or local level. The guidance can be accessed at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/04/19092035/0>. The benefits which FQPs can provide include:-

- helping RTPs and Local Authorities to better understand the needs of the freight transport industry and its customers to have timely and efficient delivery of freight, and the views of other legitimate stakeholders
- providing a single contact point for early consultation on relevant proposals, with representation from a large number of organisations
- agreeing realistic and achievable actions that provide clear economic, social and environmental benefits, and
- providing an effective working forum in which to agree, deliver and monitor freight solutions.

2.3 The first meeting of the TACTRAN Regional Freight Forum was held on 19 March 2008 in Perth. Representatives from the freight transport industry, local authorities and major freight customers were invited. Fourteen delegates representing a range of interests including the region’s Ports, Network Rail, Freightliner, Perthshire Chamber of Commerce, Scottish Enterprise Tayside, Stirling and Tayside Timber Transport Group, the North East Scotland Rail Freight Development Group, Councils and the national representative

organisations, the Road Haulage Association and Freight Transport Association attended.

- 2.4 The purpose of the Forum was to consider the main freight issues throughout the TACTRAN area and to discuss the scope for establishing a FQP for the region.

### **3. DISCUSSION**

- 3.1 The Forum considered the freight issues identified in the RTS and confirmed general agreement with them. Key issues and opportunities were discussed and a number of new issues were identified, including the increasing use of private cars for deliveries by parcels companies and the recent, and continuing, increases in fuel costs. A note of the meeting is included at Appendix A for information.

- 3.2 There was whole-hearted support for the creation of a FQP. It was considered that it should focus on two scales (i) regional connectivity for road, rail, air and water-borne freight, and (ii) local issues, such as bottlenecks on the road network and weight limits on bridges that inhibit efficient freight movement. Specific early actions for the FQP were considered to include gathering data on where and how freight is being moved in the region; identifying freight corridors; and promoting the development of a freight railhead in the region. Other potential actions could include:

- the production of information on or maps of advisory lorry routes taking account of weight and height restrictions, etc.;
- helping companies moving freight to reduce their carbon footprint;
- consideration of transport of construction materials, particularly as significant amounts are sourced from the Continent;
- the need for improvements to minor roads that will be accessed by the increasing amount of timber being harvested and transported by road;
- investigation of the need for secure lorry parking;
- bringing the region's three ports together for marketing and market development purposes to emphasise the specialisms and strengths of each port;
- highlighting funding opportunities, such as Freight Facilities Grant for rail freight;
- engaging on national strategic consultations including the Scottish Strategic Freight Study and links to the Scottish Government's Freight Action Plan
- lobbying on issues that adversely affect the TACTRAN region due to its peripherality, such as fuel prices.

- 3.3 Some issues were considered to be of less immediate importance. These concerned the role of air freight in the region and the significance of road congestion between the region and the rail freight terminals at Mossend and Coatbridge.

- 3.4 It was considered crucially important that the FQP should achieve results and that those involved should have the ability to influence actions. It was felt that development of an effective FQP, focussed on identifying and promoting positive actions in support of achieving more sustainable movement of freight

locally, regionally and nationally, would benefit from the establishment of an active and effective FQP Steering Group. A key aspect of this Group would be to identify Freight Actions for inclusion within the RTS Delivery Plan and to oversee their implementation, and monitor success through a Freight Action Plan.

- 3.5 A proposed Terms of Reference for the FQP was considered and agreed by the Regional Freight Forum. This is shown in Appendix B, which the Partnership is asked to agree.
- 3.6 It is suggested that the proposed FQP would meet six monthly, with the proposed FQP Steering Group meeting more frequently, probably quarterly, to monitor and help drive progress on agreed actions between meetings. The next meeting of the Regional Freight Forum will be held in early autumn 2008, when detailed agreement would be sought on the proposed arrangements for the establishment and agreeing membership of the regional Freight Quality Partnership.

#### **4 CONSULTATIONS**

- 4.1 This report has been prepared in consultation with the Chief Officers Liaison Group.

#### **5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The costs of establishing the Regional Freight Quality Partnership will be met from staff time within the approved Core Revenue Budget plus an additional provision of £20,000, which has been made in the 2008/09 RTS Implementation Programme, as approved by the Board on 29 April 2008 (Report RTP/08/09 refers).

**Eric Guthrie**  
**Director**

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#### **NOTE**

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

TACTRAN Regional Transport Strategy.

Establishing Freight Quality Partnerships – A Guide for Regional Transport Partnerships and Local Authorities. Scottish Executive, 2006.

Director's Report to Partnership on 29 April 2008.

# *tactran* RTS – Freight Forum

Project Title: **tactran** RTS – Ongoing freight-related support

MVA Project Number: C3708400

Subject: **tactran** Freight Forum

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Reviewer(s): David Connolly

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## **Presenters**

Gavin Roser	Forum Chair, Member of <b>tactran</b> Board	
Eric Guthrie	<b>tactran</b> Director	
Mike Cairns	<b>tactran</b> Strategy Manager	
Pam Stott	Scottish Government	A

## **Stakeholders (Alphabetical Order)**

Alex Deans	Perth and Kinross Council	A
Emily Dixon	Stirling & Tayside Timber Transport Group	B
David Eaglesham	Road Haulage Association	B
Ewan Ferguson	Chamber of Commerce	A
Gordon Fleming	Dundee City Council – Economic Development	B
Michael Gale	Scottish Enterprise Tayside	A
Paul Kyle	PKC – Perth Harbour	B
Archie Lamont	Forth Ports	A
Nick Prag	Network Rail	B
John Paterson	Montrose Port Authority	B
Gavin Scott	Freight Transport Association	A
Pam Stott	Scottish Government	A
Philip Smart	North East Scotland Rail Freight Development Group	A
Kay Walls	Freightliner Ltd	A

**Apologies from:**

Frank Roach	Highland Rail Partnership
Niall Gardiner	<b>tactran</b>
Alan Mitchell	Dundee & Angus Chamber of Commerce
A Tucker	Forfar Chamber of Commerce
Hugh Lightbody	Stirling Business Panel
John Thorne	Cairngorms National Park Authority
Olivia Lassiere	British Waterways
Graham Meiklejohn	EWS Railway
A Bain	D P & L
Ewan Gourlay	Dundee City Council
Ian Cochrane	Angus Council
Kate Smithson	Stirling Council
Lesley Millar	Angus Council
Iain Duff	Scottish Council for Development & Industry
K MacDonald	P&K Economic Development

**Facilitators**

Scott Leitham	MVA Consultancy	A
David Connolly	MVA Consultancy	B
Andrea Davison	MVA Consultancy	A
Laura Price	MVA Consultancy	B

**1 Introduction**

- 1.1 A meeting of the **tactran** Freight Forum was held at the Dewar Centre, Perth on Wednesday 19 March. The purpose of the forum was to discuss the scope for a Freight Quality Partnership for the **tactran** region and to consider the main freight issues throughout the **tactran** area.
- 1.2 After the morning presentations the stakeholders broke into two workshop groups (A and B) to discuss the following questions:
  - *'Did the preceding presentations raise any issues which should be addressed by the group?'*;
  - *'Are there any recent significant changes/developments which should be taken into account when considering the freight-related components of the **tactran** RTS strategy?'*;
  - *'Are the measures identified in the RTS still the best measures for the region?'*;

- *'Is a formal **tactran** Freight Quality Partnership required/desirable?'; and*
- *'If so, what should its membership be (with reference to the suggested list in Section 4 of the Scottish Exec FQP Guidance)?'*

## **2 Questions raised from the floor during initial presentations**

- 2.1 Question 1 – *"Why is there a regional rail forum and a regional freight forum?"*
- 2.2 Response: - Many people are attending more than one meeting at present. The purpose of today is to explore whether we need to have fewer groups or more sub groups.
- 2.3 Question 2 – *"Has there been any indication from the councils on whether they will provide funding to **tactran**?"*
- 2.4 Response: - Two of the **tactran** councils (Dundee and P&K) have decided to pool (rather than 'pull') relevant transport funds. No decision has yet been reached by the other two Local Authorities (Angus and Stirling).
- 2.5 Question 3 – *"What does the single outcome agreement mean?"*
- 2.6 Response: - Local Authorities will make agreements with community planning partnerships and at least 3 of the 4 **tactran** local authorities will sign off single outcome agreements. The single outcome agreement has meant that **tactran** must undertake an exercise to map the objectives to the outcomes in their RTS. Mike Cairns is undertaking this work at **tactran**.
- The COSLA concordat says: that each of the 32 Scottish Local authorities should aim to have a single outcome agreement (SOA) with the Scottish Government at the earliest opportunity (in place by 2008/09). The SOA will cover all local government services in each local authority as well as a significant range of the responsibilities of Community Planning Partnerships.
- 2.7 Question/Comment 4 – Kay Walls (Freightliner Ltd) pointed out that the 40-50 minute journey time between tactran and the freight terminal at Coatbridge was not currently perceived as being a significant problem.
- 2.8 Comment 5 – Gavin Scott (FTA) pointed out that companies such as DHL are increasing using private cars for deliveries.
- 2.9 Comment 6 – Gordon Fleming (DCC) suggested that air freight from Dundee airport and/or elsewhere in tactran was currently insignificant and likely to remain so for the foreseeable future.

### 3 Group A - Discussion Notes

**Table 3.1 Attendees Group A**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Alex Deans	Perth and Kinross Council
Michael Gale	Scottish Enterprise Tayside
Archie Lamont	Forth Ports
Gavin Scott	Freight Management Association
Philip Smart	NE Scotland Rail Freight Development Group
Kay Walls	Freightliner Ltd
Ewan Ferguson	Chamber of Commerce
Pam Stott	Scottish Government
Scott Leitham	MVA Consultancy (facilitator)
Andrea Davison	MVA Consultancy (scribe)

3.1 This group’s discussions have been summarised under the following eight headings:

- Local Issues/ Problems to solve
- Data, who is moving what, where and when ?
- What have other FQP’s achieved and hence what should the **tactran** FQP hope to achieve?
- What is a FQP?
- 3 ports or 1 ?
- Global Issues
- Changes to the **tactran** RTS
- Who should be involved in a Freight Quality Partnership?

#### **Local Issues / Problems to Solve**

3.2 The group felt that a FQP should remain focussed on **local issues**, such as bottlenecks on the road network, and weight limits on bridges and roads which restrict/ inhibit efficient freight movement.

- 3.3 The group felt that managing the movement of household waste was of as much importance as the movement of containers full of goods.
- 3.4 One particular local issue noted was the reduced number of HGV's allowed to cross the Tay bridge as a result of there being no staff on the bridge to decide who can and cannot cross in windy weather. There was further concern expressed that there might soon be a set of national guidelines set that state that bridges were to be closed to all HGV's when the wind strength gets to a certain point.
- 3.5 The group felt that air freight is such a small part of the business in the **tactran** region that it should not be discussed further.
- 3.6 The group felt that although it is OK to prepare strategies for 2013 and 2014, they would prefer **tactran** to focus more on immediate/short term actions.
- 3.7 The group felt that it was important to get a quick win eg implement a change or solve a problem via the FQP, in order to convince others that the Partnership was effective and worthwhile.
- 3.8 The lack of a freight rail head in the region was seen as an issue, with consideration given to developing such a facility somewhere on the existing rail network in the region, as part of the overall national freight strategy.
- 3.9 The group mentioned that companies such as Michelin, who want to move their logistics off road in order to display green credentials and have tried to do so before and have encountered problems.
- 3.10 The issue of the current weight restriction on the bridge entering the port of Dundee was highlighted as a major concern. It was felt that this issue should be addressed by tactran and their FQP.

**Data - Who is moving what, where and when?**

- 3.11 The group felt that one of the most important first steps is to have a survey carried out to find out who is moving goods and where to. This led on to some discussion of surveys and data collection that are already taking place, including previous surveys undertaken by Scottish Enterprise Tayside, multi-modal data collection and Business Research surveys commissioned recently by Scottish Enterprise, a Global Connections Survey, the DfT survey, a NESTRAN study, etc etc.

Details of the Global Connections survey can be found at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/export-statistics/gcs-introduction>.

- 3.12 It was felt that any survey or data gathering exercise should include freight movements by road, rail and sea, but should distinguish clearly between these.
- 3.13 It was suggested that obtaining data from the top 5 (largest) exporters would probably give the group enough data to understand the main freight movements through the **tactran** region.
- 3.14 Michael Gale (SET) explained that his survey of businesses in Tayside provided a snap shot of business in Tayside and the main issue that came from the survey was the availability and mobility of labour in the region.

- 3.15 Several members of the group had had experience of surveys that they had been asked to complete and which they felt were too woolly, not specific enough or ask irrelevant questions. There was also comment that some of the survey data collected would give a misrepresentation of the real freight travel patterns, due to the way the questions are asked.
- 3.16 Tracker Management Systems used by logistics companies could provide data on where and when goods are being transported, though it was not clear if the **tactran** FQP would be able to obtain access to this information.
- 3.17 The group pointed out that freight and logistics companies such as MRS, Wincanton, Excel etc hold the data that would tell us where freight is moving from and to. Gavin Scott (FTA) stated that the companies he represents were not against providing this data and indeed would be happy to do so. However the request for these data should come from senior Government officials (to assure the relevant CEOs/Managers of the importance of the request) and the subsequent data analysis and reporting would need to respect the commercial confidentiality/sensitivity of these data.

**What have other FQP's achieved and hence what should the *tactran* FQP hope to achieve?**

- 3.18 Gavin Scott spoke about his work with the Strathclyde FQP, some of the things they have set out to achieve include:
- relaxing the curfews imposed on Asda deliveries, in exchange for agreeing to keep the HGVs off roads during the periods when children are attending school and others are travelling to work;
  - assessing the possibility of a having a construction consolidation centre in the east end of Glasgow, to cater for the large amount of construction work likely to be needed to get Glasgow ready for the Commonwealth Games.
- 3.19 In England, FQP's have provided advisory route maps which take account of weight and height restrictions for lorry drivers.
- 3.20 The FQP can be a forum to bring up local constraints such as traffic lights poorly designed for HGV movements and to coordinate freight-friendly response to tackling congestion hotspots/roadworks etc.
- 3.21 Mike Cairns reported his experience of identifying locations of height/weight restrictions relevant to freight during his work with a FQP in England.

**What is a FQP?**

- 3.22 It is not a statutory body and there are currently no sources of funding associated directly with them.
- 3.23 The following text is extracted from Scottish Executive 2006 guidance on establishing Freight Quality Partnerships:

*Freight Quality Partnerships aim to provide safe, efficient and environmentally-friendly solutions to freight transport issues at a regional or local level. They:*

- help RTPs and Local Authorities to better understand the needs of the freight transport industry and its customers to have timely and efficient delivery of freight, and the views of other legitimate stakeholders;*
- provide a single contact point for early consultation, yet represent a large number of organisations;*
- agree realistic and achievable actions that provide clear economic, social and environmental benefits; and*
- provide an effective working forum in which to agree and deliver solutions.*

*Source: Establishing Freight Quality Partnerships – A guide for Regional Transport Partnerships and Local Authorities by Scottish Executive, 2006.*

### **3 Ports or 1**

- 3.24 Discussion then moved to the three ports in the **tactran** area (Montrose, Dundee and Perth harbour). The group felt that major investment to develop all three would not be beneficial, since a certain volume of goods need to pass through the port in order to make it financially viable. Kay Walls of Freightliner suggested that the area would only be able to support one terminal.
- 3.25 The example of the channel tunnel was given to explain that many Local Authorities had channel tunnel freight terminals built, at a great cost, and now these sit empty as 'white elephants'. It is seen to be important that the Scottish Local Authorities learn from this and do not do the same. They need to consolidate views and make a decision on which of the 3 ports in **tactran** is going to be developed and focus on it and the routes to it.
- 3.26 The group felt that as a FQP they should address the issue of which port of the 3 should be developed into a major hub port and/or rail terminal.
- 3.27 The group were aware of a Scottish Government study that is currently in progress which will answer the question: 'Is there a need in Scotland for a new freight terminal and where should it be located?' (See <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Transport/FT/rep-pubs> for details).

### **Global Issues - ie those beyond a tactran FQP's direct control**

- 3.28 The group were keen that the FQP remember to consider global issues and ensure that travel by sea – seen by the group as one of the most environmentally friendly freight modes, is used when possible. Targets for biodiesel were believed to be what would drive the decision to choose sea freight over land freight.
- 3.29 Fuel duty and fuel costs affect companies in the **tactran** area because the area is seen as peripheral to the central belt. In some freight businesses, the fuel bill is 35% of the cost to the business. In a more positive light, the increase in fuel costs may make alternatives to road travel appear more attractive. This issue will affect inward investment decisions. The impact of the cost of fuel on Scottish businesses is currently being considered by Scottish Government.

- 3.30 Capacity on the rail line and conflicting proposals for use of the rail line is an issue the group felt needs to be addressed. In particular the imbalance of goods moved by rail eg more goods coming in than leaving.

**Changes to the *tactran* RTS**

- 3.31 The group suggested that changes to the RTS should reflect the freight aspects of the following three documents:
- Strategic Transport Project Review (STPR);
  - National Planning Framework update; and
  - Gordon Brown’s National Security Strategy.
- 3.32 The STPR is a major study to help shape Scotland’s transport network from 2012 until 2022 – see <http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/projects/strategic-transport-projects-review> for details. The review is expected to be complete by Summer 2008.
- 3.33 The group were pleased that the **NPF or STPR** have included relevant infrastructure projects.
- 3.34 It is believed that the National Security Strategy will have information about secure lorry parking contained within it.
- 3.35 The group pointed out that access to Grangemouth and Mossend has improved recently and this was no longer seen as a major issue for the region.
- 3.36 The group felt that the Kildean link (west of Stirling) was not sufficiently important to appear explicitly in the **tactran** RTS.

**Who should be involved in the FQP?**

- 3.37 The group believed that retailers and local businesses should be involved in the FQP, including senior representatives of companies such as:
- Tesco;
  - Marks & Spencer;
  - Highland Spring;
  - Strathmore;
  - Asda.
- 3.38 It was suggested that, in order to engage the retailers in the FQP, the group could refer to how the FQP might help them to reduce their carbon footprint. This was seen to be a selling point. However, it was suggested that companies such as those listed should only be invited to a FQP meeting after a tighter specification of what the FQP will do has been produced.
- 3.39 The Top 5 importers or exporters from the region need to be identified and invited to join the FQP. The group identified Wincanton and DHL as two of the larger logistics companies who should be involved and, who as stated previously, may be able to provide data on freight movements in the region.

- 3.40 Environmental groups such as RSPB and Friends of the Earth should be included.
- 3.41 Relevant Local authority representatives would need to be included.
- 3.42 The group felt that the traffic commissioner should not be involved in the FQP.
- 3.43 Other concerns about the FQP were:
  - the FQP should be continually doing things and getting results
  - it should not be 'just a talking shop';
  - the group should not be too big;
  - those who are invited should have some power to take action; and
  - it would need an active and effective steering group.

#### **4 Group B – Discussion Notes**

**Table 4.1 Attendees Group B**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Gordon Fleming	Dundee City Council – Economic Development
Nick Prag	Network Rail
Emily Dixon	Stirling & Tayside Timber Transport Group
David Eaglesham	Road Haulage Association
Paul Kyle	PKC – Perth Harbour
John Paterson	Montrose Port Authority
David Connolly	MVA Consultancy (facilitator)
Laura Price	MVA Consultancy (scribe)

4.1 This group’s discussions are summarised under the following seven headings:

- Issues raised by previous presentations
- ‘Are there any recent significant changes/developments which should be taken into account when considering the freight-related components of the **tactran** RTS strategy?’
- Current initiatives
- Funding
- ‘Is a formal **tactran** Freight Quality Partnership required/desirable?’
- Specific issues within the **tactran** region
- Opportunities in the **tactran** region

#### **Issues Raised by Previous Presentations**

- 4.2 The issue was raised regarding political and public attitude towards freight. The Scottish Government had a transport committee looking into freight issues around 2 years ago and various parties were invited to provide comments and input, including the Association of Directors of Transport. For various reasons it was difficult to get these Directors involved (possibly as they feared a negative reaction from the committee). The group felt that antipathy towards freight is deeply ingrained within politics, and goods vehicles get too much blame for causing congestion. EG noted that he did not feel this was a problem in the **tactran** RTP area.
- 4.3 This attitude mirrors the public perception, and the general negative feeling towards trucks and freight. The general public aren’t aware of a lot of the issues and the bigger picture, i.e. people seem to have misperceptions about how freight gets into shops. Maybe the freight industry needs to communicate better with the public in order to make them more aware of the realistic situation, and this in turn could influence the political climate.
- 4.4 Freight is often discussed at a political level, but people don’t seem to be aware of what is realistically involved, i.e. rules against night time delivery, the lack of rail freight capacity in Scotland and the rest of the UK. One member of the group noted “*We have to accept the reality that 70/75% of freight will still be carried by road*”.
- 4.5 It was pointed out that the current government has given the Road Haulage Association quite a good hearing with regards to various issues such as fuel prices.
- 4.6 Further to presentation on road projects, there was no mention of the work that’s been done on the A935 road access to Montrose port. Eric Guthrie assured the group that although the presentation didn’t cover this key access route it was still included in the **tactran** strategy.
- 4.7 Scandinavians are strong on idea of shipping short sea freight across the North Sea. One of issues impacting on this ‘joint working’ is the issue of confidentiality – even in Scandanavia all the local ports saw themselves as being in competition with one another, and finding out basic information regarding shipping movements/schedules is problematic. Hidden issues like this can really hamper the development of sea freight.

- 4.8 A similar issue concerns trading information with hauliers, i.e. Strathclyde are involved in conversations about developing a consolidation centre there. One of problems is the companies/suppliers are concerned about exchanging information with potential competitors.

**Are there any recent significant changes/developments which should be taken into account when considering the freight-related components of the *tactran* RTS strategy?**

- 4.9 The Aberdeen to Mossend gauge enhancement project has now been completed, removing a former gauge restriction as far as Aberdeen. Talks to improve gauge up to Inverness are also quite well advanced and relevant freight paths are still available.
- 4.10 The recent gauge enhancement was described by one member of the group as a 'low cost' solution (ie a pragmatic approach to get specific type of container wagons over this section of the rail network) and more still needs to be done to achieve a full rail freight-handling capability on the North East's rail network.
- 4.11 The Network Rail representative noted that the availability of funding was likely to restrict any further rail freight capacity improvements across the area in the short-term.
- 4.12 A proposed rail chord at Charlestown would provide improvements for cross-Forth rail freight and should be supported by **tactran**.
- 4.13 The industrial base of Dundee is changing significantly; former 'heavy industry' companies have closed down and there is now a lot less manufacturing undertaken in the area. The city has gone from a manufacturing base to a knowledge base in the last 20 years or so and the volume of conventional freight (inputs and outputs) has dwindled accordingly.
- 4.14 Cost of fuel is a major consideration, as it has recently gone up by around 35% in last year. Fuel accounts for 30% of a haulier's total costs, so fuel price increases therefore have a major impact. **tactran** should be considering the impact of fuel on its haulage businesses and supporting them to tackle this problem.
- 4.15 It was pointed out that this fuel-price trend should in theory benefit the ports.
- 4.16 Perth and Dundee have seen a lot of movement relating to the construction industry recently, particularly the transport of materials. Thousands of houses are needed and ten schools are being built. These have been clearly set out by the planning department. The movement is not all UK based, and a lot of materials have come in from the continent.

**Current Initiatives**

- 4.17 A recent initiative in Glasgow was highlighted, whereby Asda (in agreement with the local community) have agreed to out of hours deliveries, as part of the Strathclyde Quality Partnership.
- 4.18 Three supermarkets are currently in talks (Asda, Sainsburys and Marks & Spencer) about a combined investment in developing rail freight to some regional areas. There are currently discussions taking place between Daventry and Scotland, and the next step is to look at the north up to Inverness where they'll look at critical mass together.

- 4.19 However, the problem with big businesses lies in their scale of operations. They view their interests on a national rather than regional scale, i.e. a company such as Tesco may decide to only have one distribution centre for the whole of Scotland. Their 'playing field' is Scotland, rather than regions within Scotland.
- 4.20 Nestrans are aiming to look at smaller scale issues relating to freight, i.e. things that can be done at local bottlenecks such as reconfiguring traffic lights, filters, and non-car lanes at certain points to allow priority traffic to get through.

### **Funding**

- 4.21 Various sources of freight-related funding are available. The Scottish Timber Trust fund was cited, which has £5million of available funding every year for the next three years. However this funding can be difficult to access.
- 4.22 The Freight Facilities Grant was perceived as being particularly difficult to access. This significant source of funding is significantly under-spent every year, largely due to a number of criteria 'hurdles' that can be hard to overcome. The criteria need to be made more flexible, though it was pointed out that the constraints on obtaining this funding stem 'from Brussels' and the mechanisms that the European Commission have put in place to avoid being accused of anti-competition. Examples were cited of the fishing industry whereby inappropriate criteria were similarly in place for obtaining grants. Regional and national pressures were applied and parties were able to work together to get this criteria changed. There is something of a 'chicken and egg' situation, i.e. you need to be able to prove that developing new facilities is going to be economically viable, but until you develop these new facilities the businesses that will utilise these don't exist.
- 4.23 **tactran** could be the ideal vehicle for untapping this available funding and applying pressure to get criteria changed.
- 4.24 Bridges are also a critical issue, and funding these can quickly take up entire local authority road maintenance budgets. There is no political gain from spending money on bridges (unlike with road potholes), so getting a local focus on this is difficult.
- 4.25 It was noted that "*Piers are even more expensive than bridges*".

### **Is a formal *tactran* Freight Quality Partnership required/desirable?**

- 4.26 Any FQP should not just be 'a talking shop' – people come from business with busy jobs to take part, and it needs to produce results. Although it is important to look at the big picture, 'quick wins' are important in the first few years, i.e. things that can make a difference locally.
- 4.27 The FQP needs to have an administrative core and good direction, and cannot just rely on one person. Need to ensure that there is a group drive, so that should a key person leave the whole thing doesn't just 'fizzle out'
- 4.28 An FQP would be useful for tackling issues such as fuel costs which impact all parties, and would also enable tolerance to be built for more specific issues which might not be widely known about.
- 4.29 It would be useful to tackle specific issues rather than being too 'scattergun'. A focus on a few key issues would enable a bigger impact to be made.

- 4.30 The group were asked whether they thought **tactran** was the appropriate geographical unit for a freight quality partnership. In reality the **tactran** FQP would be as local as would be regional as it would be addressing local issues. It would be useful to work with other neighbouring FQPs, as there may be commonality of issues, or cross boundary concerns which need to be tackled at a level greater than **tactran**, i.e. linkage with the northeast is a key issue, and Aberdeen traffic is a major traffic and environmental issue for Dundee.
- 4.31 Many of the markets for the port of Montrose are outwith both tactran and nestrans areas (eg customers in Moray and the Inverness area). It was pointed out that the ports do already talk to one another through the Scottish Ports Committee of the British Ports Association (although Forth Ports are not a member of this as they are a member of major ports group down south).
- 4.32 It was felt that the group of people present at this forum was quite appropriate for the proposed FQP, though it would be useful to involve people at the front line and not just representatives of associations. Need key players from both big business and small business to come to meetings and comment from their point of view. EG noted that representatives of local business had been invited to the forum, but had been unable to attend.
- 4.33 A FQP needs to be clear what it is aiming to achieve.
- 4.34 What would the correct term for this be, 'forum' or 'partnership'? The group felt that **Freight Action Partnership** (ie stressing both the action and the partnership) would be a better name for it.

#### **Specific Issues within the tactran region**

- 4.35 Further to the earlier point raised, the theme of air freight was discussed. It was felt that cargo services to airports are really not a realistic proposition at such a small scale. It is a very complicated business, particularly with regard to the documentation and security aspects involved. The transport of people is much more cost viable than the transport of goods, unless the goods are of very high value and meet certain financial parameters. These goods that do fall into this category need to travel at night, i.e. at times when air travel is not allowed. The exception to this in Scotland is Prestwick, the bulk of which has historically generated by IBM.
- 4.36 There are also infrastructure issues involved – a large volume of freight needs to go into bonded storage as soon as it arrives at the airport and has to be held there until cleared by customs and all documentation is in place. The necessary infrastructure needs to be in place to cater for this, and is unlikely to be available at tactran airports.
- 4.37 A seminar was held last Saturday through the Stirling & Tayside Timber Transport Group, and a big issue raised by hauliers concerned the condition of the roads, especially the rural ones. Members felt that maintenance is lacking and with the increase in timber production the roads are getting worse. This situation is present throughout the region, though worse in Argyll and west of Scotland. This is something which **tactran** is currently liaising with Transport Scotland over.
- 4.38 It was pointed out that Deltix have spoken in some detail to all of the timber hauliers/exporters and feedback has indicated that the hauliers were fairly happy about the state of the roads on the eastern side of Scotland. This will become a pressing issue however if there is going to be an expansion of forestry. A lot of the small minor roads which are used for accessing the forests are

not suitable for carrying heavy lorries. The economy of the region is dependent on the timber industry and these roads need to be fit for purpose.

- 4.39 Designated routes must be considered as both a regional and cross-boundary issue. Designated routes show where bottlenecks are.
- 4.40 The potential of a third bridge at Perth to take traffic off the A90 should be considered, especially for trucks going to Aberdeen. **tactran** acknowledges that there are problems on A90 A94, and this encompasses other issues such as air quality in centre of Perth.
- 4.41 An issue surrounds secure truck stops and safety and security on roads. The working time directive dictates that drivers need to make regular stops and so need well signed places to park their vehicles. Around the west of Dundee there is often an issue whereby 30 trucks may be parked in laybys at night, even though there is a truck stop just up the road. Are they here because the truck stop is full, because it's not well signed/advertised, or because they prefer to save money by parking in a layby and sleeping in their lorries? It was noted that ports already provide these facilities – a fixed charge is in place per month for regular hauliers, which removes the need to identify each trailer but still allows revenue to be collected.

#### **Freight Opportunities in the *tactran* Region**

- 4.42 Michelin tyres were noted as a significant Dundee-based mover of large amounts of industrial freight, currently moving 8 million tyres, nearly all to Eastern Europe. The biggest handicap for the company is the cost of moving the finished product. At the moment these move via truck/superfast ferry from Rosyth. Could there be scope to expand freight business with this company in the **tactran** region?
- 4.43 Highland Spring was also mentioned as a significant generator of 'heavy' freight.
- 4.44 Other opportunities for freight included soft fruit from Angus and Perth and Kinross, and bulk materials coming into and going out of Montrose. We need to consider what is the key freight being moved, and will this be likely to change over time?
- 4.45 There is opportunity to involve the supermarkets, but someone like Tesco is needed to drive it. They move large quantities of goods into Dundee and so would be ideal. They have around 25 stores within reach of a railhead in Dundee.
- 4.46 The question of intermodality is often raised with regards to supermarket trade. However it is never fully explored as the infrastructure is not currently there and is not really a priority for investment. This is true of all ports within region, and those further afield such as Aberdeen. Opportunities here have been inhibited by major property development. Teesport is somewhat different as they have an ASDA distribution centre and so the critical mass is there.
- 4.47 Three ports in Sweden have come together in a 'twinning arrangement'. Is there opportunity to bring together the ports within **tactran** in this way? The emphasis here is on specialisms and building on the strengths of each particular port, rather than each port trying to provide everything and competing with other neighbouring ports.
- 4.48 Opportunities exist but there are three different types of ownership in these ports (local authority, trust port, and private port) and this needs to be considered. There are inhibitions and competitive issues involved, although ports elsewhere have managed to successfully overcome

such issues. It would be useful if **tactran** were to front/facilitate a move to help enable these three ports come together in an effective working arrangement.

- 4.49 The group were asked their view on regional distribution centres. There has to be the critical mass to justify this (i.e. Glasgow has a lot of people, and a lot of shopping centres so can justify such centres). Would a similar initiative be viable in Dundee with its population of around 150/200 thousand people? The volume of industry and business needs to be considered in order to determine whether or not a regional distribution centre would be viable.
- 4.50 Participants were asked to provide any further comments regarding the proposed Terms of Reference for the FQP to Mike Cairns/David Connolly by the end of the week.

## **5 Questions and Comments made from the floor during the Wrap Up Session**

- 5.1 Comment: GPS systems for freight companies which identify the roads and bridges that have height and weight restrictions were thought to be something that the FQP should investigate.
- 5.2 Question: "Should the FQP provide a list of what each of the 3 ports in the **tactran** area can offer?"
- 5.3 Answer: Yes. The FQP can help in prioritising development.
- 5.4 Comment: Less than 1% of goods go beyond Dover and so freight companies moving goods through the Tayside area are interested in improving the efficiency of movement in the local area. It was established that the FQP focus needs to be 95% domestic and 5% export.
- 5.5 Now is a good time to involve big business, particularly as environmental concerns such as carbon footprints are becoming increasingly important. The FQP needs to be appropriately 'sold' to these businesses, i.e. what are the incentives for getting large companies involved? There is no point approaching these companies until the FQP has a clear aim and 'something to say'.
- 5.6 It was agreed that it would be useful for the FQP to meet 6 monthly, but there would need to be an effective steering group who could make significant progress on agreed actions between meetings.

### TACTRAN REGIONAL FREIGHT QUALITY PARTNERSHIP

#### TERMS OF REFERENCE

##### Group Membership

- TACTRAN Director/Strategy Manager
- One or two officers to be nominated from each constituent Council; FTA; RHA; Chambers of Commerce; Stirling & Tayside Timber Transport Group; Confor; Transport Scotland; SCDI; Scottish Executive; Scottish Enterprise Forth Valley & Tayside; National Parks; Ports of Dundee, Montrose and Perth Harbour; Traffic Commissioner; Network Rail; rail freight operators; major hauliers/logistics operators; major freight producers and customers
- Secretariat provided by TACTRAN

##### Remit

- To bring together at a regional level stakeholders with an interest in freight movements
- To achieve a mutual understanding of stakeholder positions and problems by sharing issues of concern and identifying possible courses of action to resolve them
- To provide a forum for regional consultation on all relevant initiatives contained within the RTS and other relevant regional and national consultations
- To contribute to development and delivery of freight initiatives contained within the RTS
- To identify new opportunities and proposals for freight enhancement within the region
- To identify and examine the potential for joint activity, particularly in terms of rail and sea freight development, working towards sustainable distribution patterns, links with the forestry industry, promoting FQP initiatives and other initiatives
- To share best practice in freight distribution across all modes, taking account of environmental impacts and innovations in technology

##### Meetings

Meetings will generally be held six-monthly

##### Steering Group

A Steering Group will be formed to monitor and help drive progress on agreed actions

##### Working Groups

Working Groups will be formed as required to discuss and take forward specific initiatives