



## North East Scotland Freight Forum – Monday 21 May 2012

Aberdeen City Council Offices, Conference Room 4  
Marischal College, Broad Street, Aberdeen, AB10 1AB

### In Attendance:

Name	Organisation
Allan Malcolm	Peterson SBS
Andrew Robb	AECOM
Bill Kennedy	Kennedy Transport (Aberdeen)
Bill Walker	Walker Transport
Colin Lawson	Colin Lawson Transport
Dan Cathcart	Road Haulage Association
Derick Murray	Nestrans
Douglas Norris	CILT
Eddie Anderson	ARR Craib Transport Ltd
Graeme Robbie	BAA Aberdeen Airport Ltd
Greg Skinner	Peterson SBS
Ian Armstrong	Scottish Council Development & Industry
Ian Jessiman	Aberdeen Harbour
Jason Moir	Dyce Carriers
John May	Transport Scotland
Paul Finch	AECOM
Philip Smart	GreCoR
Rab Dickson	Nestrans
Richard Freeland	Freeland Freight Service
Sandy Hogg	James Jones & Sons Ltd
Vycki Shade	Aberdeen City Council

### Introduction

Chair Eddie Anderson welcomed all delegates to the fourth North East Scotland Freight Forum. He added that it was encouraging to see a cross-section of various interests represented in the room, including a contingent of local North East based hauliers.

Presentations were made by Rab Dickson of Nestrans, on the latest developments on Nestrans projects of freight interest, Philip Smart of Aberdeenshire Council on the GreCoR project, and Paul Finch of AECOM on work to identify priorities for future freight actions in North East Scotland.

Delegates were also provided with the opportunity to feedback in small groups on possible priorities for action in the new Freight Action Plan, roads issues, and any other areas of interest. The outcomes of these discussions are summarised below, with full notes from each group provided within the Appendix.

### **Update on Nestrans Projects of Freight Interest (*Rab Dickson, Nestrans*)**

Rab Dickson (Nestrans Transport Strategy Manager) updated the Forum on the progression of several projects. Of those of interest to the freight industry, it was noted:

- The legal challenge to the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR) will be considered in the Supreme Court on 9 and 10 July. Other schemes, as well as the locking in of the benefits of the AWPR, are dependent on the route progressing.
- Work to address the bottleneck at Inveramsay Bridge on the A96 is progressing and there is a long-term commitment to dualling the A96.
- Other key projects, such as the Third Don Crossing, have been progressed to “scheme ready” level.
- There has been investment in both Aberdeen and Peterhead harbours.
- Through a Strategic Transport Fund, there is a potential fund of £90m for strategic projects in the region over the next 20 years.

Reference was also made to the forthcoming rail freight event at the Scottish Government (Victoria Quay) on Thursday 24 May which is placing emphasis on investigating how small/medium sized operators could move small or infrequent loads by rail instead of road.

### **GreCoR Project (*Philip Smart, Aberdeenshire Council*)**

Philip Smart of Aberdeenshire Council presented GreCoR to the Forum. GreCoR (Green Corridors in the North Sea Region) is a new European freight related project which is being undertaken locally by Aberdeenshire Council, supported by Nestrans.

Philip stated that GreCoR provides a funding vehicle for freight in North East Scotland, and is a continuation of the StratMoS project, the work of which has been the focus of previous meetings of the Forum.

The project has robust objectives developed by a long list of partners in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Germany, Holland and Scotland.

While the funding provided by GreCoR prohibits investment in infrastructure, it can be used for feasibility studies, data collection and other research.

### **Possible Priorities for Action in the new Freight Action Plan (*Paul Finch, AECOM*)**

Paul Finch of AECOM presented outcomes from recent stakeholder consultations on the priorities for future freight actions in North East Scotland. He noted that a key challenge for the Freight Action Plan will be to ensure it continues to be relevant and appropriate, with the Freight Forum continuing to be a mechanism for communication.

Of the 35 actions in the Freight Action Plan, many of these have been delivered, and together with various issues (such as recent changes in local government administrations and new development plans), there is an opportunity to update the Plan.

Possible priorities for consideration relate to management issues, roads issues, and other issues. These areas formed the focus for small group workshop discussions in the second part of the Forum.

## Workshop Discussions

### **Management Issues**

Key issues included:

- Health and Safety Management Issues. Is there potential for a move to a common standard?
- The implications for abnormal load movements under a Single Police Force.
- Raising the image of the freight industry as a career in the context of an ageing (driver) workforce. The Road Haulage Association is looking for funding to support modern apprenticeships.
- The preparation and maintenance of a database of North East Haulage Companies.

Deleted: has funding available

### **Roads Issues**

Key Issues included:

- The potential for widening Dyce Drive.
- Concerns over current proposals to close the Marshall Trailers / A96 junction.
- Could freight vehicles be permitted to use bus lanes on Wellington Road?
- Improving the flow of traffic on Great Southern Road / the Bridge of Dee.
- The use of left turn only lanes on the lead up to roundabouts, but the difficulties this could cause for HGVs.
- The A96 dualling strategy must take cognisance of the effects on HGV movements (at roundabouts etc).

### **Other Suggestions**

Other issues raised by the floor included:

- The use of technology to communicate road closures etc.
- Co-ordination of planned roadworks.
- Problems for HGV flows caused by obstructive car parking.
- Issues with regard to freight movement on Market Street.

### **Conclusions**

Delegates were thanked for their valued time and contribution to the Forum.

It was agreed that, in due course, a set of minutes would be circulated inviting further comments, with the Forum reconvening in around six months time.

In closing, Derick Murray of Nestrans referred to work being undertaken on a health and safety campaign by BAA Aberdeen and the Robert Gordon University.

## **Appendix – Workshop Discussions**

### Group A – Management Issues

The break out table discussed actions relating to the Management Theme.

#### **Better Promote Capabilities / Local Database**

Overall the hauliers represented at the table observed that each haulier tends to have its own network of clients, who have been built up over time through personal contacts and networks, and perhaps there wasn't an overwhelming need for such an intervention at the current time.

#### **Operator Recognition Programme – Examples include FORS and EcoSTAR**

This would provide registered company with recognition in terms of their performance. Transport for London are currently rolling out the FORS scheme, which is being piloted in Newcastle. EcoSTAR has been launched in Edinburgh.

#### **Truck Awareness for Cyclists / School Children etc**

Some local operators already undertake exercises whereby trucks are demonstrated to specific target groups, in order to raise awareness of truck blind spots etc. It also indirectly provides a means to boost the image of the local sector. There was some support for building on this initiative.

#### **Clearer One Stop Website**

This may help to achieve better communication with freight interests in the North East.

#### **Promote SAFED driver CPD**

Issue here relates to funding available for these initiatives.

#### **Establish Better Links to RHA / FTA**

Attendance of these bodies at Freight Forum can assist, as well as RTP attendance at ScotFLAG meetings.

#### **Other Issues Discussed**

- The hauliers previously collaborated on common health and safety issues – common practice for local industry.
- Opportunity for training etc on abnormal load movements and requirements. Perhaps some changes due to move to single police force.
- Better use of Variable message signs and roadwork co-ordination.
- Key current problems for hauliers are generally fuel costs, and getting the right quality of staff. In north east a particular problem. Also many drivers getting older, fewer young drivers coming in at the bottom. Agency drivers a real issue with quality.

## Group B – Roads Issues

General titles were given for discussion and these are expanded upon below where comments were received.

### **Examine junction pinch points – impacts everyone not just freight**

Issues have been experienced in the assessment of traffic improvements for Wellington Road (access from the South study) as within the traffic models created the congestion occurring at Bridge of Dee impacts directly on the efficiency of the network on Wellington Road. No options can be tested on Wellington Road until the model network can suitably deal with Bridge of Dee traffic. Once this issue is resolved Wellington Road opportunities will be explored.

### **More efficient and consistent local traffic management – lines, signs, treatment of roundabouts, etc**

Dyce Drive – congestion is going to increase as further development comes on line along the corridor. There is an additional threat to accessibility to/from Dyce from the review of the Marshall Trailers junction where consideration is being given to closing the A96 central reservation on safety grounds. Objections have been made by Nestrans as it would move traffic onto other heavily congested points in the network or onto unsuitable rural roads. Delegates requested that some short to medium term traffic management options were considered pre AWPR e.g. open route to 3 lanes with central lane working in alternate directions at peak hours. Once AWPR is in place a new dualled section linking from AWPR junction to Airport junction will be installed (it is anticipated that this will be early in the construction programme) and this is expected to provide major relief to existing links.

Bridge of Dee roundabout lane discipline issues were raised by Grampian Police. This issue is currently being reviewed by the police along with the traffic management team from ACC. The problem is traffic on Great Southern Road using the left hand lane (less congested) to turn right into Bridge of Dee. Hatching maybe required to clarify the situation for drivers.

A further issue that was raised by delegates was the reallocating of lanes on roundabouts which appears to be undertaken with no regard to the turning movements of large vehicles. Examples (mostly in the Inverness area) were sited where entry lanes to roundabouts for straight ahead movements were moved from the left hand lane to the right hand lane (left lane being left turn only) and HGV's often end up overrunning the central island. Roundabouts at Nairn and north of the Kessock Bridge were particular problems.

### **Opportunities to contribute to planning of major road schemes, (and subsequently) road work proposals**

Dualling of the A96 is at a very early stage. Long term aspiration and consultation with stakeholders has commenced.

Stuart Wilson of Transport Scotland sent this comment prior to the meeting; "My colleagues, who are working on the A96 proposals, met various freight interests at the ScotFLAG (Scottish Freight & Logistics Advisory Group) meeting on 29 Feb 2012 at Victoria Quay. This included representation from the Freight Transport Association, Road Haulage Association and North East Transport Partnership.

Future freight discussions on the A96 will be conducted with further meetings of the ScotFLAG group and it may be appropriate, in the context of the query being raised, to consider how the North East Freight forum may best contribute to that through the ScotFLAG representatives."

The co ordination of roadworks was raised and proposed roadworks in Dyce were queried as signs say that Riverside Drive and Victoria Street were due to close at the same time. The following link is to ACC's website page for the roadworks in Aberdeen. It is clearly stated here that the proposed closures will operate at different times (see area north page). [http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/transport\\_streets/roads\\_pavements/road\\_closures.asp](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/transport_streets/roads_pavements/road_closures.asp)

**Freight priority within Aberdeen City Council**

Delegates requested that the use of bus lanes by HGV's be revisited. The initial study reviewed Wellington Road and was not taken forward following concerns being raised by cyclists and the bus companies. Consideration should be given to freight priority on Wellington Road.

**Car driver awareness of truck requirements.**

No comments were made regarding truck awareness.

## Group C – Other Suggestions / Areas of Interest

### **Notes on the discussion of Other Issues not included in first tranche**

A number of possible issues had been included, but there was an opportunity for other issues to be raised.

### **Electronic information**

Members raised the opportunity to better inform drivers through electronic media, of routing issues, particularly when emergency or unusual circumstances kick in. Sat nav and electronic information boards should give sufficient information to enable drivers to change route, sit out major delays or avoid congestion, which can impact on drivers' hours and cause serious problems. It was felt that current information is inadequate, unhelpful and sometimes misleading.

### **Co-ordination of roadworks**

It was suggested that there should be better co-ordination and advance warning of planned roadworks. Concerns were raised that both Riverview Drive and Victoria Street in Dyce appear to have works scheduled in the coming weeks.

### **Obstructive car parking**

It was noted that illegal car parking can cause delays or obstruction to HGVs. Examples given included Regent Quay beside Aberdeen Harbour, which has regular unregulated and uncontrolled parking due to no single organisation taking responsibility for enforcement.

### **Specific roads and routes causing concerns**

A number of specific concerns were raised, including Dyce Drive (particular concerns if Marshall Trailers road is stopped up), Bridge of Dee and Market Street.