

Strategy -
3b Revised RTS Guidelines

- Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update the Board on new guidance for Regional Transport Partnerships issued by Transport Scotland in October.

- Background

The guidance on Regional Transport Strategies was originally issued by the Scottish Government in March 2006. The 2006 guidance required RTPs to review their Regional Transport Strategies every four years.

Discussions between the Partnerships and the Scottish Government, bearing in mind that the Government has now decided not to proceed with their intended National Transport Strategy refresh, has concluded that it is not necessary to require RTPs to review their strategies at a stipulated timeframe. The current administration wants to take a less “hands on” approach and believes that it is appropriate to allow RTPs to determine the best time to review their strategies.

- Implications

The new guidance is attached as an Appendix to this report. This effectively means that the Nestrans Board will be able to determine whether or not a review or refresh of the Regional Transport Strategy is necessary.

There are a number of changes in the economic and legislative climate which might make a fresh look at the Regional Transport Strategy worthwhile. However, it is suggested that the key themes running through the RTS are effectively unchanged and that Nestrans should concentrate on delivering the approved strategy rather than reviewing the current document.

It may be appropriate to amend and adjust the Regional Transport Strategy to align it to the new Strategic Development Plan, ensuring consistency between land use planning and transportation, at which time it would also be possible to ensure that policies and proposals are consistent with legislative changes relating to Climate Change Act, reflect the current economic situation and the availability of funding to implement initiatives.

- Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board:

1. notes the new guidance on the production of Regional Transport Strategies; and
2. agrees to short-term focus on delivery of the approved strategy with a view to a future refresh to align with the new Strategic Development Plan.

RD/8 November 2010

Local Authority and Partnerships Team
Transport Policy

Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ
T: 0131-244 0361, F: 0131- 244 1423
keith.main@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Chairs of the Regional Transport Partnerships

Your ref:

Our ref:
B4284099

Date:
12 October 2010

Dear

**GUIDANCE ON REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGIES:
AMENDMENT TO TIMESCALES FOR REVIEW**

I am writing with regard to the current guidance on the development and publication of regional transport strategies - *Scotland's Transport Future: Guidance on Regional Transport Strategies* - which was published in March 2006.

Section 5 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 requires each Regional Transport Partnership (RTP) to draw up a transport strategy for its region and, in so doing, to have regard to any relevant guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers. Section 7 of the above Act sets out a statutory requirement to keep the strategies under review, and makes provision for their modification or renewal, but it does not set a timetable for such reviews. Sections 7(1)(c) and (3) of the Act provide that Ministers may give a direction to one or more RTPs to draw up a new transport strategy.


In meetings over recent months the Partnerships have pointed to the 2006 guidance which states, at paragraph 131, that the regional transport strategies should be reviewed and rolled forward every 4 years. A number of the Partnerships have taken the view that this requires them to begin the process of review, development and consultation very soon, so that fully revised and approved strategies could be in place by 2012. In response, the Scottish Government has emphasised that the Partnerships should be focused on demonstrating delivery against existing plans, rather than dedicating considerable time and other resources to the preparation of further studies, programmes and strategies. This view is consistent with Ministers' recent decision not to proceed further with the review of the National Transport Strategy, but to focus on the delivery of STPR and other existing commitments.

In line with this approach, Ministers have decided that the existing guidance should be amended to remove the reference to a four year review period. Instead, each RTP should continue to keep its strategy under review and will be able to decide on the most appropriate time to make modifications, or to review the entire strategy in the light of local circumstances. In coming to a decision on review, Partnerships should take account of objectives and projects delivered to date, budgetary considerations and, where appropriate, the local electoral cycle. Partnerships should also be aware of the opportunities for review provided by the development of local and strategic development plans, and ensure that close links are maintained between the transport and land use planning processes. It remains open to Ministers to direct one or more Partnerships to draw up a new strategy, should they consider it advisable or necessary to do so.

The detail of the amendments to the Guidance, which are restricted solely to the issue of the timing of any review of a regional transport strategy, are set out in the Appendix and take effect from 1 December 2010.

I have copied this letter to Councillor Alison Hay Head of Regeneration and Sustainable Development at COSLA, and to the Lead Officer in each of the Partnerships.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith Main". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a short horizontal line.

KEITH MAIN

Amendments to “Scotland’s Transport Future: Guidance on Regional Transport Strategies” - published March 2006

Guidance Paragraph	Original Text - 2006	Revised Text - 2010
112 (Bullet 1)	RTS: 10-15 year strategy reviewed, revised and refreshed every 4 years in line with the local government electoral cycle.	RTS: 10-15 year strategy to be kept under review, and modified or renewed as appropriate.
131	Section 7 of the Act requires RTPs to keep their strategy under review and, as necessary, make modifications or draw up a new strategy from scratch. The RTS should be reviewed and rolled forward every 4 years. If Ministers think a strategy is overdue for renewal, they can instruct the RTP to do this (it is not expected that this would happen other than in exceptional circumstances).	Section 7 of the Act requires RTPs to keep their strategy under review and, as necessary, make modifications or draw up a new strategy. Sections 7(1)(c) and (3) of the Act provide that Ministers may give a direction to one or more RTPs to draw up a new transport strategy.
132	When modifying or renewing its strategy, the RTP the objectives may not need a great deal of change, except insofar as some have been achieved during the previous 4 years and some new ones may be needed to reflect changes in the challenges and opportunities arising in the region.	When modifying or renewing its strategy, the RTP the objectives may not need a great deal of change, except insofar as some have been achieved and some new ones may be needed to reflect changes in the challenges and opportunities arising in the region.