
Strategy – 3c TEN-T Network Revisions

- Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update the Board on the revision process to the Trans-European TEN-T Network.

- Background

Trans European Network Background

European policymakers decided to establish the Trans-European transport network - a single, multimodal network that integrates land, sea and air transport networks throughout the Community allowing goods and people to circulate quickly and easily between Member States and assuring international connections. Establishing an efficient Trans-European transport network (TEN-T) is a key element in the re-launched Lisbon strategy for competitiveness and employment in Europe. The European Community is supporting the TEN-T implementation by several Community financial instruments and by loans from the European Investment Bank.

Grants are available, in particular under the TEN-T budget line and the Cohesion and European Development Funds. Grants are allocated to studies (from feasibility studies to comprehensive technical or environmental studies and costly geological explorations), helping to overcome early stage project difficulties, and to the works phase.

The Trans-European Transport Network Executive Agency (TEN-T EA) was created in 2006 to implement and manage the TEN-T programme on behalf of the European Commission. The original process was corridor based and produced 30 priority projects of which project No.14 West Coast Rail is relevant to Scotland, projects No.13 and No.26 link Ireland to the Continent via the UK, and projects No.15 Galileo and No.21 Motorways of the Sea are relevant throughout Europe.

TEN-T Policy Review

The Green Paper "Towards a better integrated Trans-European transport network at the service of the common transport policy" published in February 2009 opened the TEN-T policy review. This and subsequent documents have favoured a dual layer planning approach (as "option 3") which if adopted would have a "core network" as the top layer and a "comprehensive network" underneath. Six expert groups were set up and a consultation process was completed in September 2010. The major legislative proposal resulting from the Green Paper process will be a Commission proposal for the overhaul of the existing TEN-T Guidelines. The new/revised Guidelines could be ready for adoption by the Commission in 2011.

- Proposals from the policy review

European Commission officials have clearly indicated that the focus of the TEN-T network would be the connection of nodes and not the creation of corridors thus the new approach would be a core network that:

1) connects the Capital cities of member states (and others eg: Oslo);

- 2) connects key large cities (threshold quoted at approx 1million inhabitants; it is assumed that Glasgow would qualify);
- 3) connects main port clusters (stated as 12 specific cluster port areas);
- 4) connects ports under Motorways of the Sea criteria to those Capital cities where a sea leg is required in order to achieve a connection between capital cities. (example given of connecting Nicosia to Larnaca on the island of Cyprus);
- 5) with connections to outside the EU;
- 6) would not follow routes that were so circuitous that they would become unattractive; and
- 7) would include areas likely to become EU members in the future.

There would also be a comprehensive network in addition to the core network and that this comprehensive network would link other places and feed access to the core network. The comprehensive network is the subject of dialogue between member states and the Commission. It is proposed that the core network should include the existing 30 priority projects – thus it would be the intention to include the route of the West Coast rail line London to Glasgow.

- Implications

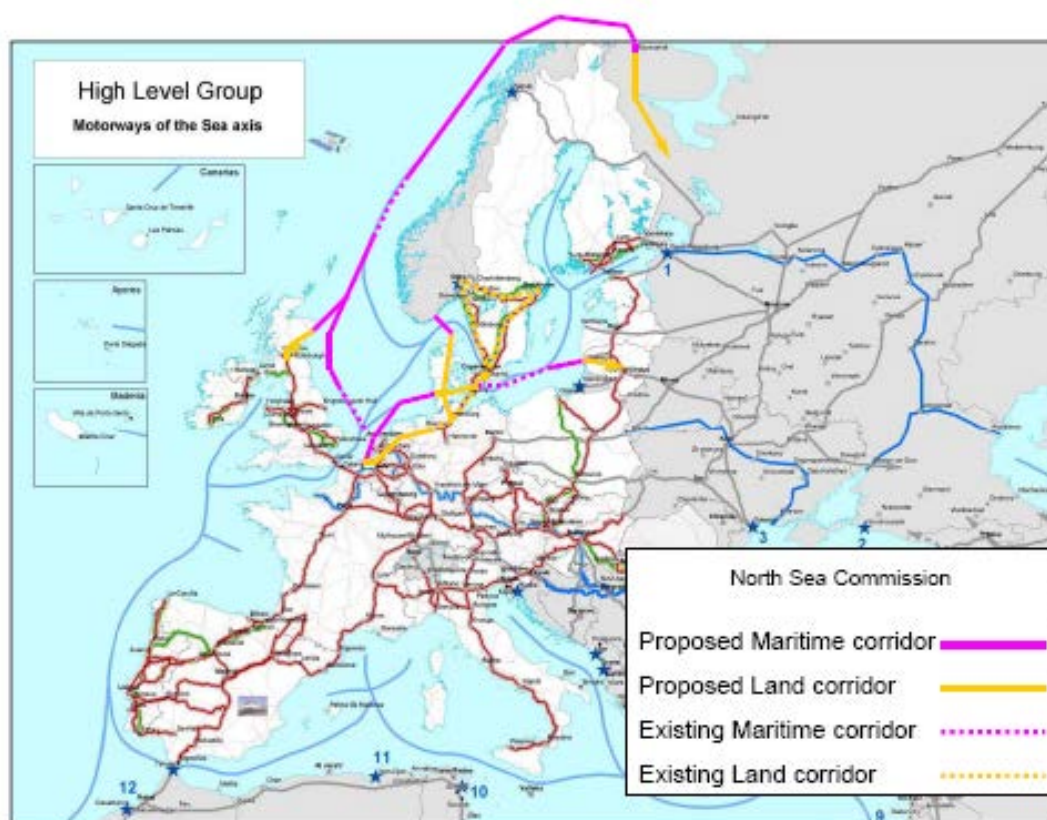
It is difficult to envisage that anywhere in the North East Scotland Area would qualify as a node on any new Core Network unless the criteria are dramatically revised. Aberdeen is already present on the previous TEN-T network as regards the rail lines and some main trunk routes but not as part of any priority project.

It would be reasonable to assume that these links to Aberdeen would continue through to the next revision of the network at the comprehensive level but the existing network does not include shipping links as the Motorways of the Sea concept is more recent. Through the StratMoS project (of which both Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City are members with Nestrans contributing to that membership), alternative sets of criteria have been developed to help the Commission give greater weight to the needs of more peripheral regions ie: those outside the envelope of proposed core network links. These ideas have been presented to Commission officials and as part of a wider lobbying effort. The work involved being 50% funded by the InterReg IVB programme.

- Progress

A number of ideas for criteria to help funding applications and give visibility to transportation in North East Scotland were developed under regional involvement in the StratMoS project. This work was input to the North Sea Commission transport group who endorsed a number of the proposals for network design and furthermore gave specific mention to two geographic locations in their final submissions; namely Aberdeen and Gothenburg. These ideas were further endorsed by the NSC Executive group and became the NSC official position in a final text which included: "We furthermore believe that the future TEN-T policy should integrate the 2007 Communication from the Commission on "Guidelines for transport in Europe and neighbouring regions". Of the five transnational axes identified in this Communication, the NSC is particularly concerned with extending the Motorways of the Sea network (from Aberdeen linking with the UK and from the various Benelux ports on the continent) along the Norwegian coast all the way to the Barents Region and North-West Russia, and with the Northern axis connecting the northern EU with Norway to the north."

The map endorsed by NSC Transport group is shown



- Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board agrees to support action in the following areas;

1. For North East Scotland to lobby for:
 - a) substantial recognition of the area in the UK's comprehensive network via UK government;
 - b) links between the comprehensive network nodes in this region with relevant nodes in other nation states and third country networks via UK Government and lobby through partners to their National Governments;
 - c) status for the Northern Maritime Corridor route to link to third countries Russia and Norway and the hinterland connections for North East Scotland ports to act as the Northern Gateway for the UK through existing channels, NSC, CPMR, StratMoS etc; and
 - d) recognition that the most appropriate route for a Core network link between the nodes of Glasgow and Oslo is by land from Glasgow to North East Scotland and from Oslo- Stavanger and a maritime link in-between. That this be done in partnership with other regions and through existing channels, NSC, CPMR, StratMoS etc.
2. That actions a) and b) are most appropriately a focus for Nestrans itself and that this needs to be coordinated with actions c) and d) through the Councils and their positions on relevant groups and relevant project organisations.