

**Nestrans Freight Action Plan 2013
Draft for Consultation**



NORTH EAST SCOTLAND
**FREIGHT
FORUM**



nestrans

**Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL**



Executive Summary

Introduction

The Freight Action Plan (FAP) sets out how Nestrans and its partners can assist in the delivery of more effective and efficient freight operations, for the wider benefit of the north east of Scotland. Critical to the success of this Plan will be the pursuit of initiatives that can add value to what is typically an efficient, effective and commercially-driven sector.

Since 2009, Nestrans, together with Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council, have engaged with the local freight sector to progress the delivery of the Actions contained in the initial plan. Following a review of progress in 2012, the Nestrans Board approved that a refresh of the FAP be undertaken.

This updated Freight Action Plan (FAP2) has been developed based on lessons learned during the implementation of the initial plan, with a bottom-up approach adopted to shaping a revised Plan followed through consultation with individual hauliers and key stakeholders undertaken in 2012, and also feedback gained from a Freight Forum event held in May 2012. Meetings of the Freight Forum have continued to be held, with the most recent meeting taking place in March 2013.

Vision and Objectives for the Freight Action Plan

The Vision of the Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) is as below. We have adopted this for the Freight Action Plan.

A transport system for the north east of Scotland which enables a more economically competitive, sustainable and socially inclusive society.

We have identified five specific objectives for the Freight Action Plan. These aim to deliver:

- a) An economically competitive freight industry that supports the economy of the north east.
- b) A freight sector that can successfully respond to national and local environmental targets.
- c) A local and strategic transport network which enables the reliable and efficient movement of goods.
- d) Benefits for the north east freight industry which are realised through the ongoing development and delivery of wider transport and economic development initiatives.
- e) An engaged local freight sector provided with a platform to communicate freight issues, identify opportunities and propose solutions to benefit the north east.

The focus of this Freight Action Plan will be on the following themes, each supported by a number of specific outcomes.

Management

- A Sustain an **organisational framework** for the delivery and ongoing development of the Freight Action Plan for north east Scotland.
- B Promote an **informed awareness** of the north east's freight industry and its requirements amongst local and national government and stakeholder organisations.

Adding Value to the North East Freight Industry

- C **Maximise beneficial outcomes** for the north east's freight industry in the ongoing delivery of the National, Regional and Local Transport Strategies, and associated economic development and spatial planning initiatives.
- D Facilitate the collection and dissemination of **information and best practice** to improve the economic and environmental performance of the north east's freight industry.

Road Freight, Sea Freight, Rail Freight, Air Freight

- E Support beneficial **service development** for the needs of the north east economy.
- F Seek to improve the **local and strategic transport networks**.
- G Seek to improve the efficiency of **transshipment, interchange and delivery**.
- H Seek to improve **environmental performance of freight transport**.

Proposed Actions

Management	
A. Sustain an organisational framework for the delivery and ongoing development of the Freight Action Plan for north east Scotland.	1. Monitor the Freight Action Plan, with a commitment to regular progress reports to the Nestrans Board, and an agreed process and timescale for review and revision.
	2. Periodically review the structure, remit and approach of the North East Freight Forum and associated Implementation Group.
	3. Sustain a regular Freight Forum to enable communication between the north east industry, the freight industry and public sector partners.
B. Promote an informed awareness of the north east's freight industry and its requirements amongst local and national government and stakeholder organisations.	4. Publish and distribute the revised Freight Action Plan in hard copy, and on the Nestrans website.
	5. Further develop and maintain a dedicated "one-stop" webpage for the Freight Action Plan and Freight Forum on the Nestrans website, including links to national freight resources.
	6. Promote the capabilities of the north east Scotland freight sector as a whole through the creation of a local database of companies, capabilities, and local specialisms.
	7. Pro-actively seek formal and informal opportunities to present the needs and successes of the north east's freight industry, through stakeholder and industry presentations, the European GreCOR project, transport related events, and effective media strategies and press releases, to boost the image and profile of the sector.
	8. Continue to develop, maintain and strengthen links to other bodies including the Road Haulage Association (RHA), the Freight Transport Association (FTA), and The Scottish Freight and Logistics Advisory Group (ScotFLAG).
Adding Value to the North East Freight Industry	
C. Maximise beneficial outcomes for the north east's freight industry in the ongoing delivery of the	9. Provide appropriate opportunities for the freight industry (through the Freight Forum) to contribute to the development and delivery of relevant transport projects and initiatives, including the roll out of the construction of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR), A90 Balmedie-Tipperty dualling, and proposals for the A96 upgrade to dual-carriageway standard.

<p>National, Regional and Local Transport Strategies, and associated economic development and spatial planning initiatives.</p>	<p>10. For relevant national, regional and local consultation opportunities (both formal and informal), ensure that the needs of the north east's freight industry are consistently and effectively made, through the Freight Forum.</p> <p>11. Improve communication with Local and Strategic Planning Authorities to support freight infrastructure development. This includes improved understanding of the land requirements for new haulage bases.</p>
<p>D. Facilitate the collection and dissemination of information and best practice to improve the economic and environmental performance of the north east's freight industry.</p>	<p>12. Nestrans and its partners will seek to promote opportunities that arise on the back of involvement in European Research, notably the GreCOR project.</p> <p><i>GreCOR (Green Corridor in the North Sea Region), which is being undertaken locally by Aberdeenshire Council, supported by Nestrans, has a focus on freight corridors and logistics hubs and covers all transport modes. GreCOR will therefore provide an opportunity for work on many of the actions in this revised Freight Action Plan for north east Scotland where they also meet the project objectives.</i></p> <p>13. Nestrans and its partners will monitor trends in freight transport in the north east, through interrogation and dissemination of national statistics, presenting these within its annual monitoring report.</p> <p>14. Where appropriate, desktop and on-site research will be undertaken to confirm core freight flows, when this adds specific value to the wider objectives and actions contained in the Freight Action Plan.</p> <p>15. Nestrans, its partners, and the Freight Forum will support the adoption of best practice in freight operations in north east Scotland through ties with the Road Haulage and Freight Transport Associations, and Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT). This includes freight efficiency and environmental performance.</p> <p>16. Nestrans and local authorities will continue to examine measures to improve communication between Councils and freight operators with regards to information on road closures and diversions.</p>
<p>Road Freight Actions</p>	
<p>E. Support beneficial service development for the needs of the north east economy.</p>	<p>17. Nestrans and its partners will undertake research to gauge the potential impact of changing trends in the energy industry on local freight interests, and future development of strategic freight links.</p>
<p>F. Seek to improve the local and strategic transport networks.</p>	<p>18. Through the RTS, Nestrans and its partners will continue to support measures to address congestion at key pinch points on the north east's road network, particularly the Haudagain and Bridge of Dee roundabouts, and completion of the following road enhancement schemes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR). • A90 Balmedie-Tipperty dualling. • A96 Dualling. <p>Nestrans also supports the removal of constraints on the trunk road network at Inveramsay Bridge, and is currently progressing a study investigating transport improvements in the Bridge of Dee area.</p> <p>19. Nestrans and its partners will undertake a study to determine the strategic needs of Aberdeen's freight industry in relation to the future development of strategic freight routes such as the A90 and A96 corridors.</p> <p><i>Transport Scotland and local agencies are currently considering</i></p>

	<p><i>improvements to these key freight corridors.</i></p> <p><i>Consideration is also possible of how these corridors currently perform with respect to established Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) corridor standards, and identification of possible mitigation to achieve these standards.</i></p> <p>20. Undertake a review of signage to key freight destinations in the north east, seeking to identify any gaps in existing information.</p> <p>21. Consider opportunities to use roadside Variable Message Signing (VMS) and assess the feasibility of other ITS interventions to better inform truck drivers of key information affecting freight routes such as closures, diversions or roadworks.</p> <p>22. Nestrans and its partners will support the proposals for a dedicated lorry parking area as detailed in the specification for the proposed Park and Ride site at Schoolhill, north of Portlethen.</p>
<p>G. Seek to improve the efficiency of transshipment, interchange and delivery.</p>	<p>23. Nestrans, its partners, and the Freight Forum will continue to promote a systematic review of road access to key freight hubs and industrial areas, with the aim of identifying both quick-win and longer term opportunities to improve freight access, including through examination and action to remove junction “pinch points” on the network.</p> <p>24. Continue to disseminate north east Area Freight Maps to drivers across the north east of Scotland, and explore opportunities to extend their coverage to non-local hauliers.</p> <p>25. Nestrans and its partners will examine, and where appropriate, promote more consistent local traffic management at the key junctions in and around Aberdeen.</p> <p>26. Nestrans and its partners will continue to consider and assess opportunities to provide Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) priority on the principal freight routes into Aberdeen City Centre.</p> <p>27. Nestrans and its partners will progress the findings of the study considering how freight distribution within Aberdeen’s Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) could be made more efficient, reducing associated air quality problems and carbon emissions.</p> <p>28. Nestrans and its partners will continue to explore opportunities to further develop intermodal freight in the region, particularly at the existing rail freight terminal at Craiginches.</p>
<p>H. Seek to improve environmental and safety performance of freight transport.</p>	<p>29. Drawing on the latest policy guidance, Nestrans and Aberdeen City Council will continue to consider the potential for establishing a Low Emission Zone (LEZ) in Aberdeen City, and assess the impact of any scheme on HGV/LGV movements in the city centre.</p> <p>30. Working with local and national partners, opportunities for piloting Alternative Fuels (as part of anticipated future national pilot schemes) will be considered, either for local servicing, or for longer distance deliveries.</p> <p>31. Promote and encourage Safe and Fuel Efficient Driving (SAFED) driver training within the context of Driver’s Certificate of Professional Competence (DCPC).</p> <p>32. Promote awareness of freight vehicle requirements amongst car drivers and vulnerable road user groups such as cyclists and pedestrians, particularly relating to the types of manoeuvres required at junctions, vehicle blind spots etc.</p> <p>33. Nestrans and its partners will undertake a review of accident locations involving freight vehicles with a view to identifying the key locations where interventions could help improve problem junctions.</p>

	<p>34. Nestrans and its partners will consider ongoing work on reducing conflict between HGVs and vulnerable users undertaken elsewhere in the UK, and then seek to implement local demonstration projects.</p> <p>See Action 15 – Dissemination of Best Practice</p>
Sea Freight Actions	
<p>E. Support beneficial service development for the needs of the north east economy.</p>	<p>35. Nestrans will support Aberdeen Harbour and other harbours in the north east in the promotion of short sea, and international shipping opportunities.</p>
	<p>36. Aberdeen Harbour Board’s masterplan for the expansion of the Harbour into Nigg Bay provides significant prospects for improved facilities, and increased efficiency for the north east freight and logistics sector. Nestrans and its partners will engage with the ongoing development of the masterplan, and seek to identify and promote wider improvements for regional freight and logistics services and facilities which will support the north east economy. A specific early focus will be with respect to multi-modal freight transfer, and freight hub development (Action 28).</p>
	<p>37. Nestrans will continue to support the maintenance and ongoing development of the Northern Isles lifeline ferry service, with Aberdeen Harbour as the principal Scottish Mainland port.</p> <p>See Action 12 – European Research Projects See Action 17 – Freight Impact of Energy Industry</p>
	<p>See Action 18 – Completion of Strategic Road Improvement Schemes See Action 19 – Freight Requirements of A90/A96</p>
<p>F. Seek to improve the local and strategic transport networks.</p>	<p>See Action 12 – European Research Projects See Action 23 – Access to Freight Hubs See Action 28 – Freight Hub Research</p>
<p>G. Seek to improve the efficiency of transshipment, interchange and delivery.</p>	<p>See Action 12 – European Research Projects See Action 23 – Access to Freight Hubs See Action 28 – Freight Hub Research</p>
<p>H. Seek to improve environmental performance of freight transport.</p>	<p>See Action 12 – European Research Projects See Action 15 – Dissemination of Best Practice</p>
Rail Freight Actions	
<p>E. Support beneficial service development for the needs of the north east economy.</p>	<p>38. Nestrans and its partners will further explore the potential to move freight by rail, and seek to harness opportunities that might emerge from new freight flows.</p>
	<p>39. Nestrans will continue to facilitate discussion between local freight operators and the Scottish Government, regarding the opportunities provided by, and the specific application of, grant funding schemes to encourage modal shift. These include the Freight Facilities Grant (FFG) and the Mode Shift Revenue Support scheme (MSRS).</p>
	<p>40. Nestrans and its partners will support an initial examination of the case for running longer freight trains to the north east, relative to the potential for an additional multi-modal freight service.</p>
	<p>41. Examine the barriers (and opportunities to overcome these barriers) of incorporating lo-loader container wagons on the Grangemouth – Aberdeen rail freight route.</p>
<p>F. Seek to improve the local and strategic transport networks.</p>	<p>42. Nestrans and its partners will continue to pursue the strategic development of the regional and national rail network, for the benefit of both passenger and freight flows. This will primarily be achieved through the delivery of the Nestrans Rail Action Plan.</p>

G. Seek to improve the efficiency of transshipment, interchange and delivery.	See Action 12 – European Research Projects See Action 23 – Access to Freight Hubs See Action 28 – Freight Hub Research
H. Seek to improve environmental performance of freight transport.	See Action 12 – European Research Projects See Action 15 – Dissemination of Best Practice
Air Freight Actions	
E. Support beneficial service development for the needs of the north east economy.	43. Continue to provide a feedback mechanism between the airport, freight bodies, and north east industry through the Freight Forum, the North East Transport Consultative Forum (NETCF), and other existing airport consultation groups.
F. Seek to improve the local and strategic transport networks.	44. Nestrans will support measures which will enable improvement in the level of service, and overall efficiency of Aberdeen Airport’s air freight services.
G. Seek to improve the efficiency of transshipment, interchange and delivery.	45. Nestrans will continue to work with the operators of Aberdeen Airport, to support the implementation of the Airport Surface Access Strategy.
	46. Nestrans will collaborate with the operators of Aberdeen Airport to undertake a needs assessment for improved air cargo services and freight handling capabilities.
H. Seek to improve environmental performance of freight transport.	It is recognised that the Freight Action Plan cannot significantly influence the environmental performance of air freight, although there is support for international and national initiatives that may influence this.

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1. Introduction

Preface

1.1 As an outcome of the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) refresh undertaken in 2013, Nestrans has committed to the development of an update of its Freight Action Plan (FAP).

1.2 Following early consultation and development alongside the freight sector in 2008, the initial FAP was approved by the Nestrans Board in October 2009, and issued as a supporting document to their RTS.

1.3 Since 2009, Nestrans, together with Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council, have engaged with the local freight sector to progress the delivery of the actions contained in the initial Freight Action Plan. Following a review of progress in 2012, the Nestrans Board approved that a refresh of the FAP be undertaken.

1.4 This Freight Action Plan (FAP2) has been developed based on lessons learned during the implementation of the initial plan, with a bottom-up approach adopted to shaping a revised Plan followed through consultation with individual hauliers and key stakeholders undertaken in 2012, and also feedback gained from a Freight Forum event held in May 2012. Meetings of the Freight Forum have continued to be held, with the most recent meeting taking place in March 2013.

Background

1.4 The Freight Action Plan sets out how Nestrans and its partners can assist in the delivery of more effective and efficient freight operations, for the wider benefit of the north east of Scotland. Critical to the success of this Plan will be the pursuit of initiatives that can add value to what is typically an efficient, effective and commercially-driven sector.

1.5 Integrated Transport is one of the key factors underpinning the economy of north east Scotland, and has been identified as a priority issue for Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Future (ACSEF). The efficient and effective movement of freight is a priority for all manufacturers, their suppliers and their customers. It affects retailers, their supply and distribution chain, and consumers. It impacts on the service and leisure sectors, and the agricultural and forestry sectors. Despite the importance of freight, across Scotland, it has perhaps not benefited from the level of attention afforded to other elements of the transport network.

1.6 The ongoing success of the Freight Action Plan requires continued effective collaboration with north east Scotland's business community, the freight industry and between Nestrans, Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council. These organisations and groups therefore share the responsibility for delivering the actions outlined in Section 4 of the Plan.

European Research Project Support

1.7 There has been a significant amount of work undertaken in recent years on projects part funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The Northern Maritime Corridor II (NMCII) project was completed in 2008, and a further project, Motorways of the Seas Strategic Demonstration project (StratMoS), was undertaken between 2008 and 2011. With regard to the latter, Aberdeenshire Council, supported by Nestrans and Aberdeen City Council, were partners in this project which supported freight policy development in north

east Scotland. In Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, the project aimed to examine the possibility of establishing a regional freight hub and the possibility of improving the connectivity between the ports and railway terminals. This then led to a test on the improved connectivity on a selected pilot based on studies of the regional traffic flows. Full project results are available from www.stratmos.com. Key activities supported in north east Scotland included:

- a) Studies undertaken on freight flows in north east Scotland;
- b) Recyclate freight flows selected for further analysis as to the ability to aggregate into suitable volumes for multimodal transport;
- c) The production and dissemination of regional freight maps identifying specific constraints on the network;
- d) Studies into HGV parking activity in the region;
- e) Dissemination of study outcomes through the regional Freight Forum;
- f) In Aberdeen, a specific investment in pilot prioritising traffic signals for HGV flows which were then tested and measured; and
- g) A specific proposal to create a new multimodal terminal with sub-studies on prospective locations under differing scenarios and their respective rail connectivity.

1.8 Work has now commenced on another ERDF part funded project called GreCOR (Green Corridor in the North Sea Region), which is being undertaken locally by Aberdeenshire Council, supported by Nestrans. GreCOR has a focus on freight corridors and logistics hubs and covers all transport modes. GreCOR will therefore provide an opportunity for work on many of the actions in this revised Freight Action Plan for north east Scotland where they also meet the project objectives. It is also anticipated that the outcomes of the GreCOR project can feed into wider strategic objectives and targets for freight at the European Union (EU) level. The GreCOR project has provided a key mechanism for developing the revised Freight Action Plan with hauliers, key stakeholders and the Freight Forum.

Structure of Document

1.9 This Action Plan is structured as follows:

- a) Key Issues Affecting Freight in north east Scotland;
- b) Vision and Objectives;
- c) Proposed Actions; and
- d) Review of Delivery Structure.

1.10 Appendices are also provided which illustrate the links between the Freight Action Plan and the Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy, and which set out the performance indicators that have been adopted to monitor delivery of this FAP.

2. Key Issues

Introduction

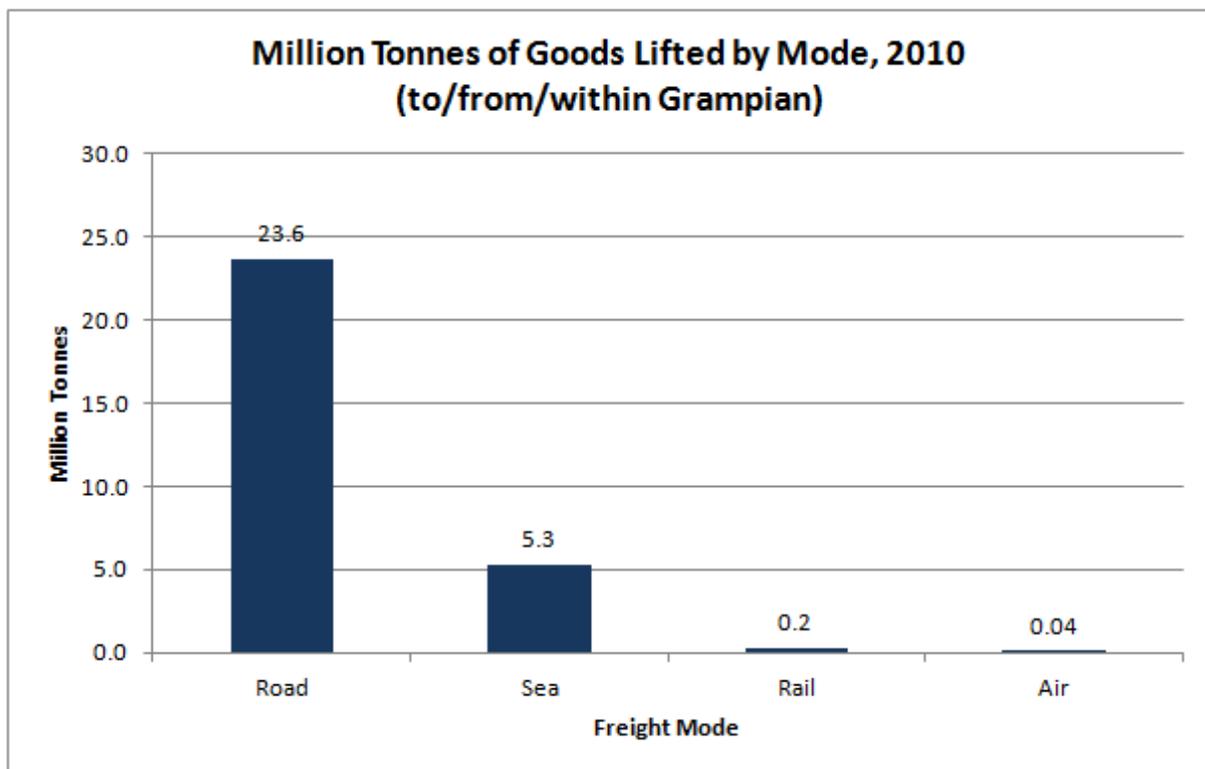
2.1 There are a number of specific issues facing the freight industry in north east Scotland. These have been identified through review of various documents, principally:

- a) The National Transport Strategy (NTS) and National Freight Action Plan (2006);
- b) The Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy 2021 (2008); and
- c) The 2008 Aberdeen City Local Transport Strategy (LTS) and the 2012 Aberdeenshire LTS.

Issues have also emerged during consultation with stakeholders during the development, and update, of this Plan.

2.2 What has emerged as a top priority is the necessity for the freight industry to contribute to a successful national, regional and local economy. What is also becoming increasingly apparent is the requirement to make meaningful progress towards Scotland’s 2050 statutory 80% carbon emissions reduction target.

2.3 Around 30 million Tonnes of goods (excluding oil and gas in pipelines) are moved to/from and within the Grampian¹ area per year. As illustrated by Figure 2.1 below, road haulage plays the central role in the transport of freight to/from and within the region, when the different modes are compared on the basis of “Tonnes Lifted”.



Statistics extracted from Nestrans Annual Monitoring Report (Scottish Transport Statistics and NESRFDG²)

¹ Nestrans is the Transport Partnership for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. The Grampian area covers Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray Council areas. Grampian is maintained as a statistical entity within published freight statistics.

² North East Scotland Rail Freight Development Group

2.4 Based on “Tonnes lifted”, sea freight is also an important component of the region’s freight network, undoubtedly supported by the oil and gas sector. Rail freight is estimated to have a 1% share of the local freight network. Local air freight (routed via Aberdeen Airport) also plays a part in the regional freight network, but its significance is perhaps under-represented in the tonnes lifted statistic, as it is frequently used for low weight, high value items. Often, instead of being carried in a plane from Aberdeen, goods are trucked as “air freight” from Aberdeen to larger airports such as Manchester or Heathrow.

2.5 It is also noted that there is a considerable degree of inter-relation between the various freight modes – for example, road haulage is typically an essential element of rail freight, sea freight and air freight, whereas some harbour traffic arrives by sea and departs by sea.

2.6 Not included in the statistics above is the movement through pipeline. A significant proportion of freight (oil and gas) in the region is transported by pipeline. In 2010, 27.6 million Tonnes of oil equivalent was carried by pipeline in Scotland. This can be assumed to have mostly passed through the north east via the St Fergus and Cruden Bay landfalls.

Common Issues for the Scottish Freight Sector

2.7 There are a number of trends that are impacting upon the whole of the Scottish freight sector. These have previously been captured in detail within the Scottish Freight Action Plan (2006), and include the following elements:

- a) Changing patterns of economic activity – changing locations of production; wider sourcing and distribution of goods; new markets in an expanding (eastwards) Europe, in Asia and South America; ongoing demand for imported consumer goods;
- b) Changing nature of balance in traffic – both Scotland to UK and Scotland to EU;
- c) Increasing pressures on delivery performance – growth in on-line retail sales, demand for Just-In-Time delivery, and tighter delivery windows; and
- d) Ongoing developments in freight logistics, with increased out-sourcing of logistics services, increased efficiency driven by efficient hub and spoke networks, centralised distribution centres, and partnering arrangements.

2.8 Associated with these trends, the following issues are common across Scotland:

- a) Traffic congestion, which reduces the efficiency of freight operations;
- b) Pressure to make meaningful contributions to reductions in carbon emissions from freight, through more sustainable and more efficient freight distribution;
- c) Managing the impacts of increasing and volatile fuel prices, potentially felt more acutely in Scotland due to longer distances to key markets;
- d) Associated concern regarding Vehicle and Fuel Taxation policies;
- e) Addressing a negative wider perception of the freight industry in order to attract the wide range of business skills required for the future;
- f) An increasing emphasis being placed on environmental performance, including on the impact of goods movement on local air quality, noise and other adverse amenity impacts;
- g) Ensuring that the landside transport connections with Scotland’s ports is as effective as possible; and
- h) A lack of appropriate freight and logistics data for transport planning.

2.9 The Scottish Freight and Logistics Advisory Group (ScotFLAG) was set up to increase sustainable economic growth and draws on the importance of freight movement in the transport sector. ScotFLAG aims to:

- a) Advise on and monitor delivery of freight policy in Scotland in order to achieve national outcomes and objectives;
- b) Consider the impact of wider Government policies on the movement of freight ; and
- c) Prioritise and co-ordinate action taken by industry and other stakeholders in response to government policies.

2.10 The Road Haulage Association, the Freight Transport Association, Regional Transport Partnerships (including Nestrans), the Scottish Council for Development and Industry, Scottish Enterprise, Highland and Islands Enterprise, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), Transport Scotland and the Scottish Government are all represented on the group. ScotFLAG meets approximately twice per year to monitor progress of freight issues through the National Freight Action Plan.

Some Specific Issues for the Nestrans Area

Peripherality from Markets

2.11 A key issue that affects the whole of the north east of Scotland's freight industry is the distance, time and costs for goods to reach centres of population in the UK, and the EU – as well as the distance, time and cost to access the UK's main import / export hubs which are located on the south and east coasts of England. The issue of peripherality is compounded by the changing nature of key market origins and destinations, high and volatile fuel prices, the requirements of the Working Time Directive, and limitations on the capacities and suitability of alternative modes.

2.12 In addition to this, high land values (relative to the Central Belt) in and around Aberdeen constrain the potential development of new or expanded operational logistics bases.

Wider UK Economic Performance

2.13 The ongoing economic and financial constraint affecting the UK has continued. Despite this, it is noted that the oil and gas sector within the Aberdeen area remains buoyant, and this has consolidated its position as a key hub in the global oil and gas supply chain.

2.14 Overall, the economic downturn has had the impact of increasing pressures for cost efficiencies in the supply chain. It has also made the cost of capital borrowing more expensive for companies, meaning that opportunities for capital investment have become more limited.

2.15 Other than oil and gas related freight, it is anticipated that volumes of goods moved into the area (principally retail) and out of the area (some manufacturing, food products) is more limited, due to reduced consumption and retail / manufacturing contraction.

2.16 The *North-east Transport Survey* undertaken by the Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce (AGCC) in 2012 highlighted that while costs have risen the most for businesses in the last 12 months due to fuel increases – and this is anticipated to continue – the business sector in the north east is generally positive about present performance, and there is an optimistic outlook. This includes confidence amongst the business community

that there will be an improvement in infrastructure over the next three years to help support growth.

Back-loading and Balance of Traffic

2.17 The key for successful and efficient freight operations is ensuring high utilisation, with both the outward and return leg of a journey being productive. Until recently, the flow of goods to and from the Grampian region was reasonably balanced – although it is recognised that there are variations by freight mode and commodity – with the regional food manufacturing and processing industry, paper making, forestry, the agricultural sector and oil and gas related activity helping to balance the inward flow of retail supplies and raw materials. However, the contraction of the paper making industry, as well as reductions in timber and agricultural haulage has changed the historic balance of freight flows in and out of the region.

Freight Forum

2.18 Within north east Scotland, there is recognition of the importance of freight issues. The development of this Freight Action Plan has enabled the establishment and ongoing maintenance of a North East Freight Forum on an approximate annual basis since 2010. Management of the Freight Action Plan, and planning and implementation of the Freight Forum, has been co-ordinated by a dedicated Freight Action Plan Implementation Group (FAPIG) consisting of a small group of Nestrans and local authority officers. Section 5 details in full how this Plan is managed.

Road Freight

2.19 Although 81% of freight is moved by road, there are few detailed local statistics available on road freight. A series of statistics on road freight are published annually in Scottish Transport Statistics³, sourced from the Department for Transport's (DfT) Continuing Survey of Roads Goods Transport. Considering the average freight lifted between 2006 and 2010, these statistics revealed that of the UK HGV trips originating in Grampian, 18.5 million Tonnes remained within Scotland (96.1%), with 745 thousand Tonnes having destinations elsewhere in the UK (3.9%). Furthermore, 15.7 million Tonnes of goods were transported wholly within the Grampian area (81.7%). For freight journeys ending in Grampian, the amounts and proportions are similar. Given that 81.7% of goods are transported wholly within Grampian, there are few viable alternatives other than to transport this freight by road.

2.20 These statistics perhaps paint a picture of a very self-sustained supply network, and it is recognised that in the case of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, there are significant volumes of short hauls of heavy equipment related to the oil and gas industry, forestry and agriculture. The picture of freight movements is perhaps more complex than the statistics may indicate. A significant quantity of raw material arrives through local ports, transhipped by local road haulage. Many retailers and suppliers tranship goods coming from the south in the Central Belt, providing a backload for Scottish and local hauliers. Similarly, many goods from Grampian are consolidated in the Central Belt prior to onward distribution. Within Aberdeen, further transhipment often occurs prior to final delivery.

³ Transport Scotland, *Scottish Transport Statistics 31*, published December 2012.

Local Road Maintenance and Management

2.21 Given that road haulage is the main transport mode for freight, it is necessary that the road network is maintained to enable the efficient movement of goods. The importance of road freight also emphasises the necessity for effective management of the road network. Clearly, these issues do not benefit just the road freight industry, but all road users.

Congestion and Delays

2.22 Within Aberdeen, there are a number of specific locations which experience peak period congestion on a daily basis. These locations are typically on the key radial routes into and out of Aberdeen, and at key junctions. Specific problems occur where peak time congestion corresponds with key HGV routes.

- a) A956 Wellington Road, North Esplanade West and Market Street – which is the main route from the South, and links Aberdeen Harbour and industrial estates at Portlethen, Altens, and Tullos;
- b) Key routes from the north of the City – Market Street, Virginia Street, Commerce Street, King Street and Ellon Road;
- c) Congestion on routes to and from Industrial Estates in and around Dyce, including the A96 Dyce Drive junction; and
- d) Congestion at the Haudagain Roundabout, Bridge of Dee Roundabout, and A90 Ellon Road affects haulage movements within Aberdeen City, but crucially haulage movements between Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire's towns.

2.23 Congestion decreases efficiency for freight operators – deliveries take longer, and utilisation levels are reduced in order to ensure that deliveries can be made to a particular delivery window. Road congestion can also lead to HGVs using potentially unsuitable diversionary routes to avoid congestion, which in turn can lead to adverse environmental and amenity impacts. There are several routes used by HGVs in the Nestrans area which are unsuitable to support frequent movements of large vehicles. These are believed to include:

- a) The B979 (between Stonehaven and the B9077/A93/A944/A96);
- b) Victoria Street (Dyce);
- c) Riverside Drive;
- d) Park Road; and
- e) The Beach Esplanade.

2.24 Since the adoption of the initial Freight Action Plan, freight maps showing principal freight routes, restrictions on the road network (such as weight and height restrictions), industrial estates and lorry parking areas have been published for the Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire areas. It is hoped that the newly designed maps for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire can act as an aid to more efficient freight distribution to and from major freight locations.

2.25 Work on the feasibility of Large Vehicle priorities on Wellington Road also enabled identification of two sets of signals whose timings were adjusted during the off-peak period to provide advantage to HGVs.

2.26 For freight, new investment in roads infrastructure will change the transport geography of the area, easing congestion around the periphery of Aberdeen, and making road trips from Aberdeen and the north east to the Central Belt and the Midlands / South East England more reliable and quicker.

2.27 The protracted legal challenge to the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR) was considered by the UK Supreme Court on 9 and 10 July 2012. The appeal to the UK Supreme Court was ultimately unsuccessful, and the AWPR and A90 Balmedie to Tippetty dualling projects are now progressing as a single project, with a target completion date of Spring 2018.

2.28 Other road schemes include proposals for the removal of the current height and width restriction at Inveramsay Bridge, a Third Crossing of the River Don and upgrade of the Haudagain Roundabout in Aberdeen. These schemes will facilitate improved and more reliable road freight flows to and from north east Scotland.

2.29 Elsewhere in Scotland, the efficiency of freight movements will be improved following the construction of the Queensferry Crossing, on track to be delivered in 2016, and the completion of the A9 Perth to Inverness dualling project by 2025.

2.30 The Scottish Government has committed to dualling of the entire A96 between Inverurie and Inverness in the longer-term, due for completion by 2030.

Planning Conditions and Traffic Orders

2.31 Restrictions in road freight operations can also be imposed by Planning Conditions and Traffic Orders which constrain the hours of loading and unloading of goods. Whilst these may be applied for specific planning, environmental or amenity reasons, they may have the impact of increasing the amount of HGVs on the road during peak periods, and may also reduce the flexibility and efficiency of freight operations. This can have knock-on impacts on other road users, through increased congestion. Aberdeen City Council has recently completed a study to consider how freight distribution within the city centre could be made more efficient, which has established patterns of deliveries to premises on Union Street, and the main shopping centres, with a view to developing policy and practical options aimed at increasing efficiency.

Air Quality and Noise

2.32 Three Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) have been declared in Aberdeen due to levels of Nitrogen Dioxide and Particulate Matter exceeding European standards:

- a) Aberdeen City Centre: Market St, Union St, King St (between Castle St and Roslin Terrace), Virginia St, Commerce St, Guild St (between Market St and Stirling St) and Holburn St (between Great Southern Road and Union St);
- b) A90 Anderson Drive: Between Bridge of Dee Roundabout and Haudagain Roundabout; and
- c) A956 Wellington Road: Between Queen Elizabeth II Bridge and Balnagask Road.

2.33 An Air Quality Action Plan has been prepared to promote solutions to ensure that air quality standards are met to comply with legislation. Traffic congestion, including a high proportion of freight vehicles in this area, are key contributors to the poor air quality in these locations. This is leading to interest in the declaration of a Low Emissions Zone (LEZ) within the centre of Aberdeen, which may mean restrictions on the most polluting vehicles, typically pre Euro 4. An LEZ Feasibility Study is currently in progress.

2.34 Recent survey work, undertaken during 2012 within the city centre of Aberdeen indicated that 77% of vehicles delivering on Union Street, or to the main city centre retail centres were Euro 4 or above.

2.35 Aberdeen City Council are also undertaking work to ascertain the levels of traffic-related noise in the City, with a view to declaring Noise Management Areas, which may also necessitate an Action Plan to tackle any identified issues.

Environmental Performance

2.36 The freight industry is increasingly placing emphasis on environmental performance, and there has recently been a focus on improving the efficiency of fleets. In January 2012, the Department for Transport invited volunteers, on a trial basis, to utilise longer semi-trailers. These trailers increase the load capability of HGVs, thus making freight movements more efficient. Teardrop Trailers have also been introduced in the UK to improve efficiency by providing more load storage space and reducing drag.

Physical Restrictions on the Road Network

2.37 HGV movements are restricted by physical constraints on the road network, most notably at the following locations on the trunk road network:

- a) A90 Bridge of Dee; and
- b) A96 Inveramsay Bridge.

It is understood that, with the exception of the Highland area, these are the only physical restrictions placed upon HGVs travelling on the Scottish trunk road network. Nestrans is currently progressing a study investigating transport improvements in the Bridge of Dee area, while Transport Scotland is currently taking forward plans to re-align the A96 and construct an improved Inveramsay Bridge with increased headroom. This scheme will also enable a two-way flow of traffic, removing a major constraint on the strategic road network.

2.38 Local operators can also be negatively impacted by constraints on the wider transport network in Scotland, for example by congestion and weather related closures at the Forth Road Bridge, and on peak period congestion on the central Scotland motorway network.

Lorry Parking

2.39 Consultation with stakeholders has identified a lack of affordable, suitable and secure Lorry Parking facilities as a concern. Within Aberdeen City, a Lorry Park operates within the Altens Industrial Estate. Other towns in Aberdeenshire occasionally suffer from inappropriate on-street parking of HGVs. This is an issue more likely to affect long-distance hauliers, possibly from UK and Europe, who do not have an established base in the north east. It is recognised that inappropriate parking in lay-bys on the trunk and strategic road network may pose a road safety hazard. Parking in lay-bys can also be a security risk for the consignor of the load and the lorry driver. Inappropriate parking within urban areas also creates amenity issues.

2.40 To investigate these issues further, a region-wide lorry parking survey was undertaken in the summer of 2010. This helped to develop a clear picture of the overall pattern of demand for overnight lorry parking in the region and an indication of the attitudes of lorry drivers towards lorry parking. A key problem identified was that of a lack of suitable overnight facilities in north east Scotland, particularly in and around Aberdeen. The

outcomes of this study will be used to inform the ongoing development of plans to provide suitable overnight lorry parking facilities in north east Scotland including the possible use of the proposed A90 Park and Choose site to the South of Aberdeen.

Timber Transport

2.41 The Grampian Timber Transport Group is tasked with undertaking timber traffic surveys in the Aberdeenshire and Moray areas, and reviewing and revising agreed routes for timber haulage. Key issues for the timber industry relate to the reliability of the supporting road infrastructure, the challenges of moving Scottish timber products to market, and restrictions imposed by weather, particularly in the winter months.

Potential Conflict with Vulnerable Road Users

2.42 Nestrans and its partner local authorities have policies to support and promote walking and cycling, both of which are recognised as sustainable and healthy forms of transport. Clearly, there is a requirement to ensure that the needs of all users are taken into account where conflict between Goods Vehicles and vulnerable users may occur, and that appropriate steps are taken to avoid, reduce and mitigate risk.

2.43 The use of Fresnel lenses has been shown to improve HGV driver vision on the passenger side of their vehicle, by increasing the visibility of their blind spot. Fresnel lenses are plastic, and when fitted to the passenger side window of the vehicle, enable drivers to see through the lens directly. The visibility of the blind spot is enhanced because the lens projects a downwards view of the passenger door of the vehicle.⁴ Fresnel lenses have been distributed through the Freight Forum to hauliers in north east Scotland in conjunction with the StratMoS Interreg IVB project.

2.44 Other initiatives are being considered elsewhere in the UK. For example, the Safe Urban Driving (SUD) course developed by Transport for London (TfL) and London boroughs has recently received industry accreditation. The course aims to reduce the number of accidents involving HGVs, cyclists and pedestrians in urban areas. It involves a theory test and practical element where lorry drivers cycle on-road to enable them to appreciate firsthand the environment of a cyclist.⁵ There is an opportunity to consider the most relevant aspects of this work, and implement it in north east Scotland.

VOSA Inspection Area

2.45 Another issue affecting road freight in the region relates to the replacement of the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) inspection area following the completion of the A90 infrastructure works at Schoolhill, north of Portlethen. Plans to locate an HGV inspection site / weighbridge in this area are understood to be dependent on development of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route, and progression of plans to develop a Park and Ride site at Schoolhill.

Sea Freight

2.46 The major ports in the area are Aberdeen and Peterhead. Aberdeen Harbour acts as the principal mainland port for freight services to and from Shetland and Orkney. Aberdeen Harbour saw an increase of almost 8% cent in all freight traffic between 2011 and 2012,

⁴ Alenia Optic Limited – Information Sheet (May 2008)

⁵ http://www.transportextra.com/magazines/local_transport_today/news/?ID=29476

increasing from 4,165 thousand tonnes to 4,493 thousand tonnes⁶. Peterhead Port saw over 1,000 thousand tonnes of all freight traffic in 2012. Furthermore, since the 2009 Freight Action Plan there has been substantial investment in Smith Quay at Peterhead, which has the benefits of having a 200-metre berth area and a depth of 10-metres. This Quay is now fully operational. Fraserburgh and Macduff harbours also handle smaller quantities of freight.

2.47 A key issue with regards to sea freight is ensuring reliable and efficient access for lorry freight to Aberdeen Harbour and harbours in Aberdeenshire, for import and export, and also general cargo movements around the harbour areas.

2.48 In September 2012, Aberdeen Harbour Board published a *Case for Growth*. This document outlined the current scope of harbour operations and the need to consider options to support expansion of the existing facilities provided at Aberdeen.

2.49 This process has led Aberdeen Harbour, in their masterplan *Directions for Growth*, to the identification of Nigg Bay as the preferred option to support an expanded Aberdeen Harbour operation. In terms of transportation, this location has the potential to provide benefits for freight, including:

- a) Proximity to the existing Altens/East Tullos industrial estates and an expanded harbour into Nigg Bay;
- b) Avoidance of city centre traffic level increase and no loss in potential benefits provided by the AWPR; and
- c) Opportunity for integration with the nearby rail freight terminal at Craiginches.

2.50 The Nigg Bay option will involve new berths and hard-standing, positioning Aberdeen Harbour for future opportunities from marine renewables, decommissioning, heavy lift, and cruise market development.

2.51 The potential expansion of the harbour presents significant opportunities for improved freight efficiency and logistics in north east Scotland, particularly when considered alongside the construction of the AWPR. The identification and subsequent realisation of these opportunities will provide a key focus for the Freight Action Plan, and Freight Forum.

Rail Freight

2.52 On the basis of discussions with rail freight operators in north east Scotland, an estimate of freight to and from the region was developed in 2013, to provide a more accurate indication of flows by rail. This estimated **!The Formula Not In Table** Tonnes per Annum for **northbound** flows to north east Scotland, and **!The Formula Not In Table** Tonnes per Annum for **southbound** flows from north east Scotland, giving a total of 166,040 Tonnes per Annum.

In recent years, there have been continuing changes in the pattern of rail freight to and from north east Scotland.

- a) The Elgin to Mossend rail freight gauge enhancement project was completed in November 2007. Using special rolling stock, high cube (9ft 6") containers can now be transported between Mossend and Elgin via Aberdeen.

⁶ Table PORT0101, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/port01-uk-ports-and-traffic>

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- b) Aberdeen's Guild Street rail freight terminal has closed, replaced by new facilities at Raiths Farm (Dyce), and at Craiginches. While Raiths Farm is currently only used at a low level, there has been a successful transfer of multi-modal activity to the new facility at Craiginches;
 - c) Shortly after the closure of the Guild Street Rail Freight Terminal in 2007, Aberdeen Harbour Board (AHB) extended rail facilities at Waterloo Quay, and provided an improved hard standing area. This facility retains AHB's direct rail freight access following the closure of Guild Street; and
 - d) The seven day a week multi-modal freight service operated by Malcolms/ARR Craib using Craiginches is increasingly being used by a wider range of customers / freight flows. Since an increase to seven day a week operation, any future growth (north bound) is constrained by train lengths on the route; capacity remains available on the southbound trip.

2.53 Investment in rail facilities in recent years has not led to an immediate increase in rail freight volumes to and from north east Scotland. Whilst there is a requirement for special rolling stock to carry standard 9ft 6" containers, other issues prevail.

- a) Rail freight is best suited to regular and relatively high volumes of freight. With the scaling down of activity in certain manufacturing sectors in north east Scotland, there is less of this type of freight available.
- b) It is recognised that the development and funding of new rail freight handling facilities is often a lengthy and complex process. Financial support is provided by the Scottish Government through the Freight Facilities Grant (FFG) system, which provides grant assistance for the construction of terminal facilities. In January 2012, the Scottish Government announced continued support for freight modal shift funding until 2014. While £0.75m has been allocated for 2012-2013 and £2m has been allocated for 2013-2014, this is a significant reduction on the £10.3m allocated in 2010-11.
- c) Support payments for rail freight haulage are available through the Mode Shift Revenue Support (MSRS) scheme (formerly the Rail Environmental Benefit Procurement scheme, REPS).

2.54 In 2009 (following completion of the rail gauge enhancement work between Elgin and Mossend), the North East Scotland Rail Freight Development Group (NESRFDG) initiated a study to consider whether local authority waste recyclates could provide levels of traffic attractive to rail freight operators, facilitating a transfer from road to rail.

2.55 The findings of the initial study found that three potential flows of recyclates – paper, card and plastics – warranted further investigation. However, more detailed consideration of these flows in a Stage 2 report highlighted potential barriers to moving these recyclates by rail from the region. For paper, there would be a requirement for significant capital investment and re-design required at the processing plant at Shotton in order to accept what would be (for the processing plant) a relatively small amount of material; for card and plastics, a key issue was the location of the reprocessing plants relative to the nearest UK rail freight terminal.

Air Freight

2.56 6,166 Tonnes of air freight were handled at Aberdeen Airport in 2012, an increase of 16% from the previous year, almost doubling from the 2002 figure of 3,808 Tonnes.⁷ The majority of this cargo was handled by UK charter operators (4,797 Tonnes).

2.57 Air freight is a complex area, as a high proportion is transported by road haulage from Aberdeen to other UK airports, but badged as air freight.

2.58 For local businesses, particularly the oil and gas industry, there is a benefit from having ready access to a range of air freight options from Aberdeen to Norway and Shetland, as well as links to national and international air freight hubs. Aberdeen International Airport is currently consulting with key businesses on the range of air freight facilities provided at the airport, and may invest in developing these if there is a business case for this.

2.59 Having considered the range of issues affecting the north east's freight industry, the following chapters present a set of objectives for the Freight Action Plan, and also a set of Actions.

⁷ CAA Statistics

3. Vision & Objectives

3.1 The Vision of the Nestrans RTS is:

A transport system for the north east of Scotland which enables a more economically competitive, sustainable and socially inclusive society.

3.2 We have identified five specific objectives for the Freight Action Plan. These aim to deliver:

- a) An economically competitive freight industry that supports the economy of the north east.
- b) A freight sector that can successfully respond to national and local environmental targets.
- c) A local and strategic transport network which enables the reliable and efficient movement of goods.
- d) Benefits for the north east freight industry which are realised through the ongoing development and delivery of wider transport and economic development initiatives.
- e) An engaged local freight sector provided with a platform to communicate freight issues, identify opportunities and propose solutions to benefit the north east.

3.3 The focus of this Freight Action Plan will be on the following themes, each supported by a number of specific outcomes.

Management

- A Sustain an **organisational framework** for the delivery and ongoing development of the Freight Action Plan for north east Scotland.
- B Promote an **informed awareness** of the north east's freight industry and its requirements amongst local and national government and stakeholder organisations.

Adding Value to the North East Freight Industry

- C **Maximise beneficial outcomes** for the north east's freight industry in the ongoing delivery of the National, Regional and Local Transport Strategies, and associated economic development and spatial planning initiatives.
- D Facilitate the collection and dissemination of **information and best practice** to improve the economic and environmental performance of the north east's freight industry.

Road Freight, Sea Freight, Rail Freight, Air Freight

- E Support beneficial **service development** for the needs of the north east economy.
- F Seek to improve the **local and strategic transport networks**.
- G Seek to improve the efficiency of **transshipment, interchange and delivery**.
- H Seek to improve **environmental performance of freight transport**.

4. Action Plan

4.1 Following a review of current best practice in relation to freight transport and the work of the Freight Action Plan Implementation Group over the last three years, an updated programme of specific actions has been prepared. The primary objectives in identifying the recommended short list of schemes were that they must:

- a) Address the key issues raised in Section 2;
- b) Provide the maximum benefit to the region;
- c) Be straightforward to implement with manageable costs;
- d) Provide Nestrans and their partners with high visibility outputs;
- e) Promote Local Authority co-operation and provide common standards across the Nestrans region; and
- f) As far as possible, maximise opportunities to engage the Freight Forum in delivering the actions.

4.2 In addition to describing what each of the actions involve, the Action Plan contains information related to:

- a) Those partners who will have a key role in delivering the action;
- b) The estimated costs involved with each scheme/action;
- c) The level of priority that should be afforded to each action; and
- d) The likely timescale for action implementation.

4.3 Once this revised Plan is adopted, it will be for Nestrans and the Freight Forum, and the other identified public and private stakeholders to take forward the adopted actions when resources are available. Short timescales are identified as 0 – 18 months; Medium timescales 18 – 36 months; and Long timescales, >36 months. We have also identified actions that are already either ongoing, or actions that would occur on a broadly “as and when” basis, such as the convening of meetings of the Freight Forum.

4.4 Progress in the delivery of the Freight Action Plan will be measured through close monitoring of a number of specific targets. These targets have been adopted from the overall Nestrans Monitoring Report as published in April 2012 as part of the Nestrans RTS.

4.5 Over the last three years, significant progress has been made by Nestrans, its partners and the Freight Forum in taking forward the Freight Action Plan. The foundations of this relationship provide the framework for continuing to deliver the actions specified in this document.

Freight Action Plan 2013 – Draft for Consultation

Theme	Action	Responsibility for Action	Estimated Cost	Priority	Timescale
Management					
A. Sustain an organisational framework for the delivery and ongoing development of the Freight Action Plan for north east Scotland.	1. Monitor the Freight Action Plan, with a commitment to regular progress reports to the Nestrans Board, and an agreed process and timescale for review and revision.	Nestrans	Officer Time	High	Ongoing Frequency at least annual
	2. Periodically review the structure, remit and approach of the North East Freight Forum and associated Implementation Group.	Freight Forum: Nestrans, ACC, AC, Freight Stakeholders	Officer Time	Med	A three year review would be appropriate.
	3. Sustain a regular Freight Forum to enable communication between the north east industry, the freight industry and public sector partners. <i>The Freight Forum typically meets once or twice a year (depending on issues), focussing around networking opportunities, progress updates, dissemination of work outcomes, discussion of specific topics of interest, and consultation on future priorities.</i>	Freight Forum: Nestrans, ACC, AC, Freight Stakeholders	Officer Time £1,000 per event	High	Frequency at least annual
B. Promote an informed awareness of the north east's freight industry and its requirements amongst local and national government and stakeholder organisations.	4. Publish and distribute the revised Freight Action Plan in hard copy, and on the Nestrans website.	Nestrans	Up to £2,000 for printing	Med	Short
	5. Further develop and maintain a dedicated "one-stop" webpage for the Freight Action Plan and Freight Forum on the Nestrans website, including links to national freight resources.	Nestrans	Officer Time Web Developer time, ~ £5,000.	Med	Ongoing

Theme	Action	Responsibility for Action	Estimated Cost	Priority	Timescale
	<p>6. Promote the capabilities of the north east Scotland freight sector as a whole through the creation of a local database of companies, capabilities, and local specialisms.</p> <p><i>Initial scoping work would be required to ascertain whether any similar exercises have been undertaken for other sectors in the region, or nationally, from which best practice could be extracted and applied.</i></p>	Freight Forum: Nestrans, ACC, AC, Freight Stakeholders	Officer Time Initial review - £1,000. Subsequent roll-out - revenue requirement of circa £4,000 per annum.	Med	Long
	7. Pro-actively seek formal and informal opportunities to present the needs and successes of the north east's freight industry, through stakeholder and industry presentations, the European GreCOR project, transport related events, and effective media strategies and press releases, to boost the image and profile of the sector.	Freight Forum: Nestrans, ACC, AC, Freight Stakeholders	Officer Time	Med	As and When
	8. Continue to develop, maintain and strengthen links to other bodies including the Road Haulage Association (RHA), the Freight Transport Association (FTA), and The Scottish Freight and Logistics Advisory Group (ScotFLAG).	Freight Forum: Nestrans, ACC, AC, Freight Stakeholders	Officer Time	High	Ongoing
Adding Value to the North East Freight Industry					
C. Maximise beneficial outcomes for the north east's freight industry in the ongoing delivery of the National, Regional and Local Transport	9. Provide appropriate opportunities for the freight industry (through the Freight Forum) to contribute to the development and delivery of relevant transport projects and initiatives, including the roll out of the construction of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR), A90 Balmedie-Tipperty dualling, and proposals	Freight Forum: Nestrans, ACC, AC, Freight Stakeholders	Officer Time	Med	As and When

Theme	Action	Responsibility for Action	Estimated Cost	Priority	Timescale
Strategies, and associated economic development and spatial planning initiatives.	for the A96 upgrade to dual-carriageway standard.				
	10. For relevant national, regional and local consultation opportunities (both formal and informal), ensure that the needs of the north east's freight industry are consistently and effectively made, through the Freight Forum.	Freight Forum: Nestrans, ACC, AC, Freight Stakeholders	Officer Time	Med	As and When
	11. Improve communication with Local and Strategic Planning Authorities to support freight infrastructure development. This includes improved understanding of the land requirements for new haulage bases.	Nestrans, ACC, AC	Officer Time	Med	Ongoing
D. Facilitate the collection and dissemination of information and best practice to improve the economic and environmental performance of the north east's freight industry.	12. Nestrans and its partners will seek to promote opportunities that arise on the back of involvement in European Research, notably the GreCOR project. <i>GreCOR (Green Corridor in the North Sea Region), which is being undertaken locally by Aberdeenshire Council, supported by Nestrans, has a focus on freight corridors and logistics hubs and covers all transport modes. GreCOR will therefore provide an opportunity for work on many of the actions in this revised Freight Action Plan for north east Scotland where they also meet the project objectives.</i>	Nestrans, ACC, AC	Officer Time <i>Committed partner contributions</i>	Med	Ongoing
	13. Nestrans and its partners will monitor trends	Nestrans, ACC, AC	Officer Time	Med	Ongoing

Theme	Action	Responsibility for Action	Estimated Cost	Priority	Timescale
	in freight transport in the north east, through interrogation and dissemination of national statistics, presenting these within its annual monitoring report.				
	<p>14. Where appropriate, desktop and on-site research will be undertaken to confirm core freight flows, when this adds specific value to the wider objectives and actions contained in the Freight Action Plan.</p> <p><i>Opportunities are available to continue to build on previous research considering flows into the Region, and the distribution of flows throughout key routes within Aberdeen City. Research will also be continued into container flows to and from the north east, as this could facilitate a possible case for short sea shipping from Aberdeen.</i></p>	Nestrans, ACC, AC	Dependent on requirements	Med	Ongoing / As and When
	15. Nestrans, its partners, and the Freight Forum will support the adoption of best practice in freight operations in north east Scotland through ties with the Road Haulage and Freight Transport Associations, and Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT). This includes freight efficiency and environmental performance.	Freight Forum: Nestrans, ACC, AC, Freight Stakeholders; NE Businesses and Trade Associations (RHA / FTA / CILT)	Officer Time	High	Ongoing
	16. Nestrans and local authorities will continue to examine measures to improve communication between Councils and freight operators with regards to information on road closures and diversions.	Nestrans, ACC, AC, Hauliers	Minimal – requires updates to distribution lists	Med	Short

Theme	Action	Responsibility for Action	Estimated Cost	Priority	Timescale
Road Freight Actions					
E. Support beneficial service development for the needs of the north east economy.	<p>17. Nestrans and its partners will undertake research to gauge the potential impact of changing trends in the energy industry on local freight interests, and future development of strategic freight links.</p> <p><i>This would be anticipated to take the form of a needs / opportunities analysis.</i></p>	Nestrans, ACC, AC, NE Businesses	Officer Time / £10,000 study	Med	Med
F. Seek to improve the local and strategic transport networks .	<p>18. Through the RTS, Nestrans and its partners will continue to support measures to address congestion at key pinch points on the north east's road network, particularly the Haudagain and Bridge of Dee roundabouts, and completion of the following road enhancement schemes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR). • A90 Balmedie-Tipperty dualling. • A96 Dualling. <p>Nestrans also supports the removal of constraints on the trunk road network at Inveramsay Bridge, and is currently progressing a study investigating transport improvements in the Bridge of Dee area.</p>	Nestrans, ACC, AC, Transport Scotland	Committed resource	High	Ongoing
	<p>19. Nestrans and its partners will undertake a study to determine the strategic needs of Aberdeen's freight industry in relation to the future development of strategic freight routes such as the A90 and A96 corridors.</p>	Nestrans, ACC, AC, Transport Scotland	Officer Time / £10,000 study	High	Med

Theme	Action	Responsibility for Action	Estimated Cost	Priority	Timescale
	<p><i>Transport Scotland and local agencies are currently considering improvements to these key freight corridors.</i></p> <p><i>Consideration is also possible of how these corridors currently perform with respect to established Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) corridor standards, and identification of possible mitigation to achieve these standards.</i></p>				
	<p>20. Undertake a review of signage to key freight destinations in the north east, seeking to identify any gaps in existing information.</p> <p><i>Opportunities to review signage (involving representatives of the freight sector) will become available as the road network is redefined as a result of the implementation of the AWPR. The results of this review will then be used to improve signage for freight vehicles travelling to key destinations (e.g. the industrial estates, Aberdeen and Peterhead Harbours, Aberdeen Airport, freight terminals and retail locations), fill any gaps, which in turn will lead to more efficient freight flows and a reduction in misrouted vehicles.</i></p>	Nestrans, ACC, AC	Officer Time, plus potential research ~ £20,000. Implementation costs would be dependent on outcome of study.	Med	Short
	<p>21. Consider opportunities to use roadside Variable Message Signing (VMS) and assess the feasibility of other ITS interventions to better inform truck drivers of key information affecting freight routes such as closures, diversions or roadworks.</p>	Nestrans, ACC, Transport Scotland	Officer Time	Low	Long

Theme	Action	Responsibility for Action	Estimated Cost	Priority	Timescale
	<p>22. Nestrans and its partners will support the proposals for a dedicated lorry parking area as detailed in the specification for the proposed Park and Ride site at Schoolhill, north of Portlethen.</p> <p><i>A region wide lorry parking survey was undertaken in the summer of 2010. This helped to develop a clear picture of the overall pattern of demand for overnight lorry parking in the region, highlighting in particular the requirement to provide suitable overnight lorry parking facilities to the South of Aberdeen. A recommendation that lorry parking should be included in the design of the proposed Park and Ride site at Schoolhill was accepted and included in the planning application currently being progressed by Aberdeenshire Council.</i></p>	Nestrans, AC	Officer Time	High	Short
G. Seek to improve the efficiency of transshipment, interchange and delivery.	<p>23. Nestrans, its partners, and the Freight Forum will continue to promote a systematic review of road access to key freight hubs and industrial areas, with the aim of identifying both quick-win and longer term opportunities to improve freight access, including through examination and action to remove junction “pinch points” on the network.</p>	Freight Forum: Nestrans, ACC, AC, Freight Stakeholders	Officer Time <i>Implementation costs depend on the scope of possible interventions at each junction.</i>	Med	Ongoing
	<p>24. Continue to disseminate north east Area Freight Maps to drivers across the north east of Scotland, and explore opportunities to extend their coverage to non-local hauliers.</p> <p><i>Freight maps have been produced for both</i></p>	Freight Forum: Nestrans, ACC, AC, Freight Stakeholders	Officer Time	Med	Ongoing

Theme	Action	Responsibility for Action	Estimated Cost	Priority	Timescale
	<p><i>Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire which show recommended routes, key locations such as ports and major employment areas, lorry parking areas, and restrictions. They also identify all width, weight and height restrictions on the main road network. Copies of these maps are available to download from the Nestrans website, and hard copies are regularly made available for delegates at Freight Forum meetings.</i></p>				
	<p>25. Nestrans and its partners will examine, and where appropriate, promote more consistent local traffic management at the key junctions in and around Aberdeen.</p> <p><i>This should include lines, signs, and treatment of junctions, particularly on recognised freight routes. Opportunities will arise following the construction of the AWPR.</i></p>	Nestrans, ACC, AC	Officer Time	Med	Long
	<p>26. Nestrans and its partners will continue to consider and assess opportunities to provide Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) priority on the principal freight routes into Aberdeen City Centre.</p> <p><i>This could be a key part of the Locking in the Benefits strategy associated with the implementation of the AWPR.</i></p>	Nestrans, ACC	Officer Time	Med	Long
	<p>27. Nestrans and its partners will progress the findings of the study considering how freight distribution within Aberdeen's Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) could be made more efficient, reducing associated air quality problems</p>	Nestrans, ACC, AC, NE Businesses	Officer Time including revisions to Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs), emission	Med	Med

Theme	Action	Responsibility for Action	Estimated Cost	Priority	Timescale
	and carbon emissions.		free servicing vehicles, and best practice guidance on managing deliveries.		
	<p>28. Nestrans and its partners will continue to explore opportunities to further develop intermodal freight in the region, particularly at the existing rail freight terminal at Craiginches.</p> <p><i>A previous study concluded that the existing rail freight terminal at Craiginches / East Tullos offers potential for further development of a freight consolidation facility in the region. There are further opportunities for this site, due to the recent publication of Aberdeen Harbour's masterplan.</i></p>	Nestrans, ACC, AC	Officer Time. Refresh previous study, to consider Aberdeen Harbour Board proposals, cost circa £10,000.	Med	Short
H. Seek to improve environmental and safety performance of freight transport.	<p>29. Drawing on the latest policy guidance, Nestrans and Aberdeen City Council will continue to consider the potential for establishing a Low Emission Zone (LEZ) in Aberdeen City, and assess the impact of any scheme on HGV/LGV movements in the city centre.</p> <p><i>A key part of the LEZ study to date has involved consultation with freight operators and businesses. This has been conducted through the Freight Forum. Now that national work on future forecasts of vehicle emissions has been completed, work to assess the implications of this for Aberdeen continue to be progressed.</i></p>	Nestrans, ACC	Officer Time	Med	Ongoing

Theme	Action	Responsibility for Action	Estimated Cost	Priority	Timescale
	30. Working with local and national partners, opportunities for piloting Alternative Fuels (as part of anticipated future national pilot schemes) will be considered, either for local servicing, or for longer distance deliveries.	Nestrans, ACC, AC, Freight Stakeholders	Officer Time. Bid costs possibly incurred.	Med	As and When
	31. Promote and encourage Safe and Fuel Efficient Driving (SAFED) driver training within the context of Driver's Certificate of Professional Competence (DCPC).	Freight Forum: Nestrans, ACC, AC, Freight Stakeholders	Officer Time	Med	Ongoing
	32. Promote awareness of freight vehicle requirements amongst car drivers and vulnerable road user groups such as cyclists and pedestrians, particularly relating to the types of manoeuvres required at junctions, vehicle blind spots etc.	Freight Forum: Nestrans, ACC, AC, Freight Stakeholders	Officer Time.	High	Ongoing
	33. Nestrans and its partners will undertake a review of accident locations involving freight vehicles with a view to identifying the key locations where interventions could help improve problem junctions.	Nestrans, ACC, AC	Officer Time	Med	Short-Med
	34. Nestrans and its partners will consider ongoing work on reducing conflict between HGVs and vulnerable users undertaken elsewhere in the UK, and then seek to implement local demonstration projects.	Freight Forum: Nestrans, ACC, AC, Freight Stakeholders	Officer Time.	High	Ongoing
	See Action 15 – Dissemination of Best Practice				
Sea Freight Actions					
E. Support beneficial service development for the needs of the north east economy.	35. Nestrans will support Aberdeen Harbour and other harbours in the north east in the promotion of short sea, and international shipping opportunities.	Nestrans, Local Port and Harbour Boards	Officer Time	Med	Ongoing

Theme	Action	Responsibility for Action	Estimated Cost	Priority	Timescale
	36. Aberdeen Harbour Board's masterplan for the expansion of the Harbour into Nigg Bay provides significant prospects for improved facilities, and increased efficiency for the north east freight and logistics sector. Nestrans and its partners will engage with the ongoing development of the masterplan, and seek to identify and promote wider improvements for regional freight and logistics services and facilities which will support the north east economy. A specific early focus will be with respect to multi-modal freight transfer, and freight hub development (Action 28).	Nestrans, Aberdeen Harbour Board, ACC, AC	Officer Time	High	Short -Med
	37. Nestrans will continue to support the maintenance and ongoing development of the Northern Isles lifeline ferry service, with Aberdeen Harbour as the principal Scottish Mainland port. <i>Serco was announced as the new operator of ferry services to the Northern Isles in May 2012, taking over from NorthLink.</i>	Nestrans, Aberdeen Harbour Board	Officer Time	Med	Ongoing
	See Action 12 – European Research Projects See Action 17 – Freight Impact of Energy Industry				
F. Seek to improve the local and strategic transport networks.	See Action 18 – Completion of Strategic Road Improvement Schemes See Action 19 – Freight Requirements of A90/A96				

Theme	Action	Responsibility for Action	Estimated Cost	Priority	Timescale
G. Seek to improve the efficiency of transshipment, interchange and delivery.	See Action 12 - European Research Projects See Action 23 – Access to Freight Hubs See Action 28 – Freight Hub Research				
H. Seek to improve environmental performance of freight transport.	See Action 12 – European Research Projects See Action 15 – Dissemination of Best Practice				
Rail Freight Actions					
E. Support beneficial service development for the needs of the north east economy.	38. Nestrans and its partners will further explore the potential to move freight by rail, and seek to harness opportunities that might emerge from new freight flows.	Nestrans, ACC, AC	Officer Time	Med	Ongoing
	39. Nestrans will continue to facilitate discussion between local freight operators and the Scottish Government, regarding the opportunities provided by, and the specific application of, grant funding schemes to encourage modal shift. These include the Freight Facilities Grant (FFG) and the Mode Shift Revenue Support scheme (MSRS).	Nestrans, Freight Stakeholders	Officer Time	Med	As and When
	40. Nestrans and its partners will support an initial examination of the case for running longer freight trains to the north east, relative to the potential for an additional multi-modal freight service. <i>This review will consider, in the first instance, the feasibility of such a service and an overview of costs and benefits.</i>	Nestrans, Freight Stakeholders, NE Businesses	Officer Time Possible research ~ circa £5,000	Med	Med

Theme	Action	Responsibility for Action	Estimated Cost	Priority	Timescale
	41. Examine the barriers (and opportunities to overcome these barriers) of incorporating lo-loader container wagons on the Grangemouth – Aberdeen rail freight route.	Nestrans, Freight Stakeholders, NE Businesses	Officer Time, possible research, ~ circa £5,000	Med	Med
F. Seek to improve the local and strategic transport networks .	42. Nestrans and its partners will continue to pursue the strategic development of the regional and national rail network, for the benefit of both passenger and freight flows. This will primarily be achieved through the delivery of the Nestrans Rail Action Plan.	Nestrans, Transport Scotland	Officer Time Committed funding	Med	Ongoing
G. Seek to improve the efficiency of transshipment, interchange and delivery .	See Action 12 – European Research See Action 23 – Access to Freight Hubs See Action 28 – Freight Hub Research				
H. Seek to improve environmental performance of freight transport .	See Action 12 – European Research Projects See Action 15 – Dissemination of Best Practice				
Air Freight Actions					
E. Support beneficial service development for the needs of the north east economy.	43. Continue to provide a feedback mechanism between the airport, freight bodies, and north east industry through the Freight Forum, the North East Transport Consultative Forum (NETCF), and other existing airport consultation groups.	Nestrans, Freight Stakeholders	Officer Time	Med	Ongoing
F. Seek to improve the local and strategic transport networks .	44. Nestrans will support measures which will enable improvement in the level of service, and overall efficiency of Aberdeen Airport's air freight services.	Nestrans	Officer Time	Med	Ongoing

Theme	Action	Responsibility for Action	Estimated Cost	Priority	Timescale
G. Seek to improve the efficiency of transshipment, interchange and delivery.	45. Nestrans will continue to work with the operators of Aberdeen Airport, to support the implementation of the Airport Surface Access Strategy.	Nestrans, Aberdeen Airport Ltd, ACC	Officer Time Committed funding	Med	Ongoing
	46. Nestrans will collaborate with the operators of Aberdeen Airport to undertake a needs assessment for improved air cargo services and freight handling capabilities.	Nestrans, Aberdeen Airport Ltd	Officer Time	Med	Med
H. Seek to improve environmental performance of freight transport.	It is recognised that the Freight Action Plan cannot significantly influence the environmental performance of air freight, although there is support for international and national initiatives that may influence this.				

5. Management of the Freight Action Plan

Introduction

5.1 The Nestrans RTS notes that “the Freight Industry itself will be central to the development of the Action Plan... One of the expected outputs from the Action Plan would be the establishment of a permanent regional freight group, a possibly restructured north east Freight Quality Partnership.”

Management

5.2 In the initial development of this Plan, there was a need for a forum identified where views could be exchanged and a two-way dialogue established between public bodies and the business sector in regard to goods movements. Consequently, the development of this Freight Action Plan has enabled the establishment and sustaining of a North East Freight Forum on an approximate annual basis since 2010.

5.3 Over the last few years, management of the Freight Action Plan, and planning and implementation of the Freight Forum, has been co-ordinated by a dedicated Freight Action Plan Implementation Group (FAPIG) consisting of a small group of Nestrans and local authority officers. This group has co-ordinated and advised on north east freight issues, and monitored the delivery of the Freight Action Plan to date. This approach has provided a management structure, enabling ongoing progress and development of the Freight Action Plan. The work of the FAPIG has been supplemented by wider consultation activities undertaken through the Freight Forum.

5.4 In further developing this structure, in consultation with north east freight stakeholders, consideration has been given to whether opportunities exist to promote broader involvement in the Freight Forum, or if changes could be made to enhance its appeal amongst a wider group of freight stakeholders. Feedback has demonstrated:

- a) That the Forum has been well received to date;
- b) The Forum needs to be relevant, and have outcomes to sustain its success;
- c) There should be a focus on small schemes, or “quick wins”;
- d) That the current set-up principally provides a communication forum;
- e) Networking and discussion opportunities are welcomed by delegates;
- f) Updates on major projects are desired; and
- g) Dissemination of best practice and new issues affecting the freight industry is of benefit to those who attend.

5.5 The continued success of the Freight Action Plan depends upon active and further participation of the parties signed up to the Plan. It will also require maintenance of effective collaborative relationships with north east Scotland’s business community, the freight industry and between Nestrans, Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council. These organisations and groups will therefore continue to share the responsibility for delivering the actions set out in this Freight Action Plan.

Glossary

ACSEF	Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Future
AGCC	Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce
AHB	Aberdeen Harbour Board
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area
AWPR	Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route
CILT	Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport
COSLA	Convention of Scottish Local Authorities
DCPC	Driver Certificate of Professional Competence
DfT	Department for Transport
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
EU	European Union
FAP	Freight Action Plan
FAPIG	Freight Action Plan Implementation Group
FFG	Freight Facilities Grant
FTA	Freight Transport Association
GreCOR	Green Corridor in the North Sea Region
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle
LEZ	Low Emission Zone
LTS	Local Transport Strategy
MSRS	Mode Shift Revenue Support scheme
NETCF	North East Transport Consultative Forum
NESRFDG	North East Scotland Rail Freight Development Group
NMCII	Northern Maritime Corridor II project

NTS	National Transport Strategy
REPS	Rail Environmental Benefit Procurement scheme
RHA	Road Haulage Association
RTS	Regional Transport Strategy
SAFED	Safe and Fuel Efficient Driving
ScotFLAG	The Scottish Freight and Logistics Advisory Group
StratMoS	Motorways of the Seas Strategic Demonstration project
SUD	Safe Urban Driving
TEN-T	Trans-European Transport Network
TfL	Transport for London
TRO	Traffic Regulation Order
VMS	Variable Message Signing
VOSA	Vehicle and Operator Services Agency