

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND
REGIONAL TRANSPORT BOARD**

Date: 26 April 2007

Subject: **Dialogue with Stakeholders**

Report of: Planning Manager, Regional Assembly

The Board is Recommended to :

1. Note the responses from the Highways Agency and Network Rail in relation to further dialogue.
2. Agree to hold the first round of such meetings in the autumn of this year, and that the arrangements are put in place by the secretariat.

Purpose of Report:

To update the Board on progress with the proposal to provide opportunities for an enhanced dialogue with key stakeholders on the Board.

1. Greater Dialogue

- 1.1 A key factor in the success of the Board has been the partnership approach to developing a shared understanding of how to address the common issues facing us as a region. The involvement of key stakeholders as members of the Board has undoubtedly helped in this respect however it is clear that there is the potential for even closer working between the organisations represented on the Board.
- 1.2 Drawing on the experience of the Assembly's work with the Environment Agency and other regional partners, it is proposed that the Board's working relationships are developed through annual dialogue meetings with the Highways Agency and Network Rail. These meetings would enable greater time to be devoted to explaining and understanding the work undertaken by the organisations in the past year and the challenges that they face in the year ahead.
- 1.3 The secretariat has approach both the Highways Agency and Network Rail on the Board's behalf. A positive response has been received from the Highways Agency.

2. Meeting Format

- 2.1 Drawing on the experience of similar events with the Environment Agency it is suggested that the approach followed with these meetings is as follows:
 - The dialogue meeting would be an annual event, and take no more than half a day.
 - The agenda would be agreed by the Chairman of the Board and the respective regional directors from the Highways Agency and Network Rail.
 - The meetings would be held in private, but a report back will be made to the Board as part of the next available meeting agenda.
- 2.2 The Assembly as the Secretariat for the Board will provide the administrative support for these meetings.

3. Next Steps

- 3.1 Pending the discussion at the Board, and a hopefully positive response from Network Rail, officers will begin developing the programme of dialogue meetings. It is likely that the first of these will be in the autumn of this year.

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10 April 2007

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