

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Date: 12 October 2001

Subject: **REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY**

Report of: Head of Regional Transport Planning

Recommendation:

That the Committee notes the progress of the development of the Regional Transport Strategy and the implications of any further slippage to the Multi-Modal Study programme on the Strategy timetable.

1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the work in hand to develop the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS).

2. Overview Work in Progress

2.1 The aim of the Regional Assembly is to have a revised RTS ready for consultation by late spring 2002.

2.2 The Regional Assembly Secretariat, working closely with the Transport Advisory Group is continuing to progress the following streams of work:

Vision and Objectives

2.3 The draft objectives for the RTS were presented to the Regional Planning Committee meeting held on 23 May 2001. As agreed at the meeting these are now being used as a basis for developing the detailed policies and proposals for the revised RTS. The content of the objectives will be reviewed as part of the audit trail as the content of the revised RTS begins to be finalised.

Strategic Networks

- 2.2 Two seminars have been held with stakeholders as part of the process of identifying the strategic networks within the region. The output from these seminars is being used by the Secretariat to develop a discussion paper with the assistance of members of the Transport Advisory Group. The discussion paper will be used as the basis for further discussions with stakeholders within the region.

Sustainable Distribution

- 2.5 A discussion paper was commissioned by the Assembly Secretariat from experts within the distribution industry. Through the discussion paper the Secretariat has sought the views of stakeholders on sustainable distribution issues and begun to identify their requirements of the RTS in order for it to deliver a more sustainable distribution network in the South East. The closing date for comments was 28 September and the Transport Advisory Group will use the comments as part of the development of detailed policies and proposals for inclusion in the RTS.

Airports

- 2.6 Work on developing the regional perspective on airports/aviation continues with a sub-group of the Transport Advisory Group currently in the process of developing the criteria/framework for the assessment of potential options for airport development. This will be applied to the potential options for airport development in advance of the SERAS consultation later this year.

Ports

- 2.7 The study on ports commissioned through SEAPLAG is underway and is currently scheduled to report in January 2002. This study will feed into the revision of the ports policies within the RTS. As part of the work associated with the study a reference group comprising representatives from the major ports within the study area has been formed. It is proposed to extend the involvement of this reference group beyond merely the ports study as part of the stakeholder involvement in the development of the wider policy framework of the RTS. The development of ports policy will also be informed and influenced by the work underway to identify and develop guidance on the region's strategic networks.

Managing Travel Demand

- 2.8 The development of detailed policies and proposals within this work stream will be assisted by the commissioning of consultants. A brief has been prepared inviting bids to prepare a framework that will encourage a more sustainable approach to managing travel demand. This framework will develop an integrated approach to the identification of accessibility criteria for new development and car parking standards, as well as providing a context within which the merits of charging might be considered. In addition it will examine the potential for travel planning to link these elements in a coordinated manner.
- 2.9 Tenders have been received by the Secretariat and an appointment will be made in early October with a view to an immediate start. The successful consultant will be reported to the Committee.

Targets and Monitoring

- 2.10 The commission on monitoring data availability has been completed by consultants Babbie. Following an initial discussion of the consultants report by the Transport Advisory Group a sub-group has been established. This sub-group will consider the consultants report in greater detail and advise on potential targets and associated monitoring framework for the RTS. The work on the development of targets and monitoring framework for the RTS is being closely linked with the work in hand to develop the monitoring framework for the wider RPG.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 2.11 This work will be undertaken in two elements. The first element will develop a sustainability framework for the RTS, one that would also be applicable for other selective reviews of RPG. The second element of this work will be to apply the framework and undertake the appraisal of the RTS.
- 2.12 Consultants have submitted their proposals and it is anticipated that a decision will be made in early October with a view to the successful consultant beginning work immediately. The successful consultant will be reported to the Committee.

Investment Priorities

- 2.13 A sub-group of the Transport Advisory Group has been established to begin developing a framework to be used in identifying regional priorities for investment. The framework will reflect the revised objectives for the RTS and tie in with the work underway on both targets and monitoring, and appraisal.

3. The Multi Modal Study Programme

3.1 In addition to the work streams referred to above, the Secretariat continues to be closely involved in the on-going programme of Multi Modal Studies. The Regional Assembly in its role as Regional Planning Body advises the Secretary of State on the output of these studies in the context of the regional policy framework. In addition the output from the studies will inform the development of the RTS. The key studies for this region and their current proposed dates for reporting are:

- ORBIT (Orbital routes around London) April 2002
- SWARMMS (London to South West/South Wales) April 2002
- SoCoMMS (South Coast: Southampton - Ramsgate) June 2002
- Thames Valley July 2002
- London to South Midlands November 2002

3.2 To ensure that emerging outputs from these studies are taken into consideration and the RTS remains on schedule to report to the current timetable, it is important that the dates for reporting on the studies are not deferred any further. The Assembly Secretariat will keep the Committee informed of the progress and any further slippage of these studies.

4. Next Steps

4.1 Work in developing the RTS will continue and further reports on progress will be brought to this Committee in due course.

4.2 Members views on the development of detailed policies and proposals will continue to be sought through briefing session on key issues. This will in turn enable an informed discussion on the emerging framework for the RTS to take place at the Assembly Plenary on February 2002. It is currently proposed that final drafting of the revised RTS will take place during March, to enable the consultation draft to be brought before the Planning Committee for approval at its meeting in April 2002.

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1 October 2001