HITRANS ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16

HI TRANS
THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

FOREWORD

2015/16 has been an exciting year for HITRANS with some excellent results and interesting challenges.

We have worked with our partner Councils to deliver an innovative shared services project delivering a step change in the availability and quality of information on passenger transport services across the region. The HiTravle project has seen HITRANS take on this responsibility across the area with Julie Cromarty our Public Transport Information Officer delivering a Bus Investment Fund supported project whose successes include the delivery of real time passenger information screens, 250 high quality information poles/displays, solar powered epaper real time displays, bus shelter poster displays and key interchange wifi hotspots.

Active Travel has been a real success story in 2015/16 with a number of new initiatives implemented by the team in collaboration with key partners including Sustrans, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and our five partner local authorities. This included the opening of the Inverness Campus South Bridge and the design of the 'North Bridge'. The North Bridge is a proposed new access to the Campus site which will provide a direct multi-modal link to the Inverness Retail Park which buses as well as pedestrians and cyclists can use. This year also saw the completion of the North Ballachulish to Corran Ferry section of the National Cycle Network and the opening of the NCN 780 or Hebridean Way in the Western Isles.

One of the key challenges for business is to effectively access markets and opportunities across the globe and the Highlands and Islands relies on our links to the wold to service our outward facing economy. It was great news that after a significant amount of work to build the case in evidence for better links to global hubs HITRANS was able to welcome the great news that British Airways were to return to Inverness Airport with a new route to London Heathrow and the Amsterdam service would be boosted with flag carrier KLM taking on the route. These announcements came at a time when continued growth was clear on our existing routes to and from Inverness.

At a research and project level we have continued to work innovatively with partners in Scotland and across the European Union to deliver meaningful improvements in transport services within the Highlands and Islands. As lead partner in the SPARA 2020 project we have been working with partners from Sweden, Norway, Ireland and Australia as well as other Scottish partners (UHI and RGU) on the delivery of this project funded through the Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme.

Rail services have required focus in 2015/16. We have continued working with partners including Transport Scotland, ScotRail and Network Rail to support the implementation of national priorities such as the Inverness – Aberdeen and Highland Mainline major projects. We have also seen real progress on the development and delivery of a number of regional and local schemes including working towards the planning application for Inverness Airport (Dalcross) Station which will be accompanied by a funding application to Transport Scotland's Scottish Stations Fund. However we have also had cause to highlight serious performance issues on the Far North and Kyle Lines that have been ongoing for some time and are resulting in passenger numbers declining as reliability continues to be an issue. We hosted the Points North Seminar to help identify ways of addressing the issue son these lines and had buy in across a wide spectrum of stakeholders including local communities, business representatives and politicians. We will continue to work with Network Rail and ScotRail to support the package of improvement measures needed to return these lines to a reliable service ideally with reducing journey times to halt a trend towards extending journey times as the solution to reliability problems caused by the infrastructure.

We continue to work with operators and Transport Scotland to support the development of our ferry services. We have had an active role in the Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Service tender with our facilitation of bidder engagement through the ferry user groups and our representation on the Independent Procurement Panel established to scrutinise the process. The Ferries Plan has set out some truly ambitious plans for improving these networks and we will work with partners to support their development from proposal to fruition.

Working with partners at Transport Scotland, Orkney Islands Council, ZetTrans and Shetland Islands Council we have made real progress on key issues relating to internal travel in Orkney and Shetland as well as for planning for the next Northern Isles Ferry Service contract tender.

Bus services are the backbone to our public transport system providing vital access to employment, education, health and leisure services and connecting with other modes. In 2015/16 HITRANS has helped improve intelligent transport information systems

building on our existing real time information provision. We have supported the development of innovative new projects and secured funding from the Bus Investment Fund for our HiTravel transport information project and continued to deliver the east Inverness bus improvement corridor. These projects are delivering bus priority, infrastructure, information and new buses across the region.

We would like to thank our many public and private partners for their support in making 2015/16 such a successful year and look forward to building upon this in the year ahead.

Cllr James Stockan
HITRANS Chair

Ranald Robertson
Partnership Director

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THE HITRANS TEAM

The HITRANS Board comprises a Councillor from each local authority area covered by the partnership and 3 non-council members appointed in a personal capacity by the Board and approved by the Minister for Transport following open advertisement and selection. The Board has appointed a group of professional advisers who play an important role, working with the executive team, in developing strategy. The executive team report to the Board.

BOARD

Cllr James Stockan, Chair (Orkney Islands Council)
Cllr John MacKay, Vice Chair (Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar)
Cllr John Cowe, (Moray Council)
Cllr Robert G MacIntyre (Argyll and Bute Council)
Cllr Audrey Sinclair (Highland Council)
Wilson Metcalfe
Prof David Gray
Okain MacLennan

ADVISORS

Gavin Barr (Orkney Islands Council)
Fraser Grieve (Scottish Council for Development and Industry)
Fergus Murray (Argyll and Bute Council)
Iain MacKinnon (Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar)
Stuart Black / Malcolm MacLeod (Highland Council)
Tony Jarvis (Highlands and Islands Enterprise)
Stephen Cooper / Nicola Moss (Moray Council)
Pip Farman (NHS)

EXECUTIVE TEAM

Ranald Robertson (Partnership Director)
Katy Cunningham (Office Manager – Inverness)
Christine Kendall (Office Manager – Lairg)
Neil MacRae (Partnership Manager)
Fiona McInally (Active Travel Officer)
Frank Roach (Partnership Manager)
Julie Cromarty (Travel Information Officer)
Jayne Westbrook (EU Project Officer)
Andrew McKay (Graduate Business Support Officer – short term internship)

THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY

The Transport Scotland Act 2005 placed the preparation of the Regional Transport Strategy as the first duty of the Regional Transport Partnerships. The Strategies are strategic high level documents that focus on the transport strategies necessary to support Government's key objectives and the single outcome agreements of the constituent local authorities.

HITRANS strategic vision and objectives as included in the Strategy link very closely with those of Government. The Strategy identifies the links between Government's aims and those of HITRANS and its constituent Councils.

The core of the Strategy can be viewed as 10 horizontal themes applying to the whole region which aim to:

- Promote the long term development of walking and cycling.
- Prepare a sub-strategy for investment in the region's bus services.
- Enhance aviation connections between islands and peripheral areas and national gateways.
- Improve the region's community and demand responsive transport provision.
- Increase efficiency of urban travel by tackling congestion, reducing car use on short journeys, and improving public transport.
- Assist freight transport to shift from road to less environmentally damaging modes.
- Develop a programme of investment to improve the locally significant rural road network.
- Prepare a sub-strategy for investment in ports and ferries.
- Develop initiatives to reduce the cost of travel.
- Develop ways to reduce the climate change impact of transport in the region.

The Strategy also identifies policy for the transport network. Priority action is required:

- To reduce journey times and increase journey reliability on our three strategic corridors linking the western parts of the region to Glasgow; the north of the region and the Inner Moray Firth to central Scotland; and Inverness to Aberdeen.
- And on the regional network to improve the Orkney inter isles services; to improve the Western Isles spinal route and sea crossings; and to reduce journey times and increase reliability on the roads on Mull; the road between Oban and Lochgilphead; the roads to north west Sutherland and Wester Ross; and on the Moray Firth coastal route.

HITRANS are required to measure the success achieved in delivering the core aims and objectives of the Regional Transport Strategy. To this end we have developed a monitoring and evaluation framework that has been approved by Audit Scotland to show progress across a range of key performance indicators. This framework is detailed in full at the end of the annual report.

HITRANS have begun the process of updating the Regional Transport Strategy. Following an initial workshop in February 2016 a public consultation on the Main Issues Report was undertaken. A copy of the Main Issues Report can be found at this link. http://bit.ly/2h5APZo. A draft of the full updated Regional Transport Strategy will in 2016/17.

HITRANS also consulted on their draft Regional Active Travel Strategy in January 2016. An amended final version of the strategy which incorporates the feedback received will also be published later this year with a series of actions and priorities that seek to help realise the Scottish Government's aspiration of 10% of all journeys being by bike and increasing walking levels within the HITRANS area.

SUPPORTING SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENTS

The Concordat between the Scottish Government and CoSLA (Convention of Scottish Local Authorities) sets out the terms of the relationship between the Scottish Government and local government. A central proposal of this agreement is the creation of a Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) between each Community Planning Partnership and the Scottish Government, based on achieving 15 key national outcomes agreed in the Concordat. The outcomes reflect the National Performance Framework and aim to deliver the National Purpose.

In taking forward its focus on Sustainable Economic Growth HITRANS has completed the development of a Regional Transport Strategy which aims to deliver a more successful Highlands and Islands, with opportunities for the whole region to flourish, through increasing the competitiveness of the region as part of Scotland as a whole. Economic sustainability and growth is a core purpose for the HITRANS partnership, and to which all the constituent Local Authorities and Community Planning partners are committed, support and actively contribute where appropriate. The Strategy identifies how improvements in transportation across the Highlands and Islands can directly support the Government in achieving its National purpose across a number of is national outcome areas.

The modern transport system that is detailed in the Regional Transport Strategy will support a smarter community through better access to learning opportunities. The Strategy and the joint working of the Partnership, its Councils and Community Planning partners will help people across the Highlands and Islands to sustain and improve their health, ensuring faster, more reliable, and more affordable access to healthcare, and greater opportunities to lead an active lifestyle through active travel access to local services and facilities. HITRANS is actively engaging in the SOA process covering each of the five Community Planning Partnerships in our region.

EUROPEAN FUNDING

NORTHERN PERIPHERY AND ARCTIC PROGRAMME- SPARA 2020 PROJECT

Smart Peripheral and Remote Airports 2020 (SPARA2020) is a Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme area project aimed at addressing some of the special needs of the smaller civilian airports in the region. This three year €2.4 million project brings together a range of public authorities, academic institutions, airports, SMEs, and specialists to focus on the particular challenges of airports serving remote and peripheral areas. The project partner were notified of the success of the application in February 2015 and this followed the completion of an initial preparatory project in 2014.

The Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme 2014-2020, is funded by the ERDF, and more generally aims to help peripheral and remote communities on the northern margins of Europe to develop their economic, social and environmental potential.

SPARA2020 has been designed both to address the region's needs, but also to explore issues that have resonance beyond Northern Europe, and to develop outputs that will deliver enduring benefits after the project concludes in May 2018. The project commences in June 2015.

The lead partner for the project is The Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership (HITRANS) who are the statutory regional transport partnership covering Eilean Siar (Western Isles), Orkney, Highland, Moray and most of the Argyll and Bute area. Other Scottish partners include the University of the Highlands and Islands and Robert Gordon University whilst Sweden is well represented with Trafikverket (The Swedish Transport Administration), Sundsvall Timrå Airport and Storuman Municipality. The North West Regional Assembly (NWRA) of Ireland will represent airports such as Donegal and Ireland West (Knock) in the project. Molde University in Norway and the University of Sydney is Australia are the other project partners. The project budget allocation is listed in the table below:

Partner	Budget
The Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership (HITRANS)	€494,253.21
University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI)	€350,216.16
Robert Gordon University (RGU)	€180,797.00
Trafikverket (Sweden)	€250,008.58
Sundsvall Timrå Airport (Sweden)	€357,143.00
Storuman Municipality (Sweden)	€379,871.00
North and West Regional Assembly (Ireland)	€234,306.80
Molde University (Norway)	€115,500.48
University of Sydney (Australia)	€60,000.00

The project will include work on Innovative Technologies to improve airport performance and control cost. These involve a close examination of Remote Air Traffic and Remote Security technologies as well as distributed training, benefitting in essence from broadband and communication technology advances. With the support of Eurocontrol the project will also examine the business case for Airport Collaborative Decision Making (lite), as suited to the smaller airport (and budget) context

Mindful of aviation's carbon footprint two work strands have been developed to foster more sustainable energy use in the sector. Low carbon fuel airport surface access demonstrator trials are being developed by HITRANS in partnership with their member Councils, Energy Savings Trust and Highlands and Islands Airports at airports in the Highlands and Islands. These are designed to be low carbon exemplar projects on how to decarbonise links from the airport to its local population centre and it is hoped this will include support for electronic bus operation on airport service, EV car hire and EV / Hybrid Taxi roll out to serve airports. The business case for offering biofuels to incoming aircraft at the region's airports will be examined in some detail learning from some pioneering work at Karlstadt Airport in Sweden.

Based upon the recognition that the performance of many peripheral airports' scheduled traffic is structurally constrained by their small catchment size, significant budget has been assigned to examining non aeronautical sources of income and diversification of roles for these facilities. A whole gamut of possibilities will be examined and best practice will be publicised and disseminated, and some more in depth pilot projects will be undertaken. Optimising an airport's role as an employment cluster will be explored extensively. The locations selected for these activities are Ireland West (Knock), Donegal, Inverness and Oban.

The project also intends to examine in some detail the distinct socio-cultural role that airports play in the Northern Periphery and Arctic area and also to refine and improve economic impact assessment methodologies of SPARA airports with a view to better guide future public investment. This will include studies led by RGU at airports in Ireland, Scotland and possibly Sweden.

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

The Partnership at its meeting of 15 April 2015 agreed the HITRANS Business Plan for 2015/16 which included a programme for Research and Strategy Development for 2015/16 in support of development, implementation and delivery of the HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy.

The table below summarises the programme and provides some information on projects. The programme was subject to regular reporting throughout the year and some items featured as individual reports. Detailed information is available on at www.hitrans.org.uk including where appropriate the final study report / output.

AREA	PROJECT	BUDGET	COMMENTS
Active Travel	Smarter Choices Smarter Places Match Funding	30000	Match funding to help partner Councils draw down their allocation under SCSP.
	Community Links (SUSTRANS Award)	610000	Budget for Inverness Campus (north bridges). Project funding drawn down from Community Links Fund only once spend achieved.
	Community Link Feasibility Support	10000	Budget to support partner authority development of potential Community Links Projects.
	SUSTRANS Partnership / Active Travel Projects	100000	Partnership with SUSTRANS for Active Travel Officer to deliver active travel projects across the region.
Aviation	Development and promotion of case for sustainable air connectivity through London / EU hub	8000	Further work to provide evidence in support of the need for the Highlands and Islands to have secure connectivity to world markets.
	Skye Air Service Project Development	3500	Development of the case for a new Skye Air link
	Air Discount Scheme - SME Extension	3300	Research to identify the feasibility and potential cost of extending the Air Discount Scheme to include business travel for island based SMEs.
	Air Service Scoping Research	1700	Survey work led by SCDI on Air Services current performance.
	Regional Air Service Development Support	35200 (11,733.33)	Funding to support de minimis air service enhancement of Glasgow - Barra service as a 3 way partnership project with Transport Scotland and CnES. HITRANS will meet a third share of the total £35,200 spend.

AREA	PROJECT	BUDGET	COMMENTS
European / External Funding	ERDF - SPARA 2020 Project	40000	HITRANS cash contribution to the budget for the SPARA 2020 project which attracts a 65% intervention rate from ERDF.
	ERDF / INTERREG Project Support	5000	Support towards the development of new EU/External funding opportunities.
	Ferry Accessibility Fund	3000	Roll out of Thistle Assistance Card in the Highlands and Islands which will be submitted for part funding through the Ferry Accessibility Fund.
Ferry	Ferry Capacity Study	10000	Partnership project with ABC, CNES and OHTIA to capture booking system availability on west coast ferry routes in summer 2015
	Northern Isles Ferry Service Contract Development	0	Support of research to support the development of the next NIFS tender.
Travel Information	Severe Weather Information for Transport (SWIFT)	10000	Extension to live eye cameras and severe weather alerts to points on the local road network across the region.
	Smart Ticketing Project Support	5000	Trials of smart cross modal ticketing to improve customer experience in using public transport in the Highlands and Islands
	Real Time Information Development	30000	Delivery of improved real-time information for public transport passengers
RTS	Regionally Significant Scheme Development	50000	Funding support to help partner Councils develop Regionally Significant Transport Projects.
	Transport Capacity Constraints - Tourism	5000	Research to investigate where transport is a constraint / barrier to the development of tourism within the Highlands and Islands.
	RTS Refresh- Green Transport Efficiency Baseline Review	25000	To support the refresh of the RTS.
Rail	Network Rail Control Period 5 - Project Development	80000	Research to support delivery of improved rail services within NR Control Period 5. Includes STPR projects inc Dalcross Station, Inverness - Elgin, Oban Interchange etc.
Road Based Passenger Transport	Bus Investment Fund	200000	Delivery of HITRANS BIF Projects and developing applications to any third round of BIF.

INTELLIGENT TRANSPORT SYSTEMS

REAL TIME BUS INFORMATION SYSTEMS

HITRANS continues to lead the way in Scotland in providing real time information to bus passengers despite challenges in the form of the areas geography and the telecommunications available in much of the area.

The successful Bus Investment Fund applications for the East Inverness Bus Improvement Corridor and HI-Travel projects provided an opportunity to improve and expand the coverage of real-time bus information on-street and online for services in the project area but also make improvements that will be of benefit to the whole HITRANS area including the piloting of different technologies to counter the challenges of providing power supplies to some sites. This involved the install of solar powered displays in Badenoach and Strathspey and live departure information displays using e-paper technology in Skye.

Another such innovation is the incorporation of Near Field Codes (NFC's) and QR codes onto bus stop timetable notices which will enable any passenger with a smartphone to obtain real-time or scheduled information for that unique bus stop.

The HiTravel project has allowed significant development of ITS services and this is covered in detail later in the Annual Report.

Combined project management and maintenance arrangements for the Argyll, Highland and Orkney real time information systems have helped streamline delivery and avoid duplication of effort across the delivery of intelligent transport system solutions to passengers across the Highlands and Islands.

SCOTLAND'S 8TH CITY – THE SMART CITY

Inverness is a member of the Scottish Cities Alliance (SCA), along with Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Perth and Stirling and the Scottish Government. To further the smart cities workstream Scotland's cities, led by Glasgow City Council, are undertaking a collaborative ERDF funded Strategic Intervention entitled 'Scotland's 8th City – the Smart City'.

Projects undertaken as part of this strategic intervention must be centred upon data and technology, and be undertaken in collaboration with at least one other Scottish City. The Strategic Intervention's outcomes include developing innovative city services, opening up data sets, and increasing citizen engagement.

HITRANS in partnership with The Highland Council have submitted an application under the Transport Smart Cities initiative with a proposed projects of a value up to £1million with 50% of this being drawn down from ERDF funding if the application is successful.

The projects will include interventions as set out below;

Intelligent Transport Systems - Traffic Management & Adaptive Bus Priority
Enhancement to the Council Urban Traffic Management Database and a roll out of a mesh network to support the coordination of traffic signals across Inverness that will facilitate intelligent bus priority and improved performance and monitoring of the traffic network.

Live Traffic and Public Transport Information
Expansion and enhancement of live public transport information across the city. Piloting of smart technologies to support public transport, parking and traffic management in the city.

AIR ROUTE DEVELOPMENT

GLASGOW – BARRA

One of the main recommendations in the Regional Air Service Development Study - undertaken by Northpoint Aviation in 2012/13 and 2013/14 - was for key stakeholders to share the study findings (including results of an online survey to capture potential new demand on various existing and new routes) with Loganair to allow them to consider whether the evidence supported additional flights between Barra and Glasgow.

Loganair have commercially operated additional double rotations on this route five days per week over the peak season in addition to the single rotation they are obliged to provide for the Public Service Obligation (PSO). Following discussions with Loganair - and within the banner of the Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership - HITRANS, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and HIE agreed to support the provision of additional rotations on Tuesday and Wednesdays from the end of May until October for a period of 20 weeks giving an additional 40 rotations at a cost of £32,000. The project proved a huge success with passenger demand being high on most flights. The initiative continued for summer 2015 with HIE being replaced by Transport Scotland as the third delivery partner and from October 2015 the additional rotations became part of the PSO contract and will continue year round fully funded by Transport Scotland through the PSO.

INDEPENDENT AIRPORTS COMMISSION

On 7 September 2012 the UK Government announced its intention to create an independent commission, chaired by Sir Howard Davies, to identify and recommend to government options for maintaining the UK's status as a global aviation hub. The commission's role is to identify and evaluate how any need for additional capacity should be met in the short, medium and long term whilst maintaining a UK-wide perspective.

After a thorough process of evidence gathering including a number of calls for evidence to which HITRANS responded the Commission published their final report and recommendations in July 2015. HITRANS welcomed the Commission's finding that increased runway capacity in the South-East of England should be created at Heathrow Airport, London. Central to our consistent support for Heathrow's expansion was a plea that Inverness Airport be given three ring-fenced slots each day to allow onward links to international markets – in recognition of its peripheral location.

At the time of the announcement HITRANS Chair Councillor James Stockan, welcomed the recommendation in favour of a third runway at London Heathrow Airport saying,

"HITRANS have taken a keen interest in the deliberations of the Independent Airports Commission. We have consistently made our argument that Inverness should be linked to the UK hub airport and whichever of the three short listed options was recommended by the Commission should move forward as quickly as possible and must deliver increased access from UK regions to that hub.

"It is particularly pleasing that the Commission has recognised our argument that the public service obligation should be available to protect regional access to a particular airport and hope that the Department for Transport responds positively to this key message.

"We recognise that this is a significant step towards creating much-needed additional capacity to improve connectivity to the UK but realise this is the end of the beginning and there is a long way to go before the new runway is constructed. We hope

this project now moves forward as quickly as possible and look forward to hearing what commitments Heathrow Airport offers to the Highlands and Islands on our access to the hub."

In its response to the consultation HITRANS favoured an expansion of Heathrow over an expansion of Gatwick.

Director Ranald Robertson wrote: "Heathrow Airport already sits at the heart of the UK's transport network. It is the only airport that offers a hub airport allowing people to connect by road, rail and air to the range of flights to international markets that business and tourism need if the UK economy is to remain competitive.

"While it is important that the UK can benefit from increased access to global markets including important markets in the EU, North America and Asia / Pacific it is equally important that this connectivity is afforded to the whole of the UK.

"For the Highlands and Islands, geography predetermines that rail - even High Speed - is not the answer for the region to connect to the UK hub airport. Distance and time make air access to London essential both for point-to-point travel and onward connectivity. In adding our voice to those proposing to the Commission that Heathrow expansion is the best opportunity for the UK's air system to develop, we would ask the Commission to strongly consider conditioning any recommendation on a new runway on the commitment from the promoter that an appropriate level of regional access will be accommodated for those UK regions who cannot access the Airport through a sub 3 hour rail journey.

"In the case of Inverness Airport, we would consider that medium to long term requirement to be 3 rotations per day with bidirectional morning and evening rotations supported by a middle of the day slot allocation. Air links to London are so important to the economy of the North of Scotland and that of the wider UK. Consequently it is essential that ring-fencing of new capacity for such links should form part of the Airports Commission's final recommendations to Government."

He went on to say that the impact of constrained capacity in the South East air system was already being felt in the Highlands and Islands. It was therefore important that the Commission's final recommendation was backed up with strong interim measures to combat any further erosion of regional access to international markets.

He added: "If increased efficiency can achieve an increase in slots at London Heathrow we would ask that consideration be given to releasing a single daily rotation for Inverness access in the short term until a new runway is provided. We would also ask that the Commission offer a strong and supportive line on the case for regions such as the Highlands and Islands to receive support to access an alternative EU hub airport in the short term and propose a solution to this issue of deploying the Regional Air Connectivity Fund to secure an intra EU PSO from Inverness to Amsterdam on a business focused morning / evening twice daily rotation."

A welcome end to 2015/16 included announcements from British Airways and London Heathrow Airport that the airline would reintroduce the Heathrow to Inverness service on a single daily rotation in May 2016. This will we hope prove hugely successful and should the Commission's recommendations move forward into Government policy we trust this will include a commitment to increase service levels on the Inverness route to optimise the travel opportunity for business and leisure to and from the Highlands and Islands with our worldwide markets.

The announcement of the new BA service to Heathrow was swiftly followed with the further welcome news that the Inverness to Amsterdam single daily service would become a KLM operated route from May 2016 giving better options for onward travel both in terms of cost and convenience.

SKYE AIRPORT

In 2013/14, HITRANS, The Highland Council and Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) jointly commissioned consultants ARUP and RDC Aviation to undertake a feasibility study to help establish the case for reintroducing scheduled flights to Airport on Skye. The Study estimated current unconstrained demand for air services from Skye to Glasgow/Edinburgh to be of the order of 21,500 passengers per annum. It also evaluated four options for creating the necessary infrastructure to re-establish air services at Ashaig Airport with the capital investment required, ranging from £2.3m to £15.3 million.

The Study developed a range of Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) scenarios tested for an Option A which represented the lowest cost airport option based on the existing runway length. This assumed Air services using Twin Otter 300 series operating a twice-daily (12 return trips per week) service and a single aircraft dedicated to the route. Other options had significantly greater

airport costs but did not provide additional passenger or tourism benefits.

Based on the inputs available at the level of detail which the Feasibility study was undertaken, the BCR using the BASE assumptions was estimated to be 0.95. A variety of other scenarios were also assessed with those tested falling within a range of 0.75 to 1.13.

Following completion of the initial Feasibility Study a working group with representatives from HITRANS, The Highland Council and HIE was set up with the objective of developing a more detailed business case to a level that would enable decisions on investment to be made.

The Working Group has since undertaken a number of elements of additional work including an updated PSO estimate for the service, revised maintenance costs, a CAP 232 survey and commenced the aerodrome licensing process with the CAA.

Before an updated business case could be developed the original study identified that it was essential to undertake a more detailed understanding of the wider socio-economic benefits that a scheduled service to the central belt may provide. Colleagues at Highlands and Islands Enterprise subsequently commissioned Ekosgen to undertake this research which was completed in March 2016. A copy of the full report can be found via the following link http://www.hie.co.uk/regional-information/economic-reports-and-research/archive/skye-air-services-study-2016.html

Following the completion of the socio-economic study, the Working Group members have agreed to commission an updated business case which will incorporate the findings of the scoio-economic study and also recent technological advances that may impact on the overall business case.

FERRY SERVICE DEVLOPMENT

ORKNEY ISLES STAG APPRAISAL

In December 2014 OIC, HITRANS, Transport Scotland, SIC and Zetrans agreed a Joint Statement establishing Partnership commitments to jointly addressing Ferry Replacement issues in Orkney and Shetland. This Agreement was itself linked into the Empowering Scotland's Islands Communities Prospectus which identified the benefits of close working to establish a fair and effective solution to service requirements for the future. It was recognised in these Statements that there was a need for evidence gathering to support future funding and investment decisions. It was further recognised that the evidence gathering should follow the established Transport Scotland Routes and Services Methodology and STAG Appraisal approaches to ensure consistency and legitimacy alongside other services in Scotland.

Orkney Islands Council and HITRANS jointly funded a Strategic Transport Appraisal Guidance Part 1 (STAG 1) to explore air or ferry service provision to the outlying islands and support the partners consideration of Orkney's future Internal Transportation Infrastructure requirements.

In addition HITRANS, OIC and Transport Scotland undertook further work to apply the Routes and Services Methodology (RSM) process to all of Orkney's islands to identify whether there is any under or over provision of internal ferry services.

STAG Part 2 Appraisal

Whilst the STAG 1 process focussed on air and ferry services specifically to the Outer North Isles, the STAG 2 appraisal process will now consider all internal transportation routes and services for the Inner, South and North Isles of Orkney, namely 13 islands including infrastructure that currently serves 19 piers/ terminals and 6 isles airfields.

HITRANS Board agreed to allocate £45,000 within the 2015/16 Business plan as a contribution towards this work and following confirmation of match funding contributions from Orkney Islands Council, HIE and Transport Scotland an Invitation to Tender was issued by Orkney Islands Council with the consultants Peter Brett Associates selected to undertake the commission following an evaluation exercise.

Work on the project is ongoing with a major public consultation exercise planned in Spring 2016. This will seek feedback from each island on the different options or packages emerging from the Transport Appraisal.

FERRY AVAILABILITY STUDY – CLYDE & HEBRIDES NETWORK

Since 2011, Outer Hebrides Tourism has carried out research on the availability to book car spaces on the CalMac website on selected routes to and from the Western Isles.

Between 2013 and 2015 this research has been financially supported by HITRANS and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and Argyll & Bute Council. Each year the work has been extended to include additional routes with the 2015 work including the services between Oban and Craignure and the Sounds of Harris and Barra for the first time. In total, the 2015 study gathered data on 10 routes and 20 separate services.

A copy of the full 2015 report is available on the HITRANS website at the following link http://bit.ly/2hy6gMX.

The work undertaken by the OHT (on behalf of HITRANS, CnES and A&B Councils) in 2015 and previous years has helped to highlight significant issues relating to the lack of online booking availability for vehicles on several routes operated by CalMac during the peak summer months. It has helped inform key stakeholders of both the current capacity constraints and likely future demands on the Clyde and Hebridean Ferry Services

(CHFS) network. This work is now complimented by Transport Scotland's Vessel Replacement and Deployment Plan.

In October 2013 Transport Scotland sponsored a project which had the objective of advising Transport Scotland (TS), Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited (CMAL) and CalMac Ferries Limited (CFL) what a programme of major vessel retentions, cascades, acquisitions and disposals may look like in order that the delivery of the Scottish Ferry Services: Ferries Plan (2013-2022), as it relates to the CHFS Contract, could be fulfilled in the timescales indicated by the Scottish Government. An annual report is now published which considers the latest data and modelling of future demand on the network to help inform decisions on vessel deployment and the vessel replacement strategy for the network.

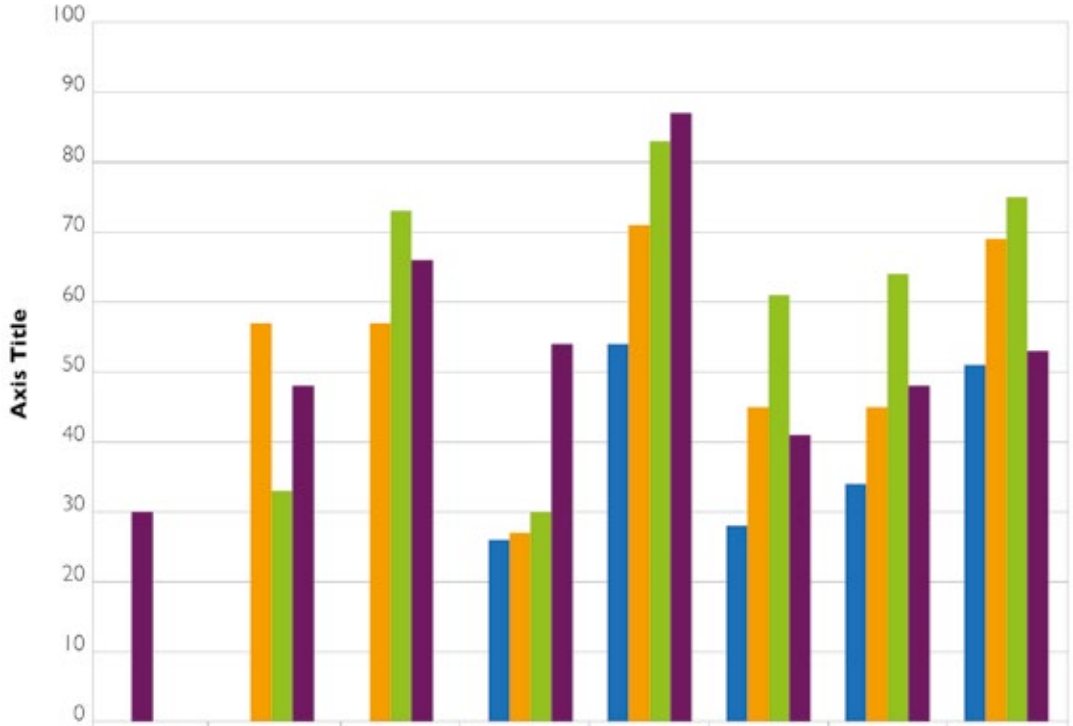
This work is set in the context of the Scottish Governments welcome roll out of the Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) scheme across those routes on the Clyde and Hebridean Ferry Services Contract which were not previously entitled to the discount scheme. The new tariffs were introduced at the start of the winter 2015/16 timetable so their full impact will only be understood in summer 2016.

April – October 2015 Summary

As the full report indicates, all the routes studied suffer from significant levels of sailings becoming unavailable to book online with a minimum of 30% of sailings on each route where data was gathered becoming Unavailable to Book Online (UTBO) by the day of sailing.

Although numbers of UTBO sailings have reduced significantly for the Stornoway/Ullapool route after the introduction of the Loch Seaforth and extra weekend sailings from the Isle of Lewis, there were still 261 UTBO sailings recorded.

An overall decrease in capacity constraints for northern Outer Hebridean routes was noted including Lewis, Harris & North Uist. At the same time a large increase was seen in capacity constraints in southern routes, particularly the Isle of Barra.



	Mull	Islay	Coll & Tiree	Barra	South Uist	North Uist	Harris	Lewis
2012				26	54	28	34	51
2013		57	57	27	71	45	45	69
2014		33	73	30	83	61	64	75
2015	30	48	66	54	87	41	48	53

Percentage of UTBO Sailings June to August

RAIL DEVELOPMENT

OBAN HUB

HITRANS held a Stakeholder meeting in Oban on 14 January with attendees from CMAL, ScotRail Alliance, Calmac, IDP Architects, Bid4Oban, Transport Scotland, Argyll and Bute Council, Serco Caledonian Sleepers, RGU and HITRANS. Following a walk around the pier, Prof Richard Laing explained his 3D scanning exercise while ABC went through the £2m Public Realm.

It was apparent that the current arrangements on the pier are unsatisfactory, and will be under further pressure with the introduction of RET and additional ferry services. The photo below demonstrates the extent to which the landscape has changed over the years, with perhaps a reduced sense of place.

There are potential conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles on the pier, and the environment is devoid of heritage interest, The station offers limited waiting facilities, and there areas of unused and sterilised ground that could be brought back into for transport and other purposes.

HITRANS began investigating options for making the ferry terminal and railway station operate more effectively, while ensuring that rail capacity can meet future needs, the most immediate being the diversion of the Caledonian Sleeper to Oban during engineering works north of Crianlarich in February.

SCOTLAND ROUTE STUDY

HITRANS responded to Network Rail's Scotland Route Study consultation

The purpose of the Route Study is to provide an evidence base that will inform funders in Scotland when considering rail industry investment choices for Control Periods 6 and 7 between 2019 and 2029. It is one of a new generation of Studies across Great Britain which will also set out how forecast growth could be met through to 2043. This longer term planning horizon is deliberate: it enables a broad range of options to be considered that take account of developments such as High Speed 2 and technological advancements, with a view to creating a prioritised set of choices for the next 10 years and beyond.

This Route Study also contains a Market Study which forecasts demand for passenger journeys undertaken wholly within Scotland. It has been combined with the Market Studies for Long Distance (Anglo Scottish) Passenger and Freight flows, to consider the potential roles that the railway could play in supporting the Scottish economy through to 2043, and identifying opportunities to enable the network to meet the future needs of the people of Scotland.

The choices for funders included in this Route Study have been developed through a strategy of focussing on making the best use of the existing network wherever possible before considering infrastructure enhancement. Where the outputs required cannot be delivered within the constraints of the current network, trade-offs between outputs have been considered, and options to enhance the network have been considered.

HITRANS comments appear below.

Inter-city

We assume Highland Main Line Phase 3 and Aberdeen-Inverness Phase 2 will be implemented in CP 6 2019-24. The Scottish Cities Alliance is focussed on speeding up inter-city connectivity in Scotland. Reduced journey times on Inverness to Aberdeen and the Highland Main Line will improve the growth of the Highland economy and help compete with the A9 and A96 dualling projects scheduled for completion in 2025 and 2030 respectively.

RETB signalling and rural routes

The RETB signalling system is due to remain operational until 2040. The SRS is end-dated 2043, therefore we would have expected some commentary on future signalling options for the rural routes. Token exchange transaction time, section length and loop entry/through/exit speeds are all constraints on performance and capacity. Originally conceived as an equipment-lite scheme, the addition of power supplies, points heaters, TPWS, OSS and GPS monitoring means that the operational footprint is now closer to conventional routes. RETB also defines the terminating platform at the seaward end of the rural routes, limiting flexibility. Equally there should be reference to future rolling stock characteristics on these routes which are unlikely to be electrified.

Highland Main Line

We would urge electrification on Central Belt to Inverness to be timed for commencement before the life expiry of the ScotRail HST diesel fleet c. 2029, so that a fully electric fleet can be procured if the electrification programme is accelerated, or a bi-mode fleet can be procured to permit phased electrification. Freight operations Daventry-Grangemouth/Coatbridge-Inverness could switch to electric traction throughout.

Perth station re-modelling, redevelopment and re-signalling prior to electrification, including freight looping capacity and with improved transport interchange capabilities will be of enormous benefit for Highland travellers interchanging there between Edinburgh and Glasgow services. The proposed layout will greatly shorten interchange times, and permit linespeed improvements from Stanley Jn to Perth Station approach (currently heavily speed restricted)

The installation of additional loops and/or double track in advance of electrification of the Highland Main Line will increase capacity, improve performance in the event of perturbation and also be of benefit to freight operations. Killiecrankie is rightly noted as a constraint both for existing freight gauge clearance, and for future electrification.

Inverness-Edinburgh services will be greatly improved with Hilton-Ladybank improvements and HSC (Higher Speed via Cowdenbeath-Halbeath-Inverkeithing direct), bringing the Edinburgh time closer to the Glasgow time. An indication of optimal journey times to Central Belt would be useful, including opportunities for peak/shoulder peak arrivals at both north and south terminals, and the impact of Edinburgh Gateway.

We would like to see a strong emphasis on climate change mitigation as HML has experienced substantial weather-related disruption in recent years at Kingussie and Dalguise.

We would also urge the industry to study in-depth the capability and capacity of Inverness Station, including: its ability to handle an increased quantum of trains, dedicated sleeper facilities, compliant north platforms that can used by rolling stock with 1/3-2/3 doors, through platforms to permit Tain-Elgin locals, improved fuelling, CET facilities near the current washer road.

Aberdeen-Inverness

We agree with the proposals for new dynamic loops/double track at Dalcross and other locations, extension of existing loops, signalling enhancements, linespeed improvements, track renewals; and urge double tracking to run from Inverness to Dalcross, with the provision for a signalled connection to Norbord. More efficient operations can be achieved by joining east and south lines at a new Seafield Jn, abandoning both the restrictive single track tunnel under the A9 and Raigmore Level Crossing.

Electrification of the route has been omitted from various policy documents over the years. Once Inverness-Perth and Perth-Dundee-Aberdeen are electrified post-HST, it would be inefficient not to complete the triangle. Freight gauge will be further enhanced, for new traffic and as a diversionary when HML is unavailable.

Far North

Re-signalling from Inverness to Dingwall, plus an additional loop between Inverness and Dingwall will enable journey time reductions with no RETB token exchange delays, improve capacity and permit additional peak services, and improve performance and reliability when there is perturbation.

This should also include new overspeed sensors to permit linespeed running within loops (currently restricted to 15mph); permissive working to split and join at both Dingwall platforms, a bi directional loop to enable freight and other trains to be passed. It should replicate the current RETB 24 hour network availability. The scheme may also help mitigate additional transaction time switching RETB panels at Invergordon.

We are pleased to see the testing of Wick 2 hourly (assume 6tpd) and Invergordon hourly, although Tain may make sense. However the long sections such as Helmsdale-Forsinard when freight paths are added in must make this hard to achieve.

The construction of the Georgemas Chord will allow trains from the south to reach Thurso perhaps 7 mins quicker. It will require motorised points to be controlled through the RETB system. The triangle created will be helpful for turning charters etc.

We are pleased to see reference Inverness station remodelling including the possible reconfiguration of platforms 5-7 and track layout at Inverness station to facilitate more frequent services on this section of route, and suggest that compliant north platforms that can used by rolling stock with 1/3-2/3 doors plus through platforms to permit Tain-Elgin locals should be investigated along with improved fuelling and CET facilities near the current washer road.

West Highland Lines and Dingwall to Kyle

It is disappointing that there are no proposals for enhancing routes to the three west coast ports of Mallaig, Oban and Kyle. One journey opportunity every 2-3 hours which may be difficult to achieve with the existing infrastructure. We agree that Fort

William-Glasgow particularly will require more than 3 ScotRail trains per day.

In the past the SRA concluded that an extended loop for freight operations was required, while there are opportunities for journey time reductions through schemes such as enhancing Crianlarich operations, improving handover at Helensburgh Upper and enabling faster cross-panel switching at Banavie for trains at St Fillans and Upper Tyndrum.

Other journey time reductions must be sought from the track to take advantage of the superior performance on the C 158s, in order to compete the with the A82/A85 road times.
At Oban the increase in both ferry and rail services, and the potential for sleepers underlines the need for investment in the interchange.

INVERNESS STATION DEVELOPMENT-PLATFORM 4 CHANGE

HITRANS began devising a Masterplan to ensure that the station can rise to the challenge of being a regional interchange for with more trains and more passengers while continuing to plays its role as the beating heart of the Old Town.

Inverness station currently handles 1.28m passengers a year, representing a 57% growth since 2005. It has other users on rail passes, meeters and greeters, people using the retail facilities on the concourse and those who use the station to cross from one side of the city to the other. Since 2005 there have been a number of developments, including: Invernet services; more trains on Inverness-Aberdeen and the Highland Main Line; increased retail activity at Eastgate; and Inverness Streetscape works.

The introduction of ticket gates has exacerbated the problem of free movement around the station, with up to 5m40 for a Wick train's passengers to egress, and sometimes over 10m for East Coast arrivals to get through.

The station has three access points: Station Square, Falcon Square and Platform 6.5. Flanked by the original buildings Station Square represents is the former public facing entrance, containing the War Memorial to the Cameron Highlanders, and also one to the Highland Railway Company's employees. It currently has car parking and a taxi concession. Falcon Square is becoming increasingly important to the city for access to retail, to buses and for cultural events, yet the access to the station is unwelcoming, thanks to signs that imply 'Keep Out', a gauntlet to be run across a road past inappropriate car parking, and fencing left over from a penal institution upgrade. Platform 6.5 is simply unpleasant, framed by aggressive ironwork, ill-placed bollards, poor surfacing and the refuse facility and leading to a car park where pedestrians may fear to tread. The station itself is characterised by a draughty concourse, a shortage of TVMs, inadequate seating, heating and eating places, curved platforms of differing lengths (but a fine barber's).

Pre-feasibility assessment work carried out by HITRANS, IDP Architects and Douglas Binns. Twenty-seven delegates attended, representing the commercial operational and statutory interests in the station and its environs. Options for increasing station capacity were explored, in the light of:

- Abellio's proposed multi-million pound spend on the concourse, façade and retail including 2go kiosk and Bike & Go. This is to be the subject of a bid to the Scottish Stations Fund
- 4 and 5 car High Speed Trains from 2018 to Aberdeen and Central Belt
- Virgin Stagecoach Trains East Coast 9 car Super Express Train from 2018
- Serco's new sleeper franchise with extended platforming requirements
- Serco's new main office on Union Street
- Inverness-Elgin resignalling by 2016
- Highland Council's Streetscape project
- Eastgate Shopping Centre expansion plans
- Royal Highland Hotel expansion plans

In order to find out what passengers think about the station, HITRANS commissioned Transport Focus, the passenger watchdog, to carry out a survey.

INVERNESS AIRPORT DALCROSS

HITRANS is the promoter of Dalcross Station reopening. Network Rail's Strategic Business Plan 2012 outlined the following intention for Control Period 5 2014-2019:

Aberdeen to Inverness Rail Line Improvements Phase 1, delivering the network capability to enable the operation of enhanced commuting services from Aberdeen to Inverurie and from Elgin to Inverness. In addition, working with station promoters to deliver new stations at Kintore (Nestrans) and Dalcross (HITRANS).

This was confirmed in the Office of Rail Regulation's final determination of the Periodic Review in autumn 2013. Full hourly, sub 2 hour journey times are not due to be completed until 2030 under Scottish Government's Infrastructure Investment Plan. The station is planned in two phases, with Phase 1 being the construction of a single platform station on the north side of the line with associated car parking. This will be on a similar basis to the original planning permission that was approved in 2007/08. The car park will be within the control of Inverness Airport Business Park. The station opening will be conditional on the closure of the level crossing.

Network Rail have confirmed in its CP5 Enhancements Delivery Plan (Dec13) that Dalcross (Petty) Level Crossing has to be closed to permit operation of the new station. The document states one of its key assumptions: agreement will be reached with relevant stakeholders for the closure of Dalcross Level Crossing prior to the construction of the new Dalcross station. Dalcross is an Automatic Half Barrier Crossing (AHB). The crossing is actuated by the train striking a treadle in the track, with sufficient time at a regulated speed being allowed for the barriers to come down and lights to come on before the train passes. The system relies on trains all travelling at the same speed. The crossing is incompatible with the safe operation of the new proposed Dalcross station and the additional Elgin-Inverness trains. The crossing closed time will be greatly extended, leading to misuse and thus safety risks.

The station will comprise a single 175m platform with a waiting shelter on the Inverness- Aberdeen line, to the south of the airport. A new access road will be constructed with cycling/ pedestrian provision from the existing road network and associated drainage works. The station is scheduled for opening in 2017.

Phase 2 will see a need for a long passing loop to increasing capacity on the Nairn-Inverness section, enabling a half hourly train service, at which time the second platform and associated footbridge will need to be provided.

HITRANS commissioned consultants to carry out the Business Case Analysis and the Transport Assessment, with Highland Council PDU providing assistance with the planning process. An application to the Scottish Stations Fund will be made in tandem with the full planning application.

Transport Assessment

The Inner Moray Firth area is the most densely populated part of the Highlands and contains some of the largest settlements where the demand for growth and development is also the greatest in the Highland region. Inverness is the capital of the Highlands and is the fastest-growing city in Scotland, serving the whole region and acting as a gateway to the Highlands and Islands.

The National Planning Framework for Scotland acknowledges Inverness and The Highlands and that the key economic sectors for the region include energy, tourism and life sciences. It also suggests that better access to Inverness Airport will be a key driver for these sectors and that "…a new rail station at Dalcross will bring economic and connectivity benefits". This is reinforced in the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan which suggests there will be significant growth in the region in the next 10 to 20 years in terms of population and employment. This has already started to be borne out with major developments gaining planning consent to the East of Inverness such as Tornagrain and Inverness Airport Business Park (IABP). As these developments start to be constructed there will be additional pressure put on the transport network to and from the East of Inverness.

Inverness to Aberdeen Rail Improvements

The Scottish Government's Strategic Transport Project Review (STPR) which was initially published in 2008 identified three priority rail projects, including the Inverness to Aberdeen Rail Improvement project. The project has three main objectives:

- to improve the provision of commuting opportunities between Elgin and Inverness and between Inverurie and Aberdeen through the provision of a half hourly frequency and new stations at Kintore (near Inverurie) and Dalcross (near Inverness)
- to achieve an hourly service pattern between Inverness and Aberdeen, and
- to reduce overall end to end journey times to around 2 hours.

Phase one of the project seeks to deliver enhanced commuter services and the infrastructure to support the provision of two new stations before 31st March 2019. Demand for additional commuter services has been an issue at both ends of the line. As previously indicated, £170 million will be invested in the Inverness to Aberdeen rail line however it should be noted that this does not include the additional rail stations where funding will need to be sought separately. The improvements will however include: the redoubling of the track between Aberdeen and Inverurie; signalling enhancements between Nairn and Elgin; platform extensions at Insch and Elgin to facilitate longer trains; the relocation of Forrest station; loop extension of the track at Forres; and infrastructure to allow new stations at Dalcross and Kintore (but not the stations themselves).

The Control Period 5 (CP5) Enhancements Delivery Plan (June 2015) outlines the projects Network Rail are committed to deliver between 2014 and 2019. The Scottish Stations Fund is identified within the delivery plan and a new station at Dalcross is identified as a project which may be delivered with the assistance of this fund. A Level Crossing Fund is also available with the purpose of supporting Network Rail, local authorities and other local stakeholders to work in partnership to facilitate the closure and partial closure of level crossings in Scotland. Dalcross Level Crossing is identified as a level crossing which may benefit from the assistance of this fund.

The Highland Council have identified a number of potential Park & Ride sites which include: Dalcross, East Inverness, and Tore.

Both East Inverness and Tore would comprise bus Park & Ride sites, while Dalcross offers the opportunity to create a rail Park & Ride. Rail Park & Ride has an advantage over Bus P&R whereby it is not subject to road network congestion and therefore can offer a reliable service where commuters can be assured of arriving at set times. Inverness Airport (Dalcross) Station and associated Park & Ride offer a solution which would bypass any congestion and delay on the A96(T). While directly benefiting commuters travelling into Inverness, it could also have a further benefit for those travelling from Inverness to the airport.

Inverness Airport (Dalcross) Station will provide an alternative parking location and reliable service for those travelling both East and West, offering a competitive and realistic alternative to private car travel, contributing to both local and national sustainable policies.

The proposals for the park and ride car park at the site include an initial provision of 50 spaces for rail users. There are no formal THC guidelines for the maximum number of spaces allowable at a rail park and ride site and so the proposals should be considered in terms of the positive impact they will have on commuter journeys from the committed Tornagrain and IABP developments.

The application also includes an additional 100 spaces which could be funded by HIAL, as a provision for airport travel. As part of this proposal a shuttle bus will also be provided by HIAL which would provide access between the park and ride car park and the Inverness Airport.

The planning application for the new station will include the closure of Dalcross (Petty) Level Crossing for the following performance and safety reasons:

- The proposals will result in trains slowing and stopping on the Inverness to Aberdeen line at the new station, increasing journey times. This will be in the backdrop of infrastructure improvements which are intended to increase line speeds and reduce journey times for patrons (a key aspiration of the Inverness to Aberdeen rail improvement project).
  The retention of the Level Crossing would exacerbate this by requiring trains to travel slower for longer.
- Increases in frequency and length of time that the level crossing barriers are down will result in extended delays for level crossing users, which may cause frustration and misuse of the level crossing. Level Crossing misuse is currently one of the biggest safety risks on UK railways. There is anecdotal evidence of misuse at the existing Dalcross Level Crossing. I
- The Highland Council have a number of consented developments in the immediate area, such as Tornagrain and IABP, which will increase the traffic flow across the level crossing. This, by association, would increase the likelihood of an incident occurring and should be borne in mind in the context of increasing the number of train services.
- Network Rail has a key assumption in their CP5 Enhancements Delivery Plan associated with the closure of the Dalcross Level Crossing prior to construction of Inverness Airport (Dalcross) Station. Network Rail will not support the new station without the level crossing closure.
- The closure of the level crossing will potentially impact upon emergency services and therefore they have been consulted as part of this Transport Assessment. All services have indicated that there would be little or no impact on their ability to provide cover to the local area as appropriate alternative routes exist. It is acknowledged that the closure would cause a hindrance to some existing local routes; however these have been quantified within this report and shown to be extremely low. When considering the safety benefits that the closure

brings, not to mention the ability to implement the new Inverness Airport (Dalcross) Station and the wider economic and transport benefits to the Inner Moray Firth and Highland Region, it is considered that the closure of the Crossing is acceptable.

Draft Business Case

The draft business case has found that the development of Inverness Airport Station proposed by HITRANS, HIE and others would result in significant net benefits. The long-term potential of the station will be significant, particularly when the additional patronage generated by the proposed Inverness Airport Business Park and Tornagrain New Town developments are factored in.

The positive Business Case for the new rail station and its rail service would be further strengthened by a range of local economic and environmental benefits have not been quantified. The likely benefits of an early delivery of the station and its rail service in establishing sustainable travel behaviour of those moving to the new developments add further weight to the argument for early provision of the new station.

It is suggested that HITRANS, HIE and others continue with their efforts to deliver the Inverness Airport Station as quickly as possible.

Construction

BAM Nuttall has been appointed the principal contractor for the £170m upgrade of Scotland's Aberdeen-Inverness line. After helping deliver the £294m Borders Railway last month, BAM will now oversee the delivery of the improvement project's first phase over the next four years. Its engineers will double-track 16 miles of line between Aberdeen and Inverurie, as well as build a new station at Forres and straighten the railway alignment.

They will also extend platforms at Insch and Elgin to accommodate longer trains, upgrade signalling systems along the route and install infrastructure to allow new station to be built at Dalcross and Kintore.

Engineers are currently undertaking ground investigations, site surveys and vegetation clearance works on the line ahead of main construction work which starts in spring 2016.

BAM's work will be delivered in partnership with AECOM, CH2M, Stobart Rail and Siemens. Plans for new stations at Dalcross and Kintore are being developed separately by HITRANS and Nestrans respectively, while a further phase of the Aberdeen-Inverness project is to be developed.

Car Parking/Access

Useful discussions continue with HIAL and IABP around the size and operation of the car park. The 150 space car park including access roads is costed at £1.3m; the 20+6 space car park is costed at £896k. Revenue funding will be required for the shuttle bus link. The SSF will only contribute to a proportion of car park costs for the 150 space scheme.

Planning

In September HITRANS presented the case for the station and associated road closure to THC's Ward 18 and 19 members. A public consultation event was held at the Airport Terminal, in March during the 12 week period following the lodging of the planning application.

Funding

Highland Council and HIAL propose to contribute capital funding to the project. When backed with HITRANS £130k spent so far and the £450k land value we will have a significant sum to assist our Scottish Stations Fund bid. Revenue funding will be required for the shuttle bus link. The SSF will only contribute to a proportion of car park costs for the 150 space scheme. The SSF application will be progressed in tandem with the planning process.

BUS SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

EAST INVERNESS BUS IMPROVEMENT CORRIDOR PROJECT

The Scottish Government Bus Investment Fund aims to enable the development of projects which have the potential to deliver improvements in bus services and infrastructure through partnership working between local transport authorities, bus operators and others. The fund is expected to run for at least another two years, providing up to £3m/year. Projects are required to be sustainable in the long term and self-funded (or funded by partners) from the end of the project period.

HITRANS secured a contribution from BIF of £700,000 towards our £2.7 million East Inverness Bus Improvement Fund project. The project seeks to develop a Quality Partnership between HITRANS, The Highland Council and Stagecoach North Scotland to improve local bus services in East Inverness through a series of information, infrastructure and service enhancements.

The project was awarded funding on 31st December 2013 and ran until 31st March 2016. The Transport Minister attended the launch of the project at the new Inverness Campus, UHI site on 28th February 2014. The Campus is one of the many key destinations which will benefit from the proposed enhancements.

In the first phase of the project, Stagecoach deployed fifteen new vehicles on two of their busiest city services. This exceeds the original twelve proposed in the application and helps make the fleet of vehicles operating in Inverness among the youngest of any city in Scotland.

The project also saw £1million of new investment into improving the infrastructure and provision of information on Inverness' bus network. This spend delivered significant improvements including the installation of over 180 new bus stop flags and display cases which following the appointment of a public transport officer we were able to fill with information.

The focus of the project in 2015/16 was to deploy strategic bus priority at signalised junctions in the city following the successful trial at two pilot junctions on Millburn Road. This has been achieved predominantly through wireless communication between the Real-time information system deployed on the city bus fleet and the traffic signals rather than through expensive on street infrastructure improvements. It is anticipated that a future development will be to provide widespread Wifi access for passengers. This last is being investigated with funds identified under an ERDF Smart Mobility funding stream.

A final key element of the project which will be delivered now the infrastructure elements are in place is the introduction of the first Statutory Quality Bus Partnership in the Highlands and Islands for which work has been ongoing throughout 2015/16.

HI-TRAVEL

Transport Scotland awarded the HITRANS HI-travel project £300,000 from the Scottish Government Bus Investment Fund. The project which was developed in partnership with Local Authority colleagues, involves the employment of a Public Transport Officer on a shared services basis with the responsibility for co-ordinating the provision of public transport information across the HITRANS area and in so doing improve the quantity and quality of public transport information available to the public.

A new Officer was appointed to the post on January 26th 2015 and has since been involved with implementing the HI-Travel project.

In addition to undertaking necessary ICT and database training the Officer has met each of the Local Authority public transport teams help to establish the baseline information available as well as priorities for investment and support.

Since the project began investment in the following areas has been delivered:

- 250 High Quality Information poles / displays / timetable cases. Priority locations / routes identified to date are Kirkwall, Stornoway, Oban, Fort William and the Service No 35 between Buckie and Portgordon.
- Poster display cases for shelters where we hope to engage with other organisations such as Outer Hebrides Tourism to install local tourist information as well as public transport

information in time.
- The supply of 5 solar e-paper displays at 5 interchanges in Skye and Lochalsh
- 4 additional Solar Chronos units at busy stops within the Cairngorm National Park area.
- Supply of real-time displays at locations in Orkney (including the Airport), Stornoway, Thurso and Elgin Bus Station.
- Maintenance and support for the JourneyGenie website.
- 5 new bus shelters for key interchanges
- Real-time display and Wifi hotspot in Portree Square

In addition to the funding from the Bus Investment Fund the shared service approach to the HiTravel project is underpinned with a further collective funding contribution of £235,000 from HITRANS and all five partner Councils.

BUS INVESTMENT FUND – LOCAL AUTHORITY LED PROJECTS

HITRANS also financially supported a number of other successful applications to the Bus Investment Fund. These are detailed below.

Moray – Urban Freedom Health Cycle
Moray Council successful application focuses on access to health and healthy living in Moray. It will see services enhanced to the new Forres Medical Centre by increasing the frequency on an existing bus service. In addition to this other bus service frequency enhancements and Sunday services are planned elsewhere in Moray as part of Stagecoach's contribution to the project. The project will also see bike racks installed on buses and some on bus bike carriage to allow people to access the Moray coast for cycling. Bus interchange and information facilities will also be enhanced.

HITRANS have agreed to provide match funding of £20,000 over two years towards this project from the Business Plan allocation for BIF support.

Argyll & Bute: Oban to Fort William Sunday Service
Argyll and Bute Council were successful with their application for funding to support the development of a Sunday service on the route between Oban and Fort William which will provide improved onward connections to Inverness and Skye for the Oban area and access to the islands and south of Oban for people in Fort William and surrounds.

The proposal is operate three journeys each way on summer Sundays and reduce this to two journeys during the winter at times similar to the weekday service giving a consistent seven day a week service to test the market in the hope that the enhancement may be continued commercially or become sustainable with minimal financial support.

The provision of the service is an important and necessary addition to the public transport network of the area and it is hoped that passenger facilities at Oban, Fort William and key points along the route can also be improved as part of the project.

The project is supported by The Highland Council and HITRANS including a £5,000 contribution towards the total project cost of £101,840.

Tasga Uibhist Community Transport
Tagsa Uibhist application to the Bus Investment Fund will allow the improvement of an invaluable community transport scheme within the HITRANS area.

Tasga Uibhist provide a vital local service and this proposal in partnership with Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar, Tagsa Uibhist and HITRANS will help enable much needed investment in the demand responsive services which they provide to the local community in North Uist, South Uist and Benbecula. This project will see investment in two new vehicles (four seater with wheel chair access and a nine seater minibus), help support the employment of a driver for the Dial a Bus service, promotion of their services and wider staff training.

HITRANS have matched the Comhairle's contribution by allocating a budget of £10,000 over the two years of the BIF project to support the Tagsa Uibhist project proposal.

The Highland Council: Badenoch & Strathspey Integrated Transport Service
The aim of this project is to develop an improved integrated transport service for the Badenoch and Strathspey (B&S) area. This will be delivered through a pilot project which links to the needs of the NHS and would be facilitated by the Badenoch & Strathspey Community Transport Company (BSCTC) which is a registered charity. The project will improve access to services for elderly and vulnerable members of the community who can be at a disadvantage due to a lack of regular, and accessible, public transport.

The two main elements of the project will be to deliver an improved fleet for BSCTC to enable cross-over with NHS requirements, i.e. new disabled compliant car and minibus to allow NHS non-emergency patient travel; and secondly the implementation of routing / scheduling software to enable optimisation of BSCTC fleet, maximising available driver resources and funding.

If successfully piloted, there should be an opportunity for community groups across the HITRANS area to benefit from similar routing / scheduling software.

ACTIVE TRAVEL

HITRANS REGIONAL ACTIVE TRAVEL STRATEGY

Action No 2 of the updated Cycling Action Plan for Scotland requests that 'each local area develop the strategic approach to supporting functional cycling (and active travel more broadly), mapping the appropriate infrastructure improvements required along with supporting promotional work to achieve tangible changes in travel choices' with an implication that future funding may only be provided where such strategic plans are in place.

HITRANS in partnership with its member Local Authorities led the way in developing Active Travel Masterplans for its main settlements with 17 Masterplans commissioned for all the main towns in the area identified below.

- Alness/Invergordon
- Aviemore
- Campbeltown
- Dingwall
- Dunoon
- Elgin
- Forres, Kinloss and Findhorn
- Fort William
- Inverness
- Kirkwall
- Lochgilphead and Ardrishaig
- Nairn
- Oban (draft)
- Rothesay
- Stornoway
- Thurso
- Wick

To support these plans HITRANS commissioned transport consultants AECOM to help support the development of an area wide Regional Active Travel Strategy that helps identify both where investment to address the actions in these Masterplans should be prioritised and also set out those parts of the strategic network where walking and cycling facilities need improved and align this with the aspiration for developing a National Cycling and Walking Network in National Planning Framework 3.

Following a workshop in December 2015 a draft strategy was issued for public consultation in March 2016.

Plan showing current National Cycle Network and Active Travel Masterplan towns in HITRANS area

INVERNESS CAMPUS NORTH AND SOUTH BRIDGES

HITRANS have worked in partnership with Highlands and Islands Enterprise to successfully apply for Community Links grant funding to develop active travel links between the new Inverness Campus site and development to its east from which it was separated by the Highland Mainline railway. 2015/16 saw the construction of the 'south bridge' link which will provide a shared use path using the existing rail overbridge after the project was successful in receiving £255,00.

HITRANS were also awarded grant funding to work in partnership with HIE to develop a design for a proposed 'North Bridge' which would see a multi-modeal link developed between the Inverness Campus site and the Inverness Retail Park. As well as providing a direct link for pedestrians and cyclists it will also cater for local bus services and in so doing open up the opportunity to provide attractive new public transport routes which would offer a competitive alternative to the car.

NCN 78 – NORTH BALLACHULISH – CORRAN FERRY

A very positive public meeting in was held in Onich at which the community unanimously supported the NCN 78 being developed through the village by utilising the existing footpath and re-designating this to a mixed use path with optimum with of 2.5m where possible. HITRANS have since been liaising with Transport Scotland, their operators BEAR and Sustrans to progress this project. The £500,000 allocation of funding which HITRANS were awarded to help progress the project has been used by Transport Scotland to commission the route operating company, BEAR Scotland to design and then start constructing the route upgrade. The first phase from Corran Ferry to the start of Onich started in autumn 2015 with works continuing into 2016.

Inverness Active Travel Map

ACTIVE TRAVEL MAPS, CYCLE PARKING, FEASIBILITY STUDIES ETC!

As part of the successful partnership between HITRANS and Sustrans, our Active Travel Officer has been able to support several initiatives and improvements across the HITRANS area using a £100,000 grant provided through the Community Links programme. Among the projects undertaken in 2016/17 are feasibility studies for new routes in Orkney between Kirkwall and Stromness and in the Longman area of Inverness. The first in a series of Active Travel Maps has also been produced for Inverness. It is hoped that further maps for each of the kmain towns in the HITRANS area in the coming years.

ROAD NETWORK

HITRANS continues to work with its member local authorities and Transport Scotland in order to improve and upgrade the Trunk Road and Regionally Significant Road Network. These strategic links are vital for connecting us both to Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen, and people to their main regional centre.

A9 & A96 DUALLING

HITRANS has been engaging with Transport Scotland as it develops proposals for the ambitious Dualling of the A9 and A96 Trunk Roads which connect Inverness with Perth and Aberdeen respectively. HITRANS have been working with other key stakeholders to ensure that the final schemes deliver the optimum solution for all forms of transport including freight, public transport and cycling. HITRANS are members of the Non Motorised User Groups which have been established to ensure that final scheme caters for all those who will use these two key arteries which link the Highlands to the rest of Scotland.

A82 AND A83 IMPROVEMENTS

HITRANS have also worked with Transport Scotland and Local authorities on proposals to upgrade the A82 and A83 trunk roads where the Scottish Government are funding works to upgrade pinch points at Crianlarich and Pulpit Rock and also solutions to address the impact of major landslips at the Rest and Be Thankful.

As the proposals for upgrading the 17 kilometre section of A82 between Tarbet and Inverarnan progresses, HITRANS have highlighted the need for this upgrade to reflect the importance of the A82 to the wider economy of the North and West Highlands and Islands by ensuring that it is built to a suitable standard to cater for the traffic which relies on this lifeline route and can help tackle the perceptions of remoteness which the currently inadequate route perpetuates.

REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT ROADS

In 2015/16 HITRANS also provided match funding support for the development of potential improvement schemes on both the A95 in Moray and the Western Isles 'Spinal Route'. It is hoped that by developing schemes to a 'drawer ready' stage it will increase the likelihood of funding becoming available for construction.

FREIGHT

BRANCHLINER

Over the next 10-15 years the timber industry needs to transport 4 million tonnes of timber from the wider Flow Country catchment to distant markets. This will have consequences for the fragile public road network, the environment and the neighbouring communities. The carrying capacity of the road network is a major constraint. The Highland Timber Transport Group's Flow Country Strategy 2014-16 highlights the still unrealised potential for rail to play a part.

This investigative study is a first phase which, if it proves positive, will lead towards a demonstrator project that will trial timber deliveries by rail.

With the help of Scottish Strategic Timber Fund and Forestry Commission HITRANS brought together a high level strategic group to establish the importance of the issues at stake – the environmental peatland interest, the economic timber interest and the critical infrastructure constraints – and to ensure there is commitment to finding a viable solution. This group set the context for and agreed a brief for consultants to develop the options and make recommendations. The consultants gathered existing knowledge and experience of timber transport by rail in the UK to see how it can be best applied to the Far North Line. They filled the gaps in knowledge and understanding of physical, cost, logistical, environmental and community issues.

The Branchliner Reports demonstrated the viability of a rail solution to the challenges of timber transport in the Flow Country.

Up to 140,000 tonnes per annum of timber can be delivered from the railhead to the market with significant economic and environmental benefits.

The Reports focussed primarily on quantitative outcomes but it is acknowledged that there is a range of qualitative environmental benefits arising from the non-abandonment of the timber resource. They are divided into seven work packages.

Civil Engineering: terminal design, improvements
The ability to move a significant volume of timber by rail from the Flow Country to Inverness and beyond is dependent on the provision of an efficient means of transferring loads from road to rail. The site at Kinbrace was chosen by the project team as the preferred transfer site.

Options were considered for both lineside loading and fixed sidings, with the fixed siding option being developed as the preferred option. The site was previously used for lineside loading – direct loading from the adjacent hardstanding onto trains occupying the main railway line.

The proposed layout entails a south facing connection onto the main railway line with two 440 metre sidings and a run round facility. This arrangement allows a train to be loaded in one siding and an empty train to be brought in on the other siding. The run round allows the locomotive to take the train of empty wagons into the siding, detach and transfer to the opposite end of the loaded wagons before heading south.

The overall terminal would have an area of approximately 30 000 square metres with a width suitable to allow the three rail lines, one through road, one loading road and a stacking area. Significant earthworks will be required in order to achieve a terminal area that is level with the adjacent railway, with reasonable longitudinal gradient.

Road access would be via the existing access point on the B871 south of Kinbrace.

The estimated cost for the civil and track engineering works is £3.6 million for works within the yard but excluding the connection to the main line

Rail Operations: procurement, wagons, haulage, pathing, possessions
The volume of c.100,000tpa or more of timber traffic over 10 to 15 years from the Flow Country to Inverness justifies a bespoke rail terminal in the Kinbrace area, serviced by a cost-effective regular train service.

The train service will be dependent on long trains with substantial payloads, and a rail terminal design which minimises the time which the locomotive and driver are required to wait before returning to Inverness, so that the round trip can be achieved in a single driver shift.

The longest trains with the largest payloads will be those which are permitted by Network Rail to operate at lengths greater than those of the line's crossing loops. In such a scenario, depending on the class of locomotive and type of wagon utilised, timber payloads range from c.624t to c.1,080t, equating to 100,000tpa or more over a 40-week season, based on four trains per week.

In the case of lineside loading – the terminal type with the lowest capital cost, but highest operating cost – the maximum possible train payload would be c.364t to c.480t, equating to 73,000tpa and 100,000tpa respectively over a 40-week season, based on five trains per week. In light of the above and other forest and rail industry concerns about the cost, complexity and inflexibility of lineside loading, this type of terminal has been rejected as a core option – although it may be required as a sub-optimal interim solution should NICS not secure approval.

The preferred Flow Country terminal option from 2017 or 2018 onwards is the provision of bespoke sidings at Kinbrace, connected permanently to the main line by a conventional set of points controlled by a ground-frame – the terminal type with the highest capital cost but lowest operating cost and greatest operational flexibility.

In the interim period (2016-2017/18) the preferred option is the 'semi-permanent' Non-Intrusive Crossover System (NICS), which would involve medium capital cost, medium operating cost and flexibility – and crucially, the potential for short-to-medium term implementation.

NICS, however, will require Type Approval or a derogation with a site-specific Safety Plan to facilitate innovation at Kinbrace. The prospects for securing derogation from Network Rail should be enhanced by Transport Scotland's enthusiasm for innovation set out in its Rail Freight Strategy.

The length of terminal loading sidings is likely to be in the range 374m to 437m, with two double-ended sidings and a parallel run-round loop within the terminal maximising wagon productivity and simplifying on-site shunting. Longer sidings will provide long-term flexibility in train size and wagon type. The detail will become clearer once a preferred rail haulier has been appointed.

In the case of an Inverness railhead, the preferred option will rest on whether a conventional or intermodal wagon option is chosen, and in the former case, on alternative accommodation being found for current Network Rail technical train berthing and equipment.

The choice of conventional or intermodal will depend on the preferences of the rail haulier, and also on the capacity and capability of each method for the Kinbrace-Inverness flow, notably payload, rail-to-road handling and delivery cost, and timescale for availability. Provision of a private siding at the Norbord mill at Dalcross would tend to push the decision towards conventional wagons.

Road Logistics: trip to and from terminals, roadspace allocation

There is the potential to deliver between approximately 112,000 tonnes and 140,000 tonnes of timber annually to Kinbrace during a 40 week year.

In providing this tonnage the anticipated timber traffic volume is:
A897 Forsinain – Kinbrace: 7 loads per day an increase of 1 load on the present restriction.
A897 Kildonan – Kinbrace: 7 loads per day an increase of 1 load on the present restriction.
B871/873 South of Syre – Kinbrace: 13 loads per day: an increase of 3 loads per day (based on 10 loads per day)

It is anticipated that the B871/873 will incur significant structural damage and THC will require additional monitoring to be carried out and additional funding to be invested in the road.

The timber will be delivered to Kinbrace using low impact timber trucks fitted and operating tyre pressure control systems with on-board cranes enabling the timber to be loaded directly onto the train.

Alternative vehicles for timber haulage were investigated; however, at this time these were discounted due to the potential damage they may cause, and general availability.

Little if any timber will be stockpiled at the rail terminal with the industry preferring to store in the wood as part of normal harvesting operations to cut down on the costly double handling of timber.

7 trucks will be required to service the haulage operation and as the operation is working above the current load restriction no additional timber will leave the area and it is anticipated that the

timber vehicles will be based in Kinbrace. Managing the haulage operation and exact road space allocation will be best handled by a cooperative of the forest owners. In effect this has started with a group of owners agreeing the road space allocation for 2016.

The recent improvement and maintenance works carried out on the roads within the area by THC has a design life of 5 years and additional funding for investment for infrastructure improvement and maintenance will be required. A figure of £1.50 per tonne may be sufficient.

Roadscanners have produced a proposal for future monitoring and assessment of the road which would specifically focus on just in time repairs and targeted infrastructure improvements. This proposal will supplement THC existing monitoring system. It is anticipated that Roadscanners will work with and for the forest owners to advise on investment and maintenance.

There is the option that in partnership with THC and Roadscanners the forest owners accept responsibility for the management of the public roads within the project area. This has been done previously for the B871 in a partnership between FES and THC.

A traffic monitoring and permit system is desirable but not essential and may be explored further if it adds value to the operation.

Product Supply: harvesting, loading to rail, off-loading and WP5 Facilitation: promoting and establishing the alliance)
The forecast for future timber production from the project area over the next 5 years indicates that only 40% of this production could be accommodated by the local road network serving the Project area.

However the indications are likely further financial and physical limitations being placed on this road infrastructure will make even this level of production unsustainable with resultant highly damaging economic and environmental impacts on this area of the Highlands and investment returns on commercial forestry, all placing a renewed imperative on establishing a feasible and complementary solution to timber transport using the rail network via a centralised "hub" at Kinbrace.

There is a need for a "paradigm" shift in the level of mutual co-operation between the various Project area forest owners / managers, timber haulage contractors, the Highland Council and rail transport operators in order to co-ordinate and optimize future timber transport to enable owners to realize their current, and justify future, investment into commercial forestry within this area of Scotland

Also needed is a modal shift in the method by which growers, harvesting and haulage contractors and market outlets measure harvested timber as a means of mitigating the historical issues associated with weight loss between harvesting site and end user.

Economic case: establishing the value of timber to the Highland economy
For each stage in the movement of the timber the economic impact has been analysed on both the HITRANS area and Scotland in terms of business turnover; employment (expressed in Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) jobs); income-i.e. gross annual wages excluding employer's contributions; and Gross Value Added (GVA).

The assessment encompasses three types of impact: direct (the activity of workers involved in moving the timber-e.g. harvesters, train drivers); indirect (the increased purchases of goods and services required by the activities e.g. fuel, sub-contractors); and induced (the expenditure in the wider economy, shops, restaurants etc. of the wages of those directly and indirectly employed as a result of the timber movements).

In addition the cost savings to mills and other timber purchasers in the HITRANS are included within the GVA impacts.

When added together these individual impacts produce total impacts. In addition there would be economic impacts from the physical works to create the rail freight facility at Kinbrace, and to upgrade the roads in the Kinbrace area to allow haulage of the timber from the forests to the railhead.

Not all of the 100,000 tonnes of timber are solely attributable to the Branchliner project. In its absence 50,000 tonnes would still be moved by road from the Kinbrace area to the mills. Thus, Branchliner would result in the harvesting of an additional 50,000 tonnes per annum-and it is this activity that is the basis of this impact assessment.

Within the HITRANS area the total direct, indirect and induced impacts would be approximately: £3.8 million of business turnover, 18 full-time equivalent jobs, £0.6 million employee income, £2.0 million GVA. For Scotland the impacts would be around: £4.6 million of business turnover, 22 full-time equivalent jobs, £0.7 million employee income, £2.4 million GVA.

The majority (over 70%) of total impacts come from harvesting, road haulage, etc. The £400,000 GVA impact for HITRANS timber purchasers would represent an additional economic impact, along with the construction impacts of the project.

Environmental assessment: impact of mode shift
This Work Package has analysed the environmental and social impact of moving timber by rail from the Flow Country to Inverness and beyond. It has outlined some of the environmental issues, described the methodology used by the Department for Transport to calculate the benefits of modal switch from road to rail in general and then used this methodology to actually calculate the marginal social benefits to society.

The conclusions are quite clear that there are substantial benefits from this modal switch, both in terms of pure environmental benefits in the reduction of CO2 and the wider social benefits. The headline figures are that for each round trip lorry load displaced by rail, approximately 0.234 tonne of CO2 is saved and maximum £140 of marginal social benefits accrue. Thus, over a year, this would amount to 532 tonnes of CO2 and £317,584 of marginal social benefits.

RAIL FREIGHT CONSULTATION

HITRANS responded to Scottish Government's Consultation on Scotland's Rail Freight Strategy -Delivering the Goods.

Freight in the Highlands and Islands use all four modes- road, rail, sea and air- to enable even the remotest island communities to participate in the economic life of the country. Because of the geography, rail links have a lifeline nature. Infrastructure resilience in the face of climate change is key to ensuring that networks operate around the clock. Weakness in infrastructure provision leads to a lack of business confidence in the rail network. Unlike roads, the railway is not open 7 days, nor 24 hours per day. Access to the track is limited by maintenance access requirements, and signaller shifts. A new freight flow, for example, may require signal boxes on trunk routes to be opened up specially, incurring substantial costs borne by the logistics supplier(although one advantage of the RETB signalled network north of Helensburgh and Inverness is round the clock staffing for level crossing and maintenance access).

Overnight freight gets the goods to the customer when it is required, and more quickly as there are few or no passenger trains competing for paths. The largely single track nature of the network in the Highlands also limits capacity in terms of the number of train paths. A much-discussed and desirable, commercially viable early arrival in Inverness of a retail goods train is simply impossible.

The Highland Rail Network has a restricted loading gauge which reduces the railway's ability to compete effectively against road. Container clearance on the Highland Main Line is restricted, while on Inverness-Aberdeen line improved gauge is available from Elgin eastwards only. The restricted loading gauge on all Highland routes reduces the railway's ability to compete effectively against road. Electrification will of course bring about a significant improvement in gauge. On the Far North and West Highland Lines a number of structures are weight restricted, and track geometry sub-optimal which limits access by certain types of freight locomotive, and reduces the speed of all locomotives.

Terminals in the North are limited in number and capacity, particularly for multimodal traffic. Fort William has only dedicated terminals for oil and alumina, Inverness handles bulk cement and supermarket goods, Lairg has oil discharge facilities and Georgemas receives nuclear and pipe trains, although traffic to Orkney regrettably ceased some years ago. While access is regulated by ORR it would be perhaps helpful if Network Rail took a more proactive role in terminal development and management, possibly for timber which may have an otherwise detrimental effect on fragile roads.

Our area requires good cross border rail links to East Coast ports via the East Coast Main Line and to the Midlands/South East via the West Coast Main Line. High Speed 2 will release capacity for freight on the classic lines, and growing electrification in Scotland will allow fast, all-electric freight to the south. Timely access to Central Scotland terminals at the right time to connect with trunk flows is very important.

We acknowledge the state aid issues with supporting rail freight but serious mode shift will only occur when there is parity of

cost, opportunity and reliability for new entrants on road and rail networks. The barriers to new entrants to rail can be lowered if Government can simplify the application process, allow non-commercial applicants and set realistic targets and budgets. EU funding does offer an opportunity to support and develop sustainable freight projects. This includes specific funds such as the TEN-T Networks that are very well focussed towards freight flows.

HITRANS have also enjoyed success in other EU funding sources including the INTERREG funding stream where HITRANS participation in the Food Port North Sea Area project enabled the innovative trial of modal shift from road to rail for the transport of Whisky product from Elgin / Speyside to central Scotland distribution and bottling plants. The Lifting the Spirit project was a HITRANS led initiative delivered in partnership with Scotch Whisky Association (SWA) HIE, Moray Council and our Food Port partners which enabled a wide range of distillers the opportunity to move bulk spirit and other food products by rail to/from Elgin during autumn 2013. With 48% of HGVs on the A95 whisky-related, sufficient potential traffic was identified. The objective was to offer this on a cost neutral basis as many of the potential customers had not used rail transport from the north of Scotland in the last 20 years, although most had recent experience of intermodal transport for cased goods and bulk spirit from Central Scotland. In majoring on an iconic product we were able to demonstrate the availability of alternative transport infrastructure and thus enhance or at least retail the area's competitive position at a time of growing transport costs and increasing demand for transport. The spirit was moved in demountable container tanks on rail wagons. Lifting equipment was procured at Elgin to facilitate transfer from local hauliers, and the tanks were sent to an intermodal terminal in Central Belt for onward delivery. Key outputs included:

- modal shift to rail
- maximising the use of rail's capability, demonstrating resilience and performance
- assisting with the development of the Moray economy
- encouraging collaboration among producers
- making the case for further infrastructure investment

The Lifting the Spirit project highlights the opportunity that EU funding can offer and was a useful way of proving demand and costs ahead of developing a longer term project through commercial business case and/or freight facilities grant.

While EU funds can attract a favourable intervention rate (Food Port secured 60% of costs met by EU sources for Lifting the Spirit) the need for the Scottish partner to provide match funding is a barrier to participation in these projects. If a fund was established to support Scottish public bodies in their participation in EU projects there would be a real opportunity for Scotland's return from EU funding to increase significantly.

The EU has set a target of 30% of all >300km freight movements to be by sustainable mode by 2030, 50% by 2050. This needs to be reinforced, by promoting load-sharing, break bulk, rail electrification and low emissions deliveries.

Over the next 10-15 years the timber industry needs to transport 4 million tonnes of timber from the wider Flow Country catchment to distant markets. This will have consequences for the fragile public road network, the environment and the neighbouring communities. The carrying capacity of the road network is a major constraint. The Highland Timber Transport Group's Flow Country Strategy 2014-16 highlights the still unrealised potential for rail to play a part.

Branchliner is an investigative study which, if it proves positive, will lead towards a demonstrator project that will trial timber deliveries by rail.

HITRANS will brings together a high level strategic group to establish the importance of the issues at stake – the environmental peatland interest, the economic timber interest and the critical infrastructure constraints – and to ensure there is commitment to finding a viable solution. This group will set the context for and agree a brief for consultants to develop the options and make recommendations. The consultants will gather existing knowledge and experience of timber transport by rail in the UK to see how it can be best applied to the Far North Line. They will establish gaps in knowledge and understanding of physical, cost, logistical, environmental and community issues and, where necessary, commission consultancy services to fill these gaps. Suitably experienced consultants will investigate the optimum location and size of loading facilities, the cost of their upgrade or creation. It will take account of train lengths, terminal operation and train path metrics and consider the role of demountable ISO flatracks, conventional dedicated timber wagons and freight multiple units. All options will be reviewed, to determine the costs and to identify any logistical barriers to delivery of Flow Country timber by rail to Inverness and beyond. The environmental benefits of mode shift to rail from the Flow Country will be calculated.

We offered the following response to the questions posed in the Consultation Document:

1. What are your views on the vision for rail freight in Scotland?
   We agree with the Government's vision, noting the emphasis on safety and environmental benefits. Rail freight acts as Scotland's link to the world: Coatbridge and Grangemouth are our gateways. An increasingly electrified network provides even greater greenhouse gas emissions compliance, as well as offering gauge enhancement.

2. What are your views on the market opportunities identified in the document?
   With the reduction in coal carrying, rail freight in Scotland is in a perilous position. In addition to intermodal growth, new markets must be found. HITRANS has devoted resource to examining the potential for whisky and timber (see above), and sees the potential for niche markets in parcels (in connection with HST space), seafood (as per the Inverness sleeper) as well as bulk such as aggregates and timber.
   Fuel supply to our area is limited to oil to Lairg and Fort William, but a move to larger coastal vessels may mean that sea deliveries will be more concentrated on fewer ports. Intermodal units could be deployed to plug the gap and offer LNG and CNG options. The strategy should also note the existing rail movements of exotic fuels from Dounreay, and the likely increase in this traffic from Hunterston and Torness.

3. What are the 3 biggest opportunities for growth in the rail freight sector in Scotland?
   In summary: niche high-value, time-sensitive (parcels, whisky, fuels, exotics), bulks (timber, construction) and intermodal retail/food (in and outbound).

4. What are the 3 biggest challenges to growth in the sector?
   Firstly, the current market changes in the power generation sector are likely to lead to drivers, locos and wagons, being re-deployed to the south or to Europe. This will result in rail freight operators being unable to resource new traffic.
   Secondly, access to the network is still an unknown quantity for many potential users, in terms of gauge, pathing, charging regime and terminals. Coupled with the falling price of road fuel and investment in new road infrastructure, a shift to rail seems all too difficult for some.
   Thirdly, how to replicate the door to door service and commitment-lite flexibility offered by competing modes?

5. What are your views on the role of the Scottish Government, as outlined in the document?
   Scottish Government, as the funder and specifier of the rail network must commit to reviewing and renewing the capability of the network (see HITRANS' Rail Freight Capability Study 2011).
   A culture of innovation must be engendered, recalling perhaps the SRA's Freight Competition of a decade or more ago. One of the winners, the Freight Multiple Unit, could herald a radical move to short-line rail services on rural routes, without the time penalty for loco-hauling on unmodernised track formations.
   Freight Facilities Grant and Mode Shift Revenue Support must continue, perhaps with a greater marketing push and de-mythifying exercise.
   Government can take the lead in pushing for cooperative working amongst FOCs, in particular in encouraging path-sharing as opposed to path-squatting where infrastructure has limited capacity. Where there is market failure, consideration should be given to tendering out freight services for a limited period, along the lines of passenger franchises. This could facilitate rail hauling freight to the Islands using lower carbon routes and shorter sea journeys.
   Where infrastructure upgrades are challenging, support could be given to rolling stock e.g. low platforms which provide the same capacity outputs.

6. What are your views on the steps necessary to create a stable environment for growth?
   The changing nature of Network Rail's governance structure and financial architecture will present Scottish Government with new challenges on funding, and a clear indication of its rail freight strategy will assist businesses in decision-making on their transport requirements.
   The Network Rail/ScotRail Alliance must be encouraged to send positive signals on the way it treats open access operators, including freight. Throughout the Periodic Review process, Scottish Government must ensure that the regulatory regime for freight is suited to Scottish needs, and that industry roles are fully understood by planners, promoters and funders.
   Regional Transport Partnerships and local authorities must be conscious of the very long-term planning process for rail freight, and acknowledge the difficulty of reinstating facilities once they have been removed.

7. Should targets be set in the final strategy and if so, what areas should these cover?
   Given EU targets on emissions quoted above, targets for freight growth in Scotland taken from a post-coal baseline would be useful.

8. What are your views on the actions identified in the document and who should take the lead role in delivering these?
   Scottish Government has to take the lead in establishing working groups to take forward the actions listed. HITRANS whilst lacking in resources is also keen to play an active part in assisting with the delivery of the proposed actions, in particular with the timber opportunities, food and drink and parcels.

TRAVEL PLANNING

HITRANS recognition of the need to reduce over-dependence on the private car for travel was at the core of our Travel Plan policy in 2015/16.

To support employers across the private and public sectors in implementing good travel planning we offer a set of leaflets aimed at managers and employees which give good advice on the benefits of changing their travel behaviour. We have distributed these leaflets to a number of employers across the region and are happy to meet any requests for copies made by employers. It is widely agreed that a good communications strategy is essential in encouraging the acceptance of Travel Plans.

HITRANS journey sharing website is www.IfYouCareShare.com

Car Sharing is also promoted in Highland Council's area through https://highland.liftshare.com or across the area through www.liftshare.com

HITRANS has worked closely with the Scottish Government, local authorities, NHS and with other Regional Transport Partnerships to develop shared experience in the delivery of travel plans. We have played an active part in encouraging the activities of the Scottish Sustainable Travel Group and the ACT TravelWise Association in Scotland.

Our key focus on travel planning in 2015/16 was our participation in the Action Renewables led REPUTE project where we have delivered a personalised travel planning (PTP) project in Fort William and developed a PTP toolkit for use in other parts of the region in the future. This was followed up with locally funded partnerships with Highland Council and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar that saw the Toolkit approach to PTP extended to Inverness and Stornoway.

EQUALITIES SCHEME

HITRANS as the Transport Partnership for the Highlands and Islands has statutory duties to have an Equalities Scheme and take very seriously engagement in matters relating to equality. Since the Partnership was established at the beginning of 2006, we have made significant progress in adopting and implementing policies in the human resources area which have equalities of opportunity enshrined within them. In addition a major theme throughout our Regional Transport Strategy is the need for equality of access to transport facilities and services and through these to jobs, health care, education, shopping and social activities.

We have a statutory duty to publish an equalities scheme under legislation covering Race, Gender and Disability and we chose to introduce a single scheme addresses what we intend to do in these areas. It also addresses our proposals in other areas as well, for example age, religion/belief and sexuality.

We have chosen to combine these commitments in one equalities scheme rather than publish a series of individual schemes addressing specific legal duties but we have made it clear in the scheme which sectors of society should benefit from our proposals. The publication of this scheme is not the end of our duty to promote equal opportunities but simply the beginning. We hope that stakeholders and service users find this scheme informative and we welcome constructive feedback with a view to its improvement.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

ACTIVE TRAVEL ADVISORY GROUP

The Active Travel Advisory Group (ATAG) meets twice per year. The Group is attended by local authority transport officers, Sustrans, Cycling Scotland, cycle campaigners, access officers, and representatives from the health sector and transport operators.

The group has been engaged in the Active Travel Town Audit/ Masterplan process and acts as a forum for those interested in the greenest form of transport to share ideas and expertise at a regional level

FERRY CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The Scottish Government tasked the Regional Transport Partnerships to put in place arrangements to provide consultative mechanisms between the operator, users and public agencies for the ferry network serving the Clyde, Hebrides, and Northern Isles.

The first line of consultation is between island groups and the ferry operator (Tier 1), with three second tier committees largely concerned with longer term planning and route development. The arrangements are now well established and the Tier 1 groups meet two to three times per annum.

There are five ferry user groups. These are:

- Clyde (Arran Bute, Cumbrae and Cowal including Kilcreggan)
- Argyll (Mull, Iona, Lismore, Coll and Tiree, Barra and South Uist, Colonsay, Islay and Gigha)
- Hebrides (Barra, the Uists, Lewis and Harris)
- Raasay, Skye and the Small Isles, Ardnamurchan and Mull
- Orkney Transport and Travel Forum

AVIATION CONSULTATION GROUP

Our strategy for aviation is to enhance connectivity within the region and to our national gateways; to increase links with countries outside the UK; to retain the London services particularly through Heathrow and Gatwick; and to manage the environmental impact of aviation on the region without adversely affecting economic growth and sustainability of our communities.

To help us take forward these strategic aspirations HITRANS has established the Aviation Consultation Group with membership drawn from representatives of our key aviation stakeholders. The Group is chaired by HITRANS Board Member Wilson Metcalfe who brings a wealth of practical real world experience to the Group.

RAIL STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

HITRANS runs three tiers of Rail Forums.

The **Rail Advisory Group (RAG)** is the working group consisting of representatives from HITRANS, Network Rail, First ScotRail, Passenger Focus, Transport Scotland and local authority transport officers. This body meets 2 times per year and directly informs HITRANS policy and workstreams.

The **Rail Stakeholder Group (RSG)** acts as the umbrella group for wider industry, public sector, voluntary and heritage interests and features formal presentations from leading industry figures in a conference style format.

The **Rail Users Group (RUG)** covers the voluntary rail user groups for the rural North Highland and West Highland Lines. Chaired by Robert Samson of Passenger Focus, this forum enables the views of the members of the groups to engage with HITRANS in twice yearly meetings. Their views are then taken by Passenger Focus to the Rail Advisory Group.

FREIGHT FORUM

Meeting yearly the HITRANS Freight Forum (HFF) draws together local authority representatives, logistics providers and users of freight services. The Forum concentrates on practical Highland issues, and has involved visits to new freight infrastructure and terminals. It was involved in the Lorry Parking and Whisky Logistics Studies.

TRANSPORT COORDINATORS GROUP

The HITRANS Transport Coordinating Officers Group (HITCOG) is formed of officers from HITRANS and local authority transport officers and aims to deal with technical issues and share good practice in relation to the management and delivery of passenger transport coordination across the Highlands and Islands. The group meets two or three times each year.

	2015/16		
	Budget	**Actual**	**Variance**
	£000	**£000**	**£000**
Staff costs	353	349	(4)
Property costs	16	24	8
Travel and subsistence costs	36	38	2
Administration and meeting costs	32	38	6
Research and strategy development costs	2,372	1,669	(703)
Publicity costs	10	9	(1)
European projects costs	-	12	12
Support services	40	38	(2)
Gross expenditure	**2,859**	**2,177**	**(682)**
Government grants	(2,464)	(1,679)	785
Other grants	(195)	(118)	77
Other income	-	(187)	(187)
Constituent Council requisitions	(200)	(193)	7
Gross income	**(2,859)**	**(2,177)**	**682**
Net expenditure	**-**	**-**	**-**

Overall the budget balanced for the year (2014/15 - £0.000m). The main variations from budget during the year were as follows:

- Property costs are overspent as a result of an increase in rental charges at the Inverness office due to utilisation of further accommodation space. However the costs are in line with the previous year costs. The 2015/16 budget did not reflect the increase in costs.
- Travel, subsistence, administration and meeting costs are overspent. The costs are slightly down on the previous year. The 2015/16 budget did not take account of the increased costs reflecting increase in staff numbers from 5 to 7, and the increased activity on project work throughout the year.
- Included in research and strategy development costs is expenditure of £0.132m for the East Inverness Bus Improvement Corridor Project, £0.755m for Community Links Projects and £0.241m for the Hi-Travel Project. All of these projects are funded by Scottish Government grants. £0.610m of the underspend relates to a Community Links Project, the North Bridge link at the University of the Highlands and Islands Inverness Campus, which was originally timetabled for completion in 2015/16. The project will now be delivered in future years, hopefully commencing in 2016/17. Included in other income is £0.184m of third party contributions to project work.

- The overspend on European projects relates to costs incurred on Smart Peripheral and Remote Airports 2020 (SPARA), part of which will be recovered next financial year from grant due from Europe.
- The budget for other grants relates to a grant from SUSTRANS for cycling project work. However this sum was unclaimed and is carried forward to 2016/17.

All government grants in respect of 2015/16 were received in the financial year with the exception of the grants from the Bus Investment Fund.

The Partnership's underspend on the 2015/16 revenue budget was £7,000 which the Partnership intend to use as a commitment towards developing a new railway station at Inverness Airport.

PUBLIC SERVICES REFORM (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH STATEMENT

HITRANS 2015/16

Introduction

Section 32(1)(a) of the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 provides that as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of each financial year each listed public body must publish a statement of the steps it has taken during the financial year to promote and increase sustainable growth through the exercise of its functions.

HITRANS, as a statutory Regional Transport Partnership, is a listed body within the Act. This statement is intended to fulfil the requirement of the Act in relation to Sustainable Economic Growth. This statement should be read in conjunction with the statement on Efficiency, Effectiveness and Economy and the financial information provided on the HITRANS website that are also required by the Act.

Government purpose and performance framework

The Government in 2015 updated its Economic Strategy as originally published in November 2007 and updated in 2011. This sets out the Government's priorities including an overarching framework for how we aim to achieve a more productive, cohesive and fairer Scotland. It forms the strategic plan for existing and all future Scottish Government policy. Creating greater prosperity and fairness is a shared national endeavour. Only by working in partnership with the wider public sector in Scotland, the third sector, trade unions, businesses and communities, will we be able to create a society where the bene ts of economic growth are shared more equally and where future economic growth is stronger and more sustainable.

The purpose of the Scottish Government and its partners remains to make Scotland a more successful country, with opportunities for all to ourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth.

Scotland's Economic Strategy focuses on the two mutually supportive goals of increasing competitiveness and tackling inequality and our approach to delivering this is underpinned by four priorities for sustainable growth.

Sustainable Economic Growth

HITRANS primary function is to produce and implement its Regional Transport Strategy. The Strategy was approved in 2008 and the monitoring framework put in place to identify our success in working with partners towards achieving its Objectives. The vision for transport is to enhance the region's viability, enhancing the region's place and competitiveness, and thereby attracting and retaining people in the region and making the Highlands and Islands a more attractive place in which to live, to work and conduct business, and to visit.

Transport has long been recognised as a significant contributor to sustainable economic growth. The HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy was developed in conjunction with our five Member Councils.

The principal ethos in setting and determining the Regional Transport Strategy has therefore been to encourage and permit sustainable economic growth.

The Partnership Approach to sustainable economic growth through delivery of our RTS.

HITRANS is committed to working with all sectors and interests within transport in adding value to the transport services delivered across the region.

The partnership has identified eight areas in which it would aim to work towards improving services. These are listed in the table below:

Area	Description
Active travel	Walking, cycling
Community and health transport	Third sector transport, social and health transport, car sharing schemes
Bus	Supported and commercial bus services, and taxis
Rail	Passenger and freight rail services
Transport Infrastructure	Roads (both trunk and local), Rail Infrastructure, Airports, Ports, Harbours, and Ferries
Freight	Cross modal, road, rail, ferry, air and sea
Ferry	Supported and commercial ferry services, national and local
Air	Supported and commercial air passenger services, including charter and freight

In each area HITRANS seeks active participation from the 5 partner Councils, our Community Planning Partners, Stakeholders, Operators, Permanent Advisors and the Partnership Board. HITRANS encourages its Community Planning Partners, Stakeholders and Operators to participate in policy development and delivery options appraisal. Operators in particular are encouraged to interact not only within their individual area of expertise but across the 8 areas and are given the opportunity individually to discuss issues with Board Members. This allows HITRANS the greatest opportunity to learn from their knowledge and experience and maximising our effectiveness in delivering sustainable economic growth.

HITRANS wishes to ensure maximum effective involvement of all groups and has devised, in each service area, mechanisms and structures that ensure that each group's views are heard and their input valued in ensuring the Partnership delivers improved transport services across the region. HITRANS has formed and continues to develop advisory and consultative groups both within and between linked transport areas, to promote improved integration across the Highlands and Islands. Regular meetings of these groups are arranged to obtain valuable input and provide information on developments and proposals.

The chart below diagrammatically reflects the approach HITRANS is taking to achieve this aim.

PUBLIC SERVICES REFORM (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010
STATEMENT OF EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS AND ECONOMY HITRANS 2015/16

During 2015/16 HITRANS has continued implementing a number of initiatives that have improved efficiency, effectiveness and economy and these are outlined below, following on from our actions the previous year.

Shared Services

Shared accommodation, administration and supplies

HITRANS moved office from Inverness Airport to Ardross Terrace in the city centre in December 2013. The office achieves a lower annual rental by square metre and provides extra space including a meeting room that has reduced the cost incurred by HITRANS in hiring meeting rooms. The office floor is shared with the Scottish Council for Development and Industry who share the rental cost of the meeting room. The office has provided room for growth within the staff team which has been facilitated through additional funding in partnerships with Sustrans, the five partner Councils and EU funding.

By improving our IT systems we have been able to reduce the number of telephone lines to our office from 4 to 3 and negotiated a new phone usage contract which reduced bills further. The increase in staff as a result of our success in attracting external project funding has not required an increase in landline costs.

In 2013/14 we reinstated the fifth Board meeting to allow better governance of the unaudited accounts sign off but made this a single day Board Members only meeting with Telephone and Video Conferencing available to Members. This meant a saving of £1,500 when compared to previous years when 5 Board meetings took place.

We have managed travel expense costs by increasing our use of telephone and video conferencing equipment to reduce the cost of traveling to meetings. There has been some increase in travel costs owing to the increase from 5 to 7 members of staff but this has not been on a pro rata basis underlining the success in managing these costs.

HITRANS is a member of Scotland Excel and gains from the resultant efficiencies that joint purchasing of supplies across the public sector in Scotland brings to our partnership.

Legal, Financial and HR Services

HITRANS has service level agreements covering Legal, HR, and Financial services with two of our member Councils with de minimis costs unchanged since 2008/09. The services provided are outlined below.

Legal and HR Services

Legal and HR services are provided by Comhairle nan Eilean Siar. Legal Services include legal advice, contractual advice, and provision of clerking for the Board. HR Services include drafting and review of HR policies and procedures, monitoring any changes in legislation, and support in dealing with staff matters. Day to day routine HR matters are managed directly by HITRANS employees. The quality of support is excellent and rates are considerably lower than comparative rates in the private sector. The cost of this service in 2015/16 was £8,000.

Financial Services

Financial services are provided by The Highland Council. Services covered include invoice and payment processing, financial ledger, regular reporting to the HITRANS Board, internal audit, liaising with external audit, budget preparation and control, pension fund management, accountancy and audit support for EU projects and investment management. The quality of support is excellent, and again, rates are considerably lower than in the private sector. The cost of this service in 2015/16 was £18,514.

Accessibility Modelling

HITRANS has developed an accessibility model covering the Highlands and Islands using Accession and this has been available to member Councils for a number of years, operating mainly through consultants MVA. The model gives a graphic presentation of the accessibility of specific locations to other locations, including areas of employment, healthcare, education, retail and leisure, by various modes.

HITRANS continues to use the arrangement with Tactran and SEStran through which we use a common contract between SEStran and MVA to access accession software with the benefit of reduced fees as a result of the larger volume of work, single licence fee for all three RTPs.

Sustainable Development

HITRANS has carried out active travel audits of all the key settlements across the region in partnership with the five authorities in the HITRANS area and provided the results to the partner authorities. The central provision of these services has saved the partner authorities significant costs in developing an effective methodology and undertaking individual audits when compared with the local development option. The Highland Council have used the outputs from the Audits as a basis for their Green and Active Highland project which has attracted ERDF support, as well as HITRANS funding as part of the funding package. Likewise Moray Council used the Elgin Audit to attract ERDF and Sustrans support for the Urban Freedom project.

Partnership Working

European Projects

HITRANS was involved in the delivery of two European Projects during 2014/15 which each achieved efficiencies and economies while working towards improvements in the effectiveness of delivery of transport services and related infrastructure within the Highlands and Islands and at wider national and international levels.

In the Northern Periphery and Arctic area HITRANS secured funding initially for a preparatory project but ultimately for a full application as a partner in the SPARA 2020 project to help prepare a main project application for this project which has as its focus the development of Smart Peripheral Airports. We are leading this project and will work with partners in Ireland, Sweden and Norway as well as other Scottish partners. This project has secured **€494,253.21** for HITRANS over the next three years.

This figure should not be looked at in isolation as SPARA 2020 is a strong collaborative project that will bring a total budget spend in the Highlands and Islands of €1,025,266.37 as HITRANS work closely with University of the Highlands and Islands and Robert Gordon University on initiatives within the project targeted at locations in the region. This project has attracted a 65% ERDF intervention rate.

HITRANS has continued our membership of Scotland Europa in an effort to access further opportunities to work with partners across the European Union to the benefit of the Highlands and Islands. We have entered into a joint membership with Tactran and SEStran significantly reducing the cost of membership which we would have otherwise incurred.

Bus Investment Fund

Working in partnership with Highland Council and Stagecoach North Scotland HITRANS was able to prepare a funding application to the Bus Investment Fund (BIF) that represents a project with a total value of £3Million including £700,000 of BIF support from Transport Scotland. The project will deliver a range of improvements to bus services in the East Inverness area including bus priority, information and infrastructure improvements and has been complemented by the introduction of 15 new buses by Stagecoach.

HITRANS has secured funding totaling £535,000 for the HiTravel project including a £300,000 contribution from Transport Scotland's Bus Investment Fund. This project also saw the employment of a Travel Information Officer as we have taken responsibility from our partner Council's for the production of bus information including roadside publicity and real time information. This shared service approach has been the result of the strong positive relationship HITRANS enjoy with the public transport teams at each Council.

HITRANS close working relationship with our Partner Councils has seen us financially support Bus Investment Fund applications by Argyll and Bute Council, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Tagsa Uibhist) and Moray Council that have secured significant funding in each area.

Sustrans Partnership

Our innovative partnership initiative with Sustrans has continued in 2015/16 following its introduction the previous year. This has seen HITRANS and Sustrans pool resource to fund an Active Travel Officer embedded within the HITRANS team with a budget to deliver Active Travel policy and projects in the region. The value of this project represents an annual investment of £150,000 which includes £100,000 from Sustrans. The post also allows HITRANS to focus much more closely on Active Travel and investigate funding opportunities such as ERDF and Community Links.

Risk Management

To support our development of sound management of risk a formal Risk Management Strategy has been developed and implemented by HITRANS. The Strategy describes the constituent parts of good Risk Management, our overriding Risk Management Aims, the range of risks we face, the processes we will put in place, and the actions we are taking. During 2015/16 HITRANS has created, updated and monitored its associated Risk Register identifying the key risks, associated controls and actions needed to minimise the impact of risk on the activities of the Partnership.

Equalities

In undertaking all of our activities HITRANS has fully considered equalities issues as required through our statutory body status as defined in the Race, Equality, Disability Equality and Gender Equality legislation. We have set up a system and are ready to take feedback on transport related equality issues from our Member Councils and Advisory Groups as has been agreed as the most appropriate means of capturing these issues. In addition promote the discussion of any issues at each of our regular Permanent Advisors Meetings, and ensure that the equality impacts of any proposals and actions by the Partnership as reflected in Board Reports are brought to the attention of the Board when they meet.

HITRANS

Public Reforms Act Information - Period covering 01/04/2015 - 31/03/2016

1) Public Relations Statement

Category	Supplier	External costs - invoiced	Supplier Total			
Drafting Newsletter	Gordon Fyfe	£250.00				
Orkney Transport Guide Summer 2015 Advertising	Orkney Islands Council	£85.00				
Photography for bike week photocall as briefed by Gordon Fyfe and supply images on CD	Ewen Wetherspoon	£90.00				
Drafting news release	Gordon Fyfe	£250.00				
Writing & distributing a news release on increased runway capacity for Heathrow Airport (July 2015), and media statement on Inverness Airport railway station (July 2015)	Gordon Fyfe	£250.00				
Orkney Transport Guide Winter 2015/16 Advertising	Orkney Islands Council	£85.00	£170.00			
Draft 3 press releases, Produce Autumn Newsletter	Gorgon Fyfe	£375.00				
Drafting Hial & British Airways News Release, drafting of winter 2015 Newsletter.	Gordon Fyfe	£240.00				
Drafting February Newsletter	Gordon Fyfe	£150.00	£1,515.00			
Total		**£1,775.00**				

2) Overseas Travel

Reason	Origin / Destination	No. Employees/ Members	Travel Costs	Accomodation/ Meals	Other Expenditure	Total
Interreg VB Project Combi Meeting	Amsterdam, Netherlands 31/05-01/06/2015	1	£393.44	£99.00		£492.44
Interreg VB Project PATRA Meeting	Bremen, Netherlands 09-10/06/2015	1	£716.60	£154.55		£871.15
NPP SPARA 2020 lead partner meeting - funded by EU Project	Kuopio, Finland 29/09-01/10/2015	2	£1,128.65	£591.83		£1,720.48
NPP SPARA 2020 lead partner meeting - funded by EU Project	Donegal, Republic of Ireland 04-06/11/2015	3	£403.30	£360.00		£763.30
Total			**£2,641.99**	**£1,205.38**	**£0.00**	**£3,847.37**

3) Hospitality & Entertainment

Date	Reason	Cost				
12/15/2015	Management services for the Arisaig office	£27.26				
Total		**£27.26**				

4) External Consultancy

Supplier	Project / Service	Total	Supplier Total
Transport Focus	Inverness Station	£10,999.60	
Deltix	Branchliner	£2,312.00	
Systra	Dalcross Station	£8,460.00	
Douglas Binns	Branchliner	£3,936.05	
Deltix	Branchliner	£2,572.30	
Systra	Dalcross Station	£6,240.00	
AECOM	Dalcross Station	£3,000.00	
Transport Focus	Inverness Station	£12,691.38	£23,690.98
CJ Piper	Branchliner	£4,975.00	
ArvikaConsult	Branchliner	£4,950.00	
Douglas Binns	Branchliner	£940.00	£4,876.05
Systra	Dalcross Station	£825.00	£15,525.00
Rosskirk Scot Ltd	Branchliner	£740.00	
Bob Stubbs	Branchliner	£4,500.00	
Northpoint Aviation	European Part Funded Project - SPARA 2020	£3,900.00	
Northpoint Aviation	Integrated Transport Support	£1,000.00	£4,900.00
AECOM	HITRANS Regional Active Travel Strategy	£9,927.00	
AECOM	BIF Innverness SQP	£15,606.67	£38,225.05
JMP	Smarter Choices Smarter Places - Inverness/Nairn PTP	£90,003.00	
JMP	Smarter Choices Smarter Places - Stornoway	£45,000.00	
Solan Enterprise	Air Discount Scheme	£160.00	
Reference Economics Consultants	Air Discount Scheme	£3,330.00	
Reference Economics Consultants	Inverness-Amsterdam: PSO Air Service Research	£10,350.00	£13,680.00
Eyland Skyn	HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy Refresh	£13,800.00	
Urban Foresight	HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy Refresh	£5,148.50	
Velocity	HITRANS Annual support services - hitrans.org.uk	£1,000.00	
Velocity	Business Class Hosting and W24 Licence 1 year 2016/17	£1,000.00	£2,000.00
Total		**267,366.50**	

5) Payments in Excess of £25,000

Payee	Commodity / Service Description	Amount	
Chambers Electronics	Sustrans Partnership - Cycle Counters and Installation	£25,335.00	
Orkney Islands Council	Contribution Orkneys Inter Island Air & Ferry STAG Study	£46,225.00	
Externiture Ltd	BIF HItravel - Bus Stop Upgrade	£66,200.00	
Nexus Alpha	BIF HItravel - At Stop Infrastructure	£26,874.00	
The Scottish Government	Community Links - Ballaculish Bridge to Corran Ferry shared use cycleway project	£350,000.00	
Highlands and Islands Enterprise	Sustrans Partnership Community Links - Inverness Campus South Bridge	£255,000.00	
Highlands and Islands Enterprise	Sustrans Partnership Community Links - Inverness Campus North Bridge	£55,653.98	
JMP	Sustrans Partnership Community Links -Smarter Choices Smarter Places	£55,000.00	
JMP	Sustrans Partnership Community Links -Smarter Choices Smarter Places	£30,000.00	
JMP	Sustrans Partnership Community Links -Smarter Choices Smarter Places	£66,670.00	
Trueform	BIF - At Stop Infrastructure	£34,012.50	
Trueform	BIF - At Stop Infrastructure	£34,012.50	
Trapeze	BIF - Database Supply Installation Maintenance and Hosting	£51,318.00	
Total		**£1,096,300.98**	

6) Members or employees who received remuneration in excess of £150,000

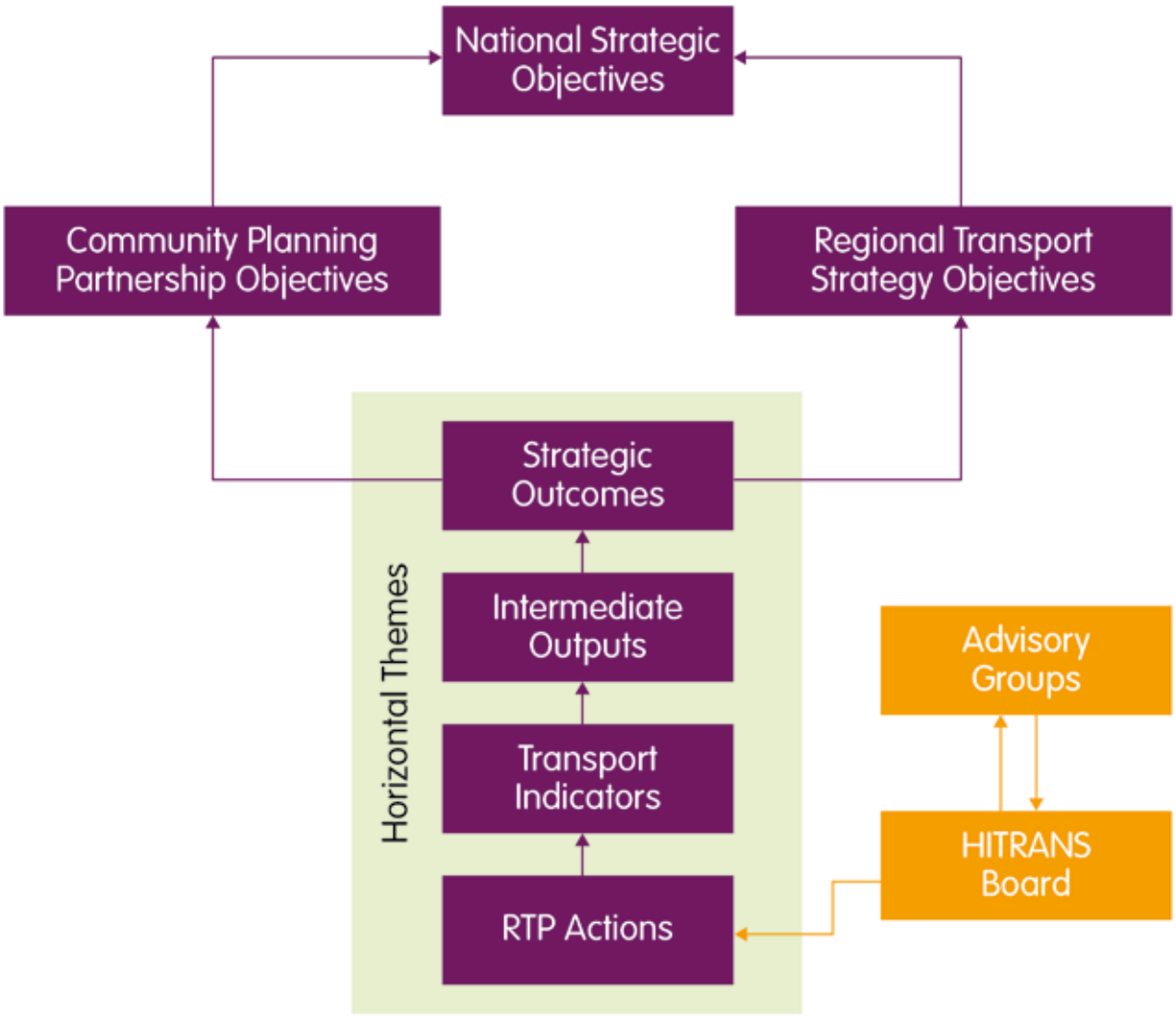
Nil return.

REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY MONITORING AND EVALUATION

HITRANS developed a monitoring and evaluation framework for the Regional Transport Strategy.

The key aims of the monitoring and evaluation framework are:

- To determine the extent to which RTS objectives have been met, and if not met, why.
- To provide evidence on overall performance and to assess to net additional value obtained from RTS actions.
- To diagnose where under or over performance has taken place and to identify and assess the causes.
- To provide a link between transport planning and wider community planning across the HITRANS area and to demonstrate the contribution of transport to the Community Planning Partnerships' own agendas.



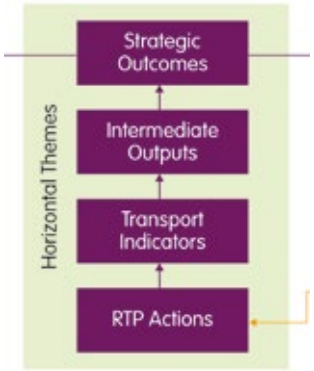
The RTS monitoring and evaluation framework follows a logical structure from actions on the ground right up to how the RTS contributes to the Scottish Government's National Strategic Objectives.

The Single Outcome agreements produced by the Community Planning Partnerships in the HITRANS region are also aimed at higher level government objectives – either the National Strategic Objectives or the National Outcomes.

This gives both the RTS and the Single Outcome Agreements a set of shared objectives that will allow HITRANS to engage more meaningfully with the CPPs, to make the case for the wider benefits of transport interventions.

For each of the five objectives in the RTS, a chain of indicators has been developed, linking implemented measures to the objectives. The chain of linkages varies slightly between objectives but on the whole, it is as follows:

- A set of high level Strategic Outcomes for the region as a whole, which result from the intermediate output, and which will indicate whether objectives are being achieved.
- A set of Intermediate Outputs which would be achieved as a result of the transport intervention.
- A set of Transport Indicators to determine the direct impacts of transport interventions.



Horizontal themes are the set of issues identified in the RTS through consultation with stakeholders that, in many cases, cut across the objectives and outcomes in the monitoring and evaluation framework.

HITRANS' monitoring activity also takes into account the impact on these themes by linking them with specific actions and indicators (see next page).

The Horizontal Themes are:

- Active travel
- Aviation
- Community and health transport
- Congestion and urban issues
- Freight transport
- Locally significant network and road maintenance
- Mainstream passenger transport
- Ports, ferries and waterways
- Costs of transport and travel
- Environmental impacts
- Strategic network
- Regional network

All RTS actions are ultimately passed by the HITRANS board. The decision making process is informed by the various advisory bodies that report to the board.

The relationship between the board and the advisory bodies is two way.

In its simplest form, the role of the advisory bodies is to present papers to the board analysing issues and recommend actions. The board will consider the paper and ultimately add actions to the programme. Advisory bodies then provide feedback on implemented actions.

MONITORING FRAMEWORK BY OBJECTIVE

The following diagrams show the linkages from transport indicators to objectives.

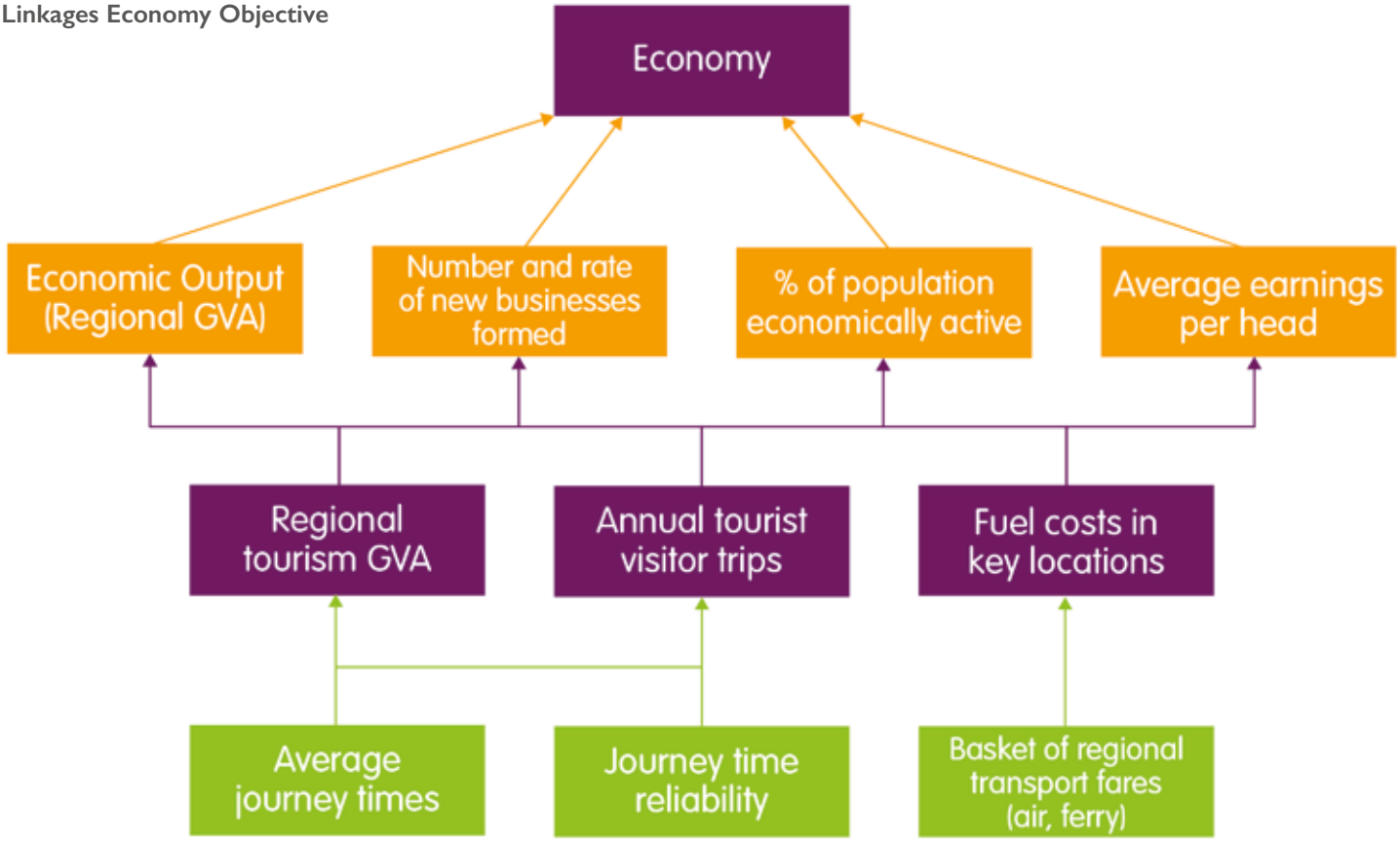
In most cases there is a full set of outcomes, outputs and indicators. In some cases, such as the Safety objective, the linkages are more straightforward and therefore do not require three levels of monitoring to draw linkages between actions and objectives.

In most cases, there is an expected relationship between different levels of the framework

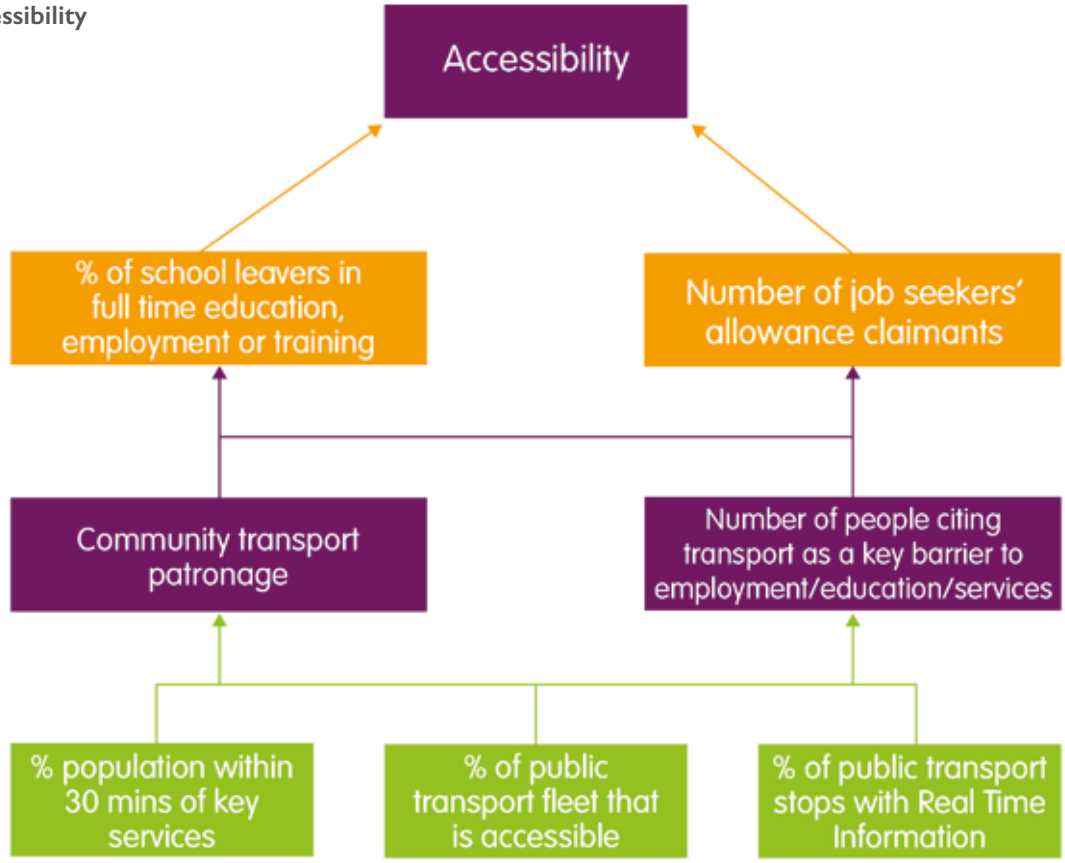
In an ideal world, for example, increasing the % of population within 30 minutes of key services by public transport (Transport Indicator) should show a positive relationship with the % of people citing transport as a key barrier to accessing key services (Intermediate Output) and impact positively on the number of people in education and training and in employment.

In reality these relationships are not so clear cut. External factors will impact on these indicators, but this framework allows us highlight these anomalies and understand what the wider picture is with regards to transport

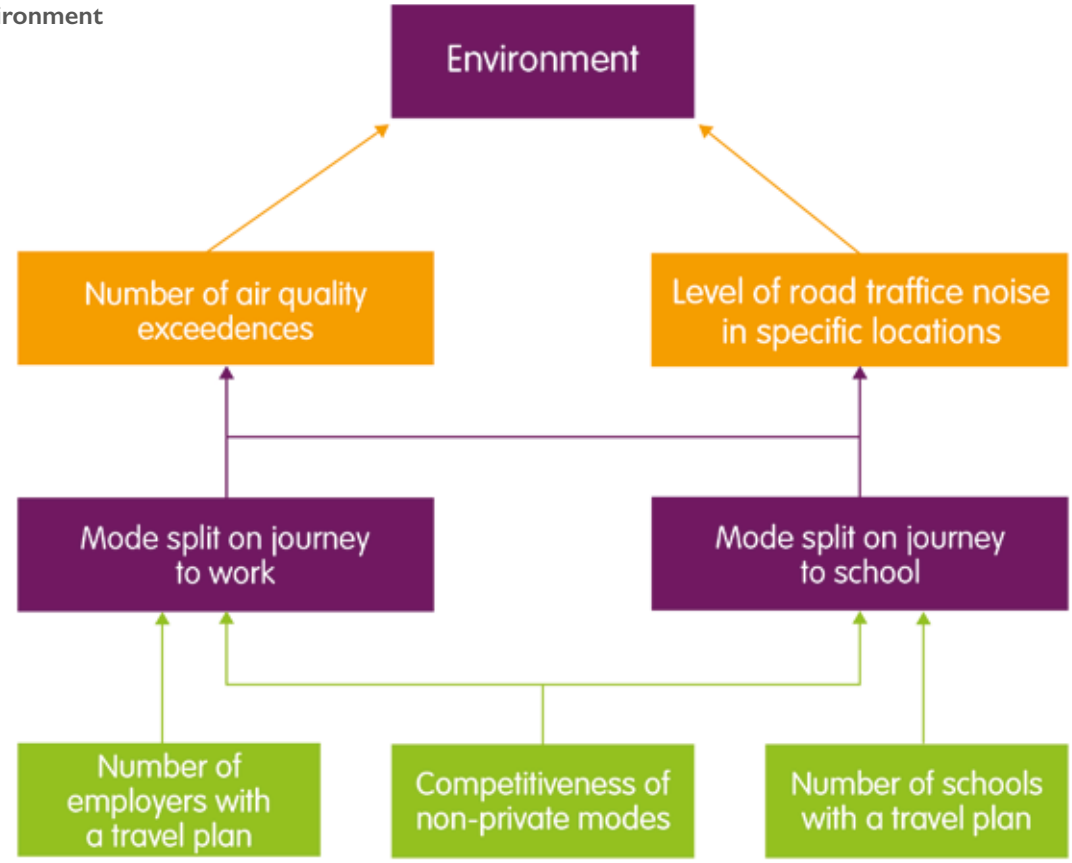
Linkages Economy Objective



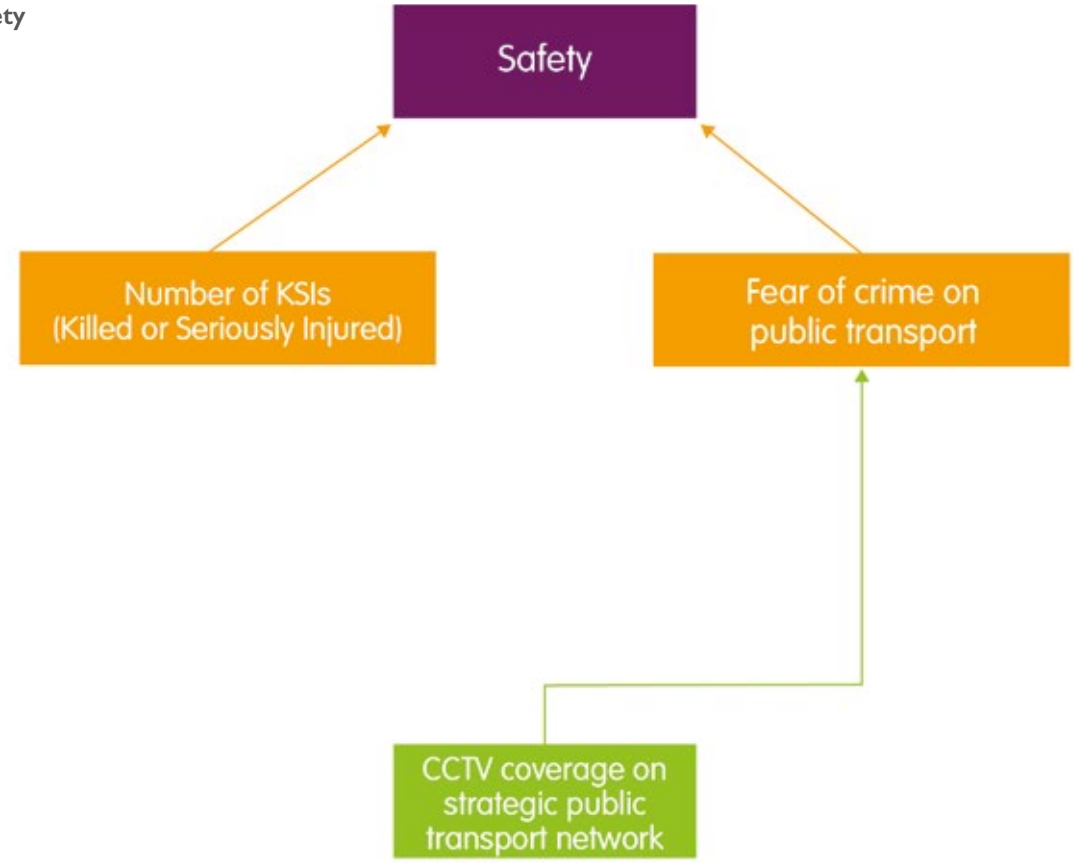
Linkages – Accessibility



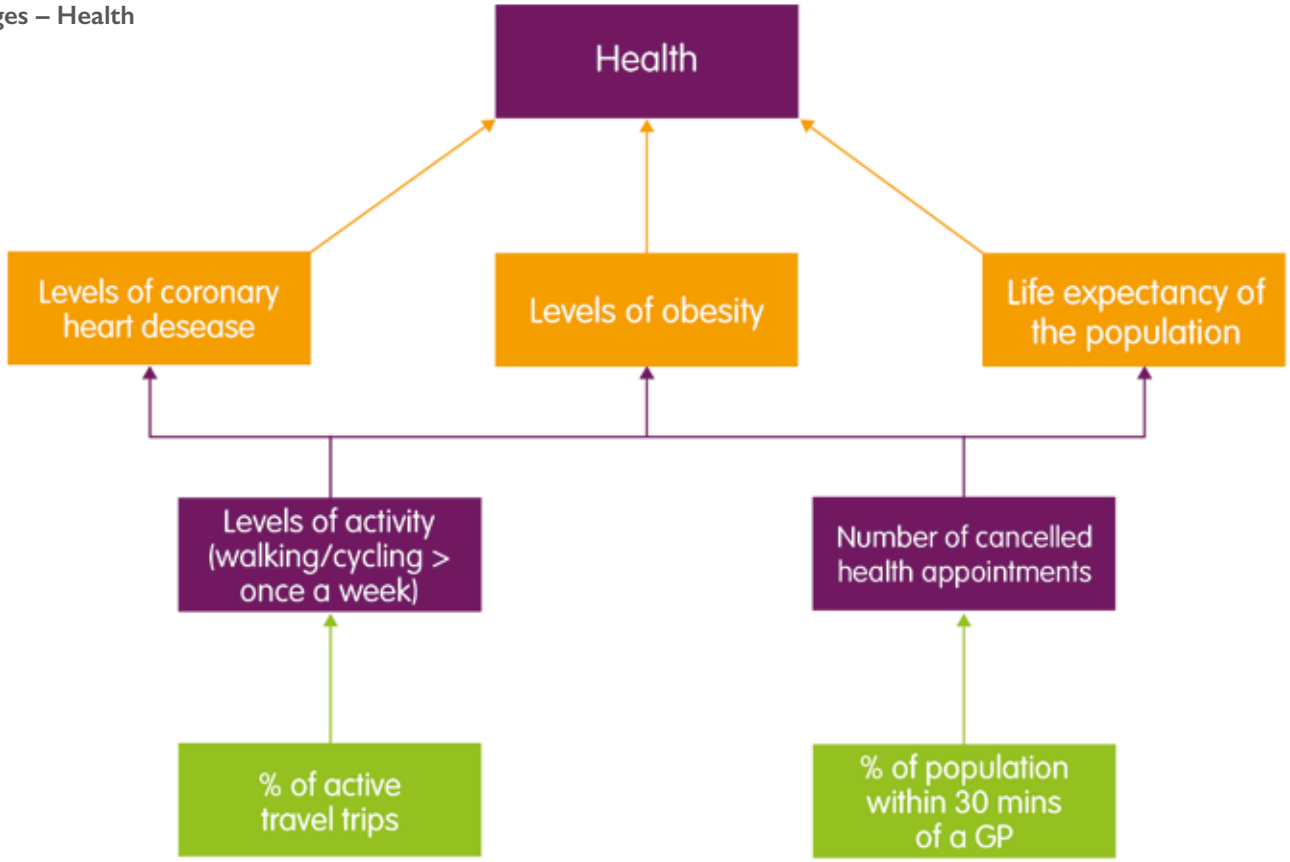
Linkages – Environment



Linkages – Safety



Linkages – Health



Eyland Skyn was commissioned by HITRANS to update the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) Monitoring Spreadsheet for the 2015/16 monitoring period, to include the most up-to-date available data.

This annual report is also tasked with commenting on any trends in data, regionally and by local authority area, and where data is available or unavailable to comment on any relevant issues that might be useful for HITRANS to consider.

This report is structured as follows and should be considered in conjunction with the accompanying spreadsheet containing the updated monitoring data:

- **Overview of emerging trends, highlighting key trends for the region and / or by local authority area.**
- **A comparison of the 2014/15 trends to the prior years' assessment, particularly focussing on the RAG scores that have been applied for indicators and the objectives collectively.**

In line with the Regional Transport Strategy Refresh process, this should be the final year of the RTS monitoring in this format. As part of this monitoring exercise, a separate note has been compiled identifying opportunities to improve the monitoring of the RTS in future years, based on:

- Considering HITRANS performance against the context of performance and trends in the rest of Scotland, which will assist in assessing whether progress (or otherwise) in the region is because of interventions or rather following wider and external trends and patterns. Such an approach would also allow benchmarking with other areas.
- Using a more demonstrable and quantifiable approach to the RAG scoring; with SMART targets and trajectories set and monitored.

Given the localised nature of several RTS items, at the outset of a new project, a tailored monitoring framework should be agreed specific for that project, that will aim to capture the outcomes associated with its delivery and aligned to the objectives of the refresh RTS. This localised / project-specific approach would then be reported alongside the wider RTS progress against targets as further evidence of progress or otherwise.

EMERGING TRENDS

As has been the case in prior years' monitoring reports, the emerging trends are presented in this section by way of setting out the monitoring framework and commenting on the headline position of each linkage in the framework.

Five tables follow for each of the economy, environment, safety, accessibility and health Regional Transport Strategy objectives. In each case, the objective and linkages have been assessed with a 'traffic light' RAG score to depict overall performance, on a (subjectively assessed) scale of:

Green: progress, generally significant, made towards objective or outcome
Amber: some progress made towards objective, but generally a mixed picture of progress across the region
Red: negative results across the monitoring period
Blue: data not available across the time period under review

For each indicator with available and up-to-date information, commentary is provided as to the movement over the last year and compared to earlier in the Regional Transport Strategy period as appropriate, from the base year of 2006.

1.1 Economy Objective

Linkages – Economy Objective

The regional economy displays mixed performance from the start of the RTS to date. There is year-on-year growth in terms of economic output and the net number of new businesses formed in the most recent data, while there is a mixed picture in terms of the percentage of people who are economically active and the average earnings per head of the population across the five local authority areas. Sustainable Tourism GVA is up across the region except for Orkney, while fuel costs have risen compared to the prior year, and while there is a mixed picture in terms of journey times and journey time reliability.

Economic Output

Regional GVA per capita has grown 19 per cent in the period 2006-15, and six per cent more recently in the period from 2013-15. In 2015, the HITRANS area GVA was 91 per cent of the Scottish value; this share has remained within a range of 89-91 per cent since 2006.

By area, since 2006, Orkney (27 per cent) and Lochaber, Skye Lochalsh, (Arran & Cumbrae) and Argyll & Bute (26 per cent) have shown the highest rate of growth; whilst more recently (2013-15) growth has been most pronounced in Caithness & Sutherland and Ross & Cromarty (11 per cent), with all other areas showing growth between two per cent (Inverness & Nairn and Moray, Badenoch & Strathspay) and nine per cent (Lochaber, Skye Lochalsh, (Arran & Cumbrae) and Argyll & Bute. Over the full period-2006-15 the growth rate was lowest for the Western Isles (two per cent); whilst in the most recent period (2013-15) growth in the Wester Isles has been better at seven per cent.

Number of new businesses formed

Data for 2014 and 2015 has been added to the ONS Business Demography report. There has been significant variation since 2006, with a peak of 450 business 'births' less business 'deaths' for the region in 2007 and a trough of -55 net ('births' less 'deaths') in 2010. Following a very positive rise in 2013 to 425 net businesses for the region, 2014 and 2015 have been similarly positive with 420 and 335 net births per year respectively.

There is a downwards trend in recent years in Orkney with net businesses numbers falling from 45 in 2013 to 20 and then 10 in 2014 and 2015 respectively.

% economically active

In three out of the five local authority areas, there has been a growth in economic activity between 2006 and 2016. Growth is greatest in Orkney and the Western Isles. Argyll & Bute and Moray has seen a decline in economic activity over this period.

Economic activity in the period to 2016 compared to the prior years shows all areas remaining approximately static, the greatest variation being a two percentage point decrease for the Moray area.

Average earnings per head

There is mixed performance in terms of average earnings in 2016 compared to 2015. Annual percentage change in 2016: Argyll & Bute -0.3 per cent, Western Isles -2.7 per cent, Highland +8.6 per cent, Moray +2.8 per cent and Orkney -0.9 per cent. These data compare to a Scottish growth rate of +2.6 per cent.

Highland and Moray are at all-time highs in 2016 with £26,272 and £22,102 respectively; while Argyll and Bute and Orkney continue to out-perform Moray (£24,156 and £23,811 respectively). Average earnings are consistently lowest in the Western Isles, £21,242 in 2016.

Sustainable Tourism GVA

Sustainable Tourism GVA over the period 2008-2014 shows mixed performance between areas. Growth rates vary from -41 per cent in Orkney through to +119 per cent in the Western Isles. For both areas the data show pronounced increase/decrease in the most recent years' data – 2014. Following a period of fluctuating decline, Highland has a very similar value in 2014 compared to 2008, while Moray has seen 20 per cent growth over the period and Argyll and Bute 12 per cent growth.

Fuel costs in key locations

In 2016 fuel prices are up across the region by between eight to 11 per cent at the sites monitored.

This has taken prices to above what they were in 2009, but still14-19 per cent lower that their peak in 2012.

Of the sites monitored, a litre of unleaded petrol is most expensive in Stornoway (123.4p) and cheapest in Portree (117.4).

Average journey times

Car journey times across the 12 routes examined are on average three per cent quicker in 2016 compared to 2015.

Four of the routes are a little slower or have the same average speed in 2015, while the remaining eight routes are quicker in 2016, with the greatest improvement being for the journey between Fort William and Glasgow, which is showing as being 10 per cent quicker in 2016. Inverness to Thurso and Elgin to Aberdeen are also showing noticeable improvements with travel time reductions of eight per cent and seven per cent respectively.

The largest percentage increase in journey time for the year is on the route between the A82 on the outskirts of Inverness transferring to the A9, with a nine percent increase in journey time; however, given the short trip involved with this route, small variations of even one minute on the journey time make a significant difference to the percentage.

Journey time reliability

Information was not available in this period.

Basket of regional transport fares

Not collected.

1.2 Environment Objective

Linkages – Environment Objective

The regional environment has experienced some improvement, particularly through a reduction in use of car for the journey to work accompanied by an increase in active travel modes. Disappointingly, the trend of an increase in car use of the journey to school however has continued for the most recent year. There is variation in the competitiveness of public transport journey times compared to car travel – with some routes showing significantly longer journey times by public transport, as much as 60 per cent longer between Inverness and Thurso; where there is a direct rail route this is often quicker than the equivalent road journey however.

Number of air quality exceedances

There is one site in Highland – Inverness – with a declared active Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).

Level of road traffic noise in specific locations

Not collected.

Mode split on journey to work

The data for 2015 show that there has been a reduction in the car mode share on the journey to work for the HITRANS region; showing 65.2 per cent in 2015 compared to 70.0 per cent in 2014; this is approaching the 2006-15 all-time low of 62.1 per cent in 2012. The reduction in car use in the most recent year is accompanied by also a reduction in public transport use for the journey to work, which reduced from 6.9 per cent to 5.7 per cent, the same value as was the case in 2013. Positively, the reduction in car use has been accompanied also with a significant increase in the active travel share, rising from 19.8 per cent in 2014 to 23.1 per cent in 2015; suggesting that those now choosing not to travel by car and choosing health-promoting active travel options.

Some Local Authority-based data is available for 2015, which shows that the growth in active travel on the journey to work is most pronounced in Moray with a 2.9 percentage point increase (compared to 2013), while there has been a slight decline in Western Isles and Highland.

Mode split of journey to school

The use of car for the journey to school has continued to increase into 2015 – 30 per cent of journeys to school are by car compared to 27.8 per cent in the prior year, and compared to a low over the monitoring period of 18.5 per cent in 2012.

The proportion using public transport remains roughly the same in 2015 compared to the prior year, reflecting the high prevalence of school transport provision particularly in rural areas with larger distances to school. Use of active travel for the journey to school is down in 2015; down by 1.7 percentage points to a level of 42.6 per cent and compared to the all-time high over the monitoring period of 52.8 per cent in 2008.

Number of employers with a travel plan

Not collected.

Competitiveness of non-private modes

Generally public transport is observed to be less competitive than the private car across the region, except for the routes that have a direct rail line – notably Inverness-Perth and Inverness-Elgin, when rail is four per cent and 28 per cent quicker than journeys by car. For Elgin to Aberdeen average public transport times compared to car travel times are improving.

On nine (out of 12) routes public transport takes longer than car, with the largest differences seen for Inverness-Thurso (60 per cent), Portree-Glasgow (40 per cent), Campbeltown-Tarbet (38 per cent) and Inverness-Wick (38 per cent).

Number of schools with a travel plan

Not collected.

1.3 Safety Objective

Linkages – Safety Objective Continuing reduction in the number of KSIs on the region's roads.	
Number of KSIs	**Fear of crime on public transport**
There has been a further annual decrease in the number of KSIs on the region's roads in 2015 – falling to 175, compared to 182 in the prior year and contrasted with an all-time high over the monitoring period of 430 KSIs in 2007. The four per cent reduction for the region comprises significant variation from area to area, which can be expected on a year-to-year basis. The greatest reduction is in Orkney, but this is based on very small numbers – a reduction from 5 in 2014 to 1 in 2015. In Moray, the reduction was 21 per cent from 47 to 37; whilst in Western Isles there was a slight reduction from 6 to 5 KSIs. There was a slight increase in Argyll & Bute (four per cent) to 57 and in Highland (nine per cent) to 75 KSIs.	Not available in most recent year.
	CCTV coverage on strategic public transport network
	Not collected

1.4 Accessibility Objective

Linkages – Accessibility Objective There are some gaps in the availability of data for the accessibility objective again this year, notably in terms of the intermediate outputs and some transport indicators. The HITRANS area continues to perform well in terms of the number of school leavers going on to positive destinations-93 per cent compared to 92 per cent for Scotland. The release of SIMD16 has shown an increase in the number of people within the region within 30 minutes of key service centres by public transport, but some concerns with this indicator are noted.	
% school leavers in full time education, employment or training	**Number of job seekers' allowance claimants**
The rate of school leavers having a positive destination has increased for the HITRANS region in each of 2010/11, 2011/12, 2012/13 and 2013/14; and has remained roughly the same in 14/15 with 93 per cent of school leavers having a positive destination, compared to 92 per cent for Scotland. There was no notable variation in any of the individual local authorities for 2014/15 compared to the prior year.	To 2016 there has been a slight increase in the number of job seekers' allowance claimants following several years of reductions from a high of 2.9 per cent in 2011 and 2012; with the rate in the HITRANS region up to 1.6 (4,460 people) compared to 1.3 (3,827 people) in 2015. Rates have decreased across all local authority areas. The increase comprises increases in Highland, Moray and Orkney, while there had been a slight reduction in Argyll and Bute and the Western Isles areas. The regional rate of 1.6 compares to the Scotland level of 3.0 per cent.
Community transport patronage	**Number of people citing transport as a key barrier**
Not collected.	Not available for this period.

% population within 30 mins of key services	% public transport fleet that is accessible	% public transport stops with Real Time Information
There has been an overall increase in the number of people within 30 minutes of a key service centre by public transport based on the release of SIMD16. There are some differences between the way in which data have been assessed between 2012 and 2016, and concerns remain as to the appropriateness of these indicators particularly for remoter areas; e.g. being within 30 minutes' public transport journeys could be a well-served locality (according to SIMD), but which have a very infrequent service availability.	Not collected.	Not collected.

1.5 Health Objective

Linkages – Health Objective

Regional health demonstrates a generally improving position compared to earlier years. There is evidence of improvement with CHD hospital admissions, levels of obesity in children and in life expectancy. No up to date information is available in respect to levels of activity and hospital 'did not attends'. There is an improving position in respect to active travel trips for the journey to work and from the snapshot taken in terms of public transport access to a GP through the SIMD2016.

Coronary heart disease – hospital admissions rate/100,000	Levels of obesity	Life expectancy
There has been an increase in Argyll & Bute and in the Western Isles, while there has been a slight decrease in Orkney, and more notable decreases in Highland and Moray compared to the prior year.	Data for 2015 and 2016 have been added. Across all areas, except for Moray, there has been a reduction in the number of Primary 1 pupils at risk of childhood obesity. The greatest reductions are in Argyll & Bute, Western Isles and Orkney, all of which started from the highest levels; Orkney particularly has decreased from a high of 15.7 in 2014 down to 11.3 in 2016; still the highest in the region, but now much closer to the other local authority areas.	Life expectancy remained approximately the same in 2015 compared to 2014, at between 76.8 (Western Isles) and 78.8 (Moray and Orkney); and compared to 77.1 for Scotland. (Data recorded is for males.)

Levels of activity	Number of cancelled health appointments
Walking in the past seven days as a means of transport or for leisure / keep fit not available for this period.	2015 data not available.

% of active travel trips	% of population within 30 mins of a GP
There has been an increase of 1.6 percentage points for the HITRANS region in terms of the number of people making an active travel trip to work – up to 23.1 per cent in 2015 compared to 2013. This comprises a very slight reduction in Moray and notable increases Argyll & Bute (5.1 percentage points) and Highland (2.3 percentage points). Data had not been available in 2013 for Western Isles and Orkney, but their 2015 figures are down 4.9 percentage points in the case of the Western Isles and up 5.5 percentage points in the case of Orkney compared to the 2012 results.	Based on the SIMD16 there has been between a 10 and 33 percentage point increase in the number of people within 30 minutes of a GP by public transport across the HITRANS local authority areas. This is highest in Moray at 97 per cent and lowest in Western Isles at 85 percent, which however is shown to have increased from 58 per cent in 2012. The same comments exist as to the usefulness of the SIMD for particularly remote areas as highlighted above; SIMD does not reflect the often very infrequent nature of public transport services outwith main settlements.

1.6 Conclusions

As can be seen from the tables in this section, there is a consistently more positive picture across all the five RTS objective areas.

The economy continues to make broadly good progress with year-on-year growth in terms of economic output and the net number of new businesses formed in the year. That said, there is a mixed picture in terms of the percentage of people across the region who are economically active and the average earnings per head across the local authority areas.

In terms of the environment objective there has been some improvement, and this has scored 'amber' compared to 'red' in the prior year. This is based particularly on a reduction in the use of car for the journey to work, accompanied by an increase in active travel modes. Unfortunately, the car continues to be increasingly popular however for the journey to school.

In terms of the safety objective the main factor to note is the continuing reduction in the number of KSIs on the region's road in the most recent data, giving a 'green' score for the first time in the monitoring period; however, it should be noted that the other key safety indicator-fear of crime on public transport-was not available for the most recent period.

In term of the accessibility objective, there are some gaps in the availability of data this year. That said, the HITRANS area continues to perform well in terms of the number of school leavers going on to positive destinations-93 per cent compared to 92 per cent for Scotland. And the release of SIMD16 has shown an increase in the number of people within the region within 30 minutes of key service centres by public transport. But as noted in the tables there are some concerns with these SIMD indicators for the region. The accessibility objective has been scored as 'green' overall.

In terms of the health objective, a generally improving position is shown. There is evidence of improvement with CHD hospital admissions, levels of obesity in children and in life expectancy. There is an improving position in respect to active travel trips for the journey to work and from the snapshot taken in terms of public transport access to a GP through the SIMD2016; and so the health objective has been scored as 'amber', compared to a drop to 'red' in the prior year, which in turn had followed several years where the health objective had scored as 'green'.

Overall then there are some positive movements for the region, and including some indicators that show evidence of recovering following a period of deterioration. From the data, the economy appears to be performing well, and the entrepreneurial spirit is continuing across the region with a high level of businesses created. The cost of fuel is rising again across the region, with the global price of fuel driving this. The increase in active travel use on the journey to work is very encouraging, and poignant considering the progress that has been made through Active Travel audits and investment in centres around the region. That said it is disappointing that the car increasingly dominates the journey to school. It will be very interesting to study the walking activity levels (as a means of transport and for leisure / keep fit) when the next data is made available from the Scottish Household Survey late this year.

COMPARING 2015/16 TO 2014/15, 2013/14, 2012/13 AND 2011/12

This section presents the traffic light-based assessment for 2015/16 compared to 2014/15, 2013/14, 2012/13 and 2011/12 in order to demonstrate movement in relation to each of the Regional Transport Strategy objectives compared to the preceding years.

1.7 Economy Objective

Linkages – Economy Objective 2015/16
Linkages – Economy Objective 2014/15
Linkages – Economy Objective 2013/14
Linkages – Economy Objective 2012/13
Linkages – Economy Objective 2011/12

2015/16	Economic Output	Number of new businesses formed	% economically active	Average earnings per head
2014/15	Economic Output	Number of new businesses formed	% economically active	Average earnings per head
2013/14	Economic Output	Number of new businesses formed	% economically active	Average earnings per head
2012/13	Economic Output	Number of new businesses formed	% economically active	Average earnings per head
2011/12	Economic Output	Number of new businesses formed	% economically active	Average earnings per head

2015/16	Sustainable Tourism GVA		Fuel costs in key locations
2014/15	Accommodation GVA		Fuel costs in key locations
2013/14	Accommodation GVA		Fuel costs in key locations
2012/13	Accommodation GVA	Annual tourist visitor trips	Fuel costs in key locations
2011/12	Regional Tourism GVA	Annual tourist visitor trips	Fuel costs in key locations
2015/16	Average journey times	Journey time reliability	Basket of regional transport fares
2014/15	Average journey times	Journey time reliability	Basket of regional transport fares
2013/14	Average journey times	Journey time reliability	Basket of regional transport fares
2012/13	Average journey times	Journey time reliability	Basket of regional transport fares
2011/12	Average journey times	Journey time reliability	Basket of regional transport fares

1.8 Environment Objective

Linkages – Environment Objective 2015/16
Linkages – Environment Objective 2014/15
Linkages – Environment Objective 2013/14
Linkages – Environment Objective 2012/13
Linkages – Environment Objective 2011/12

2015/16	Number of air quality exceedances	Level of road traffic noise in specific locations
2014/15	Number of air quality exceedances	Level of road traffic noise in specific locations
2013/14	Number of air quality exceedances	Level of road traffic noise in specific locations
2012/13	Number of air quality exceedances	Level of road traffic noise in specific locations
2011/12	Number of air quality exceedances	Level of road traffic noise in specific locations

2015/16	Mode split on journey to work	Mode split on journey to school
2014/15	Mode split on journey to work	Mode split on journey to school
2013/14	Mode split on journey to work	Mode split on journey to school
2012/13	Mode split on journey to work	Mode split of journey to school
2011/12	Mode split on journey to work	Mode split of journey to school

2015/16	Number of employers with a travel plan	Competitiveness of non-private modes	Number of schools with a travel plan
2014/15	Number of employers with a travel plan	Competitiveness of non-private modes	Number of schools with a travel plan
2013/14	Number of employers with a travel plan	Competitiveness of non-private modes	Number of schools with a travel plan
2012/13	Number of employers with a travel plan	Competitiveness of non-private modes	Number of schools with a travel plan
2011/12	Number of employers with a travel plan	Competitiveness of non-private modes	Number of schools with a travel plan

1.9 Safety Objective

Linkages – Safety Objective 2015/16
Linkages – Safety Objective 2014/15
Linkages – Safety Objective 2013/14
Linkages – Safety Objective 2012/13
Linkages – Safety Objective 2011/12

2015/16	Number of KSIs	Fear of crime on public transport
2014/15	Number of KSIs	Fear of crime on public transport
2013/14	Number of KSIs	Fear of crime on public transport
2012/13	Number of KSIs	Fear of crime on public transport
2011/12	Number of KSIs	Fear of crime on public transport

1.10 Accessibility Objective

Linkages – Accessibility Objective 2015/16
Linkages – Accessibility Objective 2014/15
Linkages – Accessibility Objective 2013/14
Linkages – Accessibility Objective 2012/13
Linkages – Accessibility Objective 2011/12

2015/16	% school leavers in full time education, employment or training	Number of job seekers' allowance claimants
2014/15	% school leavers in full time education, employment or training	Number of job seekers' allowance claimants
2013/14	% school leavers in full time education, employment or training	Number of job seekers' allowance claimants
2012/13	% school leavers in full time education, employment or training	Number of job seekers' allowance claimants
2011/12	% school leavers in full time education, employment or training	Number of job seekers' allowance claimants

2015/16	Community transport patronage	Number of people citing transport as a key barrier
2014/15	Community transport patronage	Number of people citing transport as a key barrier
2013/14	Community transport patronage	Number of people citing transport as a key barrier
2012/13	Community transport patronage	Number of people citing transport as a key barrier
2011/12	Community transport patronage	Number of people citing transport as a key barrier

2015/16	% population within 30 mins of key services	% public transport fleet that is accessible	% public transport stops with Real Time Information
2014/15	% population within 30 mins of key services	% public transport fleet that is accessible	% public transport stops with Real Time Information
2013/14	% population within 30 mins of key services	% public transport fleet that is accessible	% public transport stops with Real Time Information
2012/13	% population within 30 mins of key services	% public transport fleet that is accessible	% public transport stops with Real Time Information
2011/12	% population within 30 mins of key services	% public transport fleet that is accessible	% public transport stops with Real Time Information

1.11 Health Objective

Linkages – Health Objective 2015/16
Linkages – Health Objective 2014/15
Linkages – Health Objective 2013/14
Linkages – Health Objective 2012/13
Linkages – Health Objective 2011/12

2015/16	Coronary heart disease – hospital admissions rate/100,000	Levels of obesity	Life expectancy
2014/15	Coronary heart disease – hospital admissions rate/100,000	Levels of obesity	Life expectancy
2013/14	Coronary heart disease – hospital admissions rate/100,000	Levels of obesity	Life expectancy
2012/13	Coronary heart disease – hospital admissions rate/100,000	Levels of obesity	Life expectancy
2011/12	Levels of coronary heart disease	Levels of obesity	Life expectancy

2015/16	Levels of activity	Number of cancelled health appointments
2014/15	Levels of activity	Number of cancelled health appointments
2013/14	Levels of activity	Number of cancelled health appointments
2012/13	Levels of activity	Number of cancelled health appointments
2011/12	Levels of activity	Number of cancelled health appointments

2015/16	% of active travel trips	% of population within 30 mins of a GP
2014/15	% of active travel trips	% of population within 30 mins of a GP
2013/14	% of active travel trips	% of population within 30 mins of a GP
2012/13	% of active travel trips	% of population within 30 mins of a GP
2011/12	% of active travel trips	% of population within 30 mins of a GP

1.12 Conclusions

Comparing 2015/16 to 2014/15, 2013/14, 2012/13 and 2011/12, there has been some positive movement across several areas. Considering the headline objectives of economy, environment, safety, accessibility and health, the table below depicts the changes from 2011/12 through to the present 2015/16:

2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Economy	Economy	Economy	Economy	Economy
Environment	Environment	Environment	Environment	Environment
Safety	Safety	Safety	Safety	Safety
Accessibility	Accessibility	Accessibility	Accessibility	Accessibility
Health	Health	Health	Health	Health

In fact, overall, in 2015/16 the highest number of 'green' plus 'amber' objectives is seen, with three and two respectively. Notably, the safety objective has moved from 'amber' to 'green' and the health objective from 'red' to 'amber'. It should be highlighted though that the 'safety' objective this year is based on only one indicator due to other data not being available for the most recent year. The economy objective has remained 'green' for a second year and the accessibility objective has remained 'green' for the fourth year in a row.

HITRANS MONITORING FRAMEWORK - STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

Outcome Code	Outcome Description	Source	Status	Scope	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016		2014 comments	2015 comments	2016 Comments
	Increased economic output	Workplace-based regional GVA - National Statistics (£m, current basic prices)		Highlands and Islands (includes Arran and Cumbrae)	21,549	22,468	22,873	22,201	22,541	22,945	23,477	24,203	25,145	25,601			Figures updated from new release, and 2012 data added	Figures updated and added from 10 Dec 2014 release from ONS: Regional Gross Value Added (Income Approach), December 2014	Processing errors affecting the compilation NUTS3 level for a number of industries have been corrected. Shifted to GVA per capita
ST01	**Increased number and rate of new businesses formed**	ONS Business Demography	Data Collected (2011). Released Dec 2012.	Argyll & Bute	50	75	15	-50	-5	5	-5	25	40	20			Some figures updated from Dec 2013 release, plus 2012 data added	Some data updated and 2013 data added from Nov 2014 release - 2014 data should be available from end Nov 2015.	Some data updated for prior years
				Eilean Siar	0	20	25	-10	-10	10	-5	30	40	-					
				Highland	190	295	205	20	-40	130	25	260	215	220					
				Moray	75	50	30	5	5	5	5	65	105	85					
				Orkney Islands	-5	10	0	0	-5	10	-15	45	20	10					
					310	**450**	**275**	**-35**	**-55**	**160**	**5**	**425**	**420**	**335**					
ST02	**Increased % of population that is economically active**	NOMIS/ONS Annual Population Survey	Data Collected (2012)	Argyll & Bute	81.3	80.8	79.4	78.3	77.0	76.4	75.6	78.3	79.7	79.8	80		Minor amends to many previous data; new data to June 14 added	2014.15 data added	100%
				Eilean Siar	77.4	78.1	75.5	72.9	65.3	68.1	70.4	75.0	78.5	81.6	82				101%
				Highland	80.5	82.7	81	82.7	81.1	83	79.1	78.6	74.8	82.3	81				99%
				Moray	79.7	80.6	83.5	81.4	81.1	81.3	83.2	81.6	78.5	78.7	77				98%
				Orkney Islands	81.8	85.3	85.4	88.4	81.1	82.4	87.5	82.5	83.8	88.7	89				100%
				HITRANS	**80.6**	**81.2**	**81.2**	**82.4**	**80.1**	**80.3**	**79.5**		**80.8**	**81.4**					
ST03	**Increase in average earnings**	Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)	Data Collected (2011/12)	Argyll & Bute			20,534	22,841	21,682	22,254	22,241	22,414	23,388	24229	24156		2013 provision data added - next release due 19/11/14	2014 data added; A&B, ES, H, M and Orkney moved 4.4%, -2.7%, 4.6%, 1.2% and -4% respectively	Annual percentage change in 2016: A&B: -0.3%, WI: -2.7%, H: +8.6%, M: +2.8% and O:-0.9% These data compare to the Scotland percentage change of +2.6%
				Eilean Siar			20,543	20,358	22,209	20,459	20,450	21,210	20,166	21829	21242				
				Highland			21,767	21,463	21,631	21,280	22,471	22,663	23,053	24191	26272				
				Moray			18,621	20,140	19,792	21,001	20,775	22,076	21,807	21510	22102				
				Orkney Islands			21,487	21,647	20,777	21,400	21,224	21,567	20,769	24020	23811				
ST05	**Increased % of school leavers in further/higher education, employment or training**	ONS -Destinations of Leavers from Scottish Schools	Data Collected (2010/11)	Argyll & Bute	86.5	87.8	87.45	87.77	89.8	89.7	90.7	92.4	92.00	92.7	1.01			significant reductions in training (down 27 percentage points) and employment (down 4 percentage points).	Scotland =92.0
				Eilean Siar	94.9	93.3	88.27	94.28	92.6	92.3	94.1	95.2	96.80	96.6	1.00				
				Highland	89.1	88.5	85.11	86.73	89.4	90.0	91.8	92.5	94.70	94	0.99				
				Moray	86.1	89.5	88.22	90.87	88.4	84.6	87.9	92.4	92.90	89.7	0.97				
				Orkney Islands	94.5	92.2	93.88	93.94	89.3	89.6	94.9	91.2	94.10	93.8	1.00				
				HITRANS	**86.1**	**86.0**	**85.32**	**86.35**	**88.58**	**89.0**	**91.1**	**92.5**	**93.90**	**93.0**				2006	2007
ST06	**Reductions in number of work benefit claimants**	Nomis Official Labout Market Statistics http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/default.asp	Annual average of monthly rates	Argyll & Bute	2.4	2.1	2.1	3.0	3.1	3.4	3.3	3.2	2.5	1.7	1.6	6%	Update with to Sept 2014 data	1,390	1,209
				Eilean Siar	3.1	2.7	2.2	3.5	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.0	2.6	2.1	1.9	10%		499	432
				Highland	2.1	1.7	1.7	2.7	2.8	2.9	2.8	2.7	1.8	1.2	1.6	-33%		2,879	2,396
				Moray	2.2	1.9	1.8	2.4	2.5	2.7	2.6	2.4	1.7	1.3	1.5	-15%		1,211	1,045
				Orkney Islands	1.4	1.1	0.9	1.1	1.4	1.7	1.6	1.4	1.0	0.6	0.9	-50%		173	134
				HITRANS Count	**6,151**	**5,216**	**5,057**	**7,586**	**7,819**	**8,131**	**7,931**	**7,613**	**5465**	**3827**	**4460**				
				HITRANS %	**2.2**	**1.9**	**1.8**	**2.7**	**2.8**	**2.9**	**2.9**	**2.7**	**1.9**	**1.3**	**1.6**				
ST07	**Improvements in local air quality in specific locations**	Local authority air quality monitoring results - Update and Screening Assessments. Number of exceedences of NO2 and PM10 standards	Various reports from LAs (/ indicates no report available)	Argyll & Bute	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0					
				Eilean Siar	0	0		0	/	/	/	0	0	0					
				Highland	0			1	0	/	/	1	1	1					
				Moray	0			/	/	0	0	0	0	0					
				Orkney Islands	0		0	/	/	/	/	0	0	0					
				HITRANS	**0**			**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**1**	**1**				Fatal	Serious
ST08	**Reduced number and severity of road casualties (KSIs)**	Local authority road casualty data	Data collected (2005-2009 average an annual count thereafter)	Argyll & Bute		114		92	80	63	67	62	55	57	4%		STATS19 annual report	4	63
				Eilean Siar		19		12	9	5	9	2	6	5	-17%			1	8
				Highland		233		173	121	119	104	93	69	75	9%			14	90
				Moray		55		46	35	28	46	50	47	37	-21%			2	44
				Orkney Islands		9		7	4	2	10	6	5	1	-80%			5	5
				HITRANS		**430**		**330**	**249**	**217**	**236**	**213**	**182**	**175**	**-4%**			26	210
ST09	**Reductions in crimes and fear of crime when travelling on public transport**	Scottish Household Survey question - 'How safe from crime do you feel when travelling by bus in the evenings?' - % agreeing with the statement	Updated from 2009/10 onwards to show those agreeing that "I feel personally safe and secure on the bus during the evening."	Argyll & Bute	89.7			83.2	70.7		Values surpressed as less than 5 reponses for each of these LAs		77.4					2014 data added; daytime data also added for comparison	97.3	
				Eilean Siar	95.1			95.55	92				88.2						99.1	
				Highland	85.9			76.05	60.3				70.1						94.2	
				Moray	79.7			82.4	66.4				62.9						97.6	
				Orkney Islands	98.4			0	Not available				80.1						88.8	95.4
				HITRANS	**89.1**			**82.45**	**66.3**		**71.0**		**71.2**					2002	2003
ST10	**Reduced levels of coronary heart disease**	SNS - coronary heart disease admissions to hospital per 100,000 people	Data from Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics	Argyll & Bute	674	671	556	508	464	570	590			104%			No more up to date information available	743	714
				Eilean Siar	782	677	698	688	439	556	606			109%				1,145	1,065
				Highland	721	723	742	688	785	689	558			81%				612	672
				Moray	696	680	698	587	570	620	474			76%				764	759
				Orkney Islands	632	690	618	651	552	625	608			97%				828	751
ST11	**Reduced levels of obesity**	Child obesity in Primary 1 (%) - % at risk of childhood obesity - BMI in P1	http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Child-Health/Publications/data-tables.asp?id=1020#1020	Argyll & Bute			x	13.2	10.4	11.1	10.0	10.5	12.3	11.1	10.4	0.84552846	Previous P1BMI Statistic publications also presented information by Council Area. As approximate information by Council Area can be obtained by combining relevant Community Health Partnership data a separate breakdown of the information by Council Area is no longer provided.		
				Eilean Siar	9.8	10.3	12.6	10.8	14.7	12.5	11.7	12.6	11.9	12.7	8.7	0.73109244			
				Highland			x	10.5	11.3	11.2	10.2	10.3	11.4	10.5	10.3	0.90350877			
				Moray			x	x	8.9	10.0	10.4	9.9	10.2	10.2	10.7	1.04901961			
				Orkney Islands			x	x	x	12.6	14.2	13.3	15.7	8.0	11.3	0.71788235			
ST12	**Improvements to general health of the population**	Life expectancy - HITRANS region, CHP Profiles	Data presented by ScotPHO http://www.scotpho.org.uk/	Argyll & Bute	74.7		77.8	76.3	78.1		77.3		78.3	78.2		100%	Data added for 2009 and 2012 is for males only. Separate data are available for females, but no combined life expectancy data are supplied by ScotPHO	2012-14 data added and some revisions to earlier data made + 2004 baseline added to the 2006 column	2013-15 data added for males
				Eilean Siar	72.4		76.0	73.9	76.5		76.4		77.0	76.75		100%			
				Highland	74.5		77.6	76.5	78.0		77.2		78.3	77.9		99%			
				Moray	75.0		77.4	76.9	77.9		77.4		78.6	78.8		100%			
				Orkney Islands	76.6		78.6	76.2	78.5		79.7		78.7	78.8		100%			
				HITRANS			**77.5**		**78.0**										

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
1,836								
518								
3,962								
1,415								
200								
2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
741	698	674	671	556	508	464	570	590
994	697	782	677	698	688	439	556	606
690	655	721	723	742	688	785	689	558
668	630	696	680	698	587	570	620	474
610	658	632	690	618	651	552	625	608

KEY

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HITRANS MONITORING FRAMEWORK - INTERMEDIATE OUTPUTS

Output Code	Output description	Source	Scope	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2016 Comments	2015 Comments	2014 Comments
IO01	Visitor stays	Scottish Annual Business Survey	Sustainable Tourism GVA	Argyll & Bute		£19,036	£15,206	£15,286	£14,303	£16,779	£15,964	£21,341	12%		Updated to comprise Sustainable Tourism GVA	Slight revisions to 2012 data; 2013 data added	Have replaced data with GVA Accomdation which is available over time period.
				Eilean Siar		£20,462	£11,093	£12,557	£17,862	£21,196	£18,039	£44,828	119%				
				Highland		£20,274	£12,107	£13,453	£15,603	£16,778	£14,986	£20,262	-0%				
				Moray		£17,505	£11,914	£23,111	£21,500	£19,094	£13,486	£20,920	20%				
				Orkney Islands		£23,145	£9,907	£12,619	£15,151	£20,880	£21,780	£13,588	-41%				
IO02	Reduce input costs for businesses	Unleaded average price: www.petrolprices.com	Inverness				109.8		133.4	134.1	135.9	124.9	106.8	118.1		0.12	Prices on 05/11/14
			Kirkwall				117.9		145.5	146.6	145.9	127.9	*	*		-	
			Stornoway				119.2		145.7	148.9	140.9	125.9	111.4	123.4		0.17	
			Fort William				110.1		134.9	140.2	139.9	126.9	110.4	120.6		0.14	
			Ullapool				115.9		144.9	151.9	145.9	134.9	112.9	122.9		0.19	
			Oban				110.6		136.9	141.6	139.9	128.9	107.9	119.2		0.16	
			Portree				113.4		142.9	142.9	139.9	128.9	108.9	117.4		0.18	
IO03	Number of passengers using community transport services	Local authorities/operators	Argyll & Bute														
			Eilean Siar														
			Highland														
			Moray														
			Orkney Islands														
IO04	Number of people citing transport as a key barrier to accessing employment / education / training services - % citing public transport in their area fairly or very inconvenient	Local Area Analysis of SHS data	HITRANS	23.4		19.2		20.2		16.5		14.0			Next data available in 2017; question asked biennially	2014 data added	Question only asked every 2 years, so next asked in the 2013 survey, and therefore published in 2015
			Argyll & Bute			20.1		14.7		15.0		15.0					
			Eilean Siar			8.2		15.5		10.4		7.0					
			Highland			22.0		24.6		19.4		14.0					
			Moray			13.3		9.8		10.4		13.0					
			Orkney Islands			25.5		35.7		15.9		14.0					
IO05	Mode split on the journey to work	Local Area Analysis of SHS data	Car		67.0	67.7		69.9		62.1	66.7	70.0	65.2				HITRANS and LA data added for 12/13
			PT		10.0	7.1		5.7		7.1	5.7	6.9	5.7				
			Walk/Cycle		20.0	20.7		19.9		24.4	21.5	19.8	23.1				
IO06	Mode split on the journey to school	Local Area Analysis of SHS data	Car			19.6		22.3		18.5	19.3	27.8	30.0				Hitrans data added for 12/13 plus LA data
			PT			27.6		31.1		33.3	31.6	27.9	27.5				
			Walk/Cycle			52.8		46.5		45.5	46.3	44.3	42.6	-1.7			
IO07	Increased activity levels (Walking in the past seven days (aged 16+) (Those who had made a trip of more than quarter of a mile for the specified purpose on at least one of the previous seven days))	Local Area Analysis of SHS data	As means of transport	47.0		47.9		56.0		61.0		57.0					
			Leisure/Keep fit	63.0		55.5		57.7		56.0		60.1			Next data available in 2017; question asked biennially	2014 data added, and by LA data for functional and leisure walking in the last 7 days	2012 data added - biennial question
IO08	Number of cancelled health appointments	NHS Scotland DNA stats. http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/scotPerforms/partnerstories/NHSScotlandperformance/DNArates	Highland (Highland & Argyll & Bute)	7.2	7.6	7.7	7.6	7.0	6.7	6.3	6.4	6.2			Has not been published since 31/03/14 for the quarter ending Dec 14	More Recent data not being added by ISD as of yet	Full data over time series added from ISD National Statistics Release - September 14
			Western Isles	8.6	8.0	9.1	7.4	7.7	7.6	8.5	7.0	6.2					
			Orkney	5.5	6.0	4.9	4.4	3.3	3.7	3.5	4.2	6.3					
			Grampian (Moray, Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire)	7.6	8.2	8.7	7.8	8.0	8.5	8.3	7.2	6.5					

Output Code	Scope	GVA Accomodation at basic prices	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010										
IO01	Argyll & Bute	Argyll & Bute - Inveraray Castle	×	×	58,959	73,670	×										
	Eilean Siar	Highland - Eilean Donan Castle	271,414	283,751	270,822	314,636	314,199										
	Highland	Johnston's Cashmere Visitor Centre, Elgin	×	×	194,052	202,200											
	Moray	Highland - Rothiemurchus Estate	×	110,834	249,000	274,602	359,000										
	Orkney Islands	Eilean Siar - An Lantair, Stornoway	179,559	186,772	191,873	201,005	218,344										
		Orkney - St Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall	23,186	76,847	120,909	120,193	117,490										
IO02	Inverness	0.919	-14%	97%													
	Kirkwall	0.877															
	Stornoway	0.894	-12%	93%													
	Fort William	0.907	-13%	100%													
	Ullapool	0.925	-16%	97%													
	Oban	0.921	-16%	98%													
	Portree	0.921	-16%	96%													
IO04	Orkney Islands	Argyll & Bute	Eilean Siar	Highland	Moray	Orkney	Argyll & Bute	Eilean Siar	Highland	Moray	Orkney	Argyll & Bute	Eilean Siar	Highland	Moray	Orkney	
IO05	Car	*	77.6	65.3	59	59.5	58.9	78.3	68.3	65.7	62.5	64	72	67	76	60	1.087
	PT	*	4.7	5.9	10	8.4	6.9	6	*	6.2	6.2	8.1	7.4	7.3	6.2	6.1	
	Walk/Cycle	*	12	25.8	22.7	17.5	23.3	*	22.8	18.6	*	22	14.6	23.3	13.1	22.3	
IO06	Car	32.6	16.1	20.1	14.1	*	*	*	31.2	*	*						
	PT	27	63.5	25.7	28.9	*	*	*	22.8	*	*						
	Walk/Cycle	36	16.8	50.2	50.7	*	*	*	44.6	*	*						
IO07	As means of transport	Argyll & Bute	Eilean Siar	Highland	Moray	Orkney	Argyll & Bute	Eilean Siar	Highland	Moray	Orkney						
	Leisure/Keep fit	56.8	38.7	58.7	50.8	80.7	58.1	57.6	58.8	61.8	64.4						

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- 2016 Adjusted data
- 2016 New data added

HITRANS MONITORING FRAMEWORK - TRANSPORT INDICATORS

Indicator Code	Indicator description	Source	Scope	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014 AA	2014 Google	2015	2015 AA	2016	2016 Comments	2015 Comments	2014 Comments	2013 Comments	2012 Comments	Comments		
TI01	Average car journey times	Google Map	Fort William - Glasgow		2:30		2:32	2:28	2:29	2:35	2:49	2:46	2:31	2:29	10%							
			Fort William - Inverness		1:26		1:27	1:27	1:27	1:28	1:40	1:45	1:40	1:39	6%							
			Inverness - Perth		2:35		2:36	2:34	2:33	2:41	2:17	2:20	2:18	2:15	4%							
			Inverness - Elgin		0:56		0:56	0:56	0:56	0:56	1:02	1:00	1:00	1:00	0%							
			Elgin - Aberdeen		1:32		1:32	1:32	1:34	1:34	1:45	1:40	1:39	1:33	7%							
			Campbeltown-Tarbet (A83/A82 Junction)		2:12		2:12	2:12	2:12	2:12	2:17	2:20	2:15	2:16	3%							
			Inverness - Thurso		2:26		2:26	2:26	2:26	2:27	2:19	2:30	2:22	2:18	8%							
			Inverness - Wick		2:16		2:17	2:17	2:17	2:18	2:14	2:20	2:16	2:12	6%							
			Oban - Tyndrum (A85/A82 junction)		0:49		0:49	0:49	0:49	0:49	0:55	1:00	0:57	0:57	5%							
			Elgin - Perth (via A95)		3:14		3:09	3:08	3:07	3:12	2:51	2:50	2:49	2:51	-1%							
			A82 on outskirts of Inverness transferring to A9 (Lochend to Daviot)		0:21			0:22	0:22	0:20	0:25	0:22	0:23	0:24	-9%							
			Portree - Glasgow						4:55	5:01	5:01	5:00	5:01	4:59	0%							
TI02	Journey time reliability	Difference in AM Peak and Inter-peak journey times from Transportdirect.info	Fort William - Glasgow		4%		2%	3%	1%		11%	3%							This is a comparison from Transport direct. I suspect that given the difference with 2009, the comparison might have been with the AA journey planner for one or both of the AM peak or inter-peak				
			Fort William - Inverness		8%		3%	3%	3%		9%	-9%			3%							
			Inverness - Perth		5%		2%	4%	0%		11%	0%										
			Inverness - Elgin		12%		4%	5%	5%		11%	0%										
			Elgin - Aberdeen		8%		4%	4%	4%		16%	0%										
			Campbeltown-Tarbet (A83/A82 Junction)		5%		3%	3%	1%		11%	0%										
			Inverness - Thurso		5%		2%	-2%	-2%		9%	0%										
			Inverness - Wick		6%		2%	-2%	-1%		10%	0%										
			Oban - Tyndrum (A85/A82 junction)		11%		5%	2%	5%		7%	0%										
			Elgin - Perth (via A95)		4%		1%	3%	-1%		10%	0%										
			A82 on outskirts of Inverness transferring to A9 (Lochend to Daviot)		13%		5%	5%	5%		12%	0%				The 2015 data added from google plus range of road journey times for each route		Updated. Added Potree - Glasgow as a route to monitor - as it has the longest land-based journey time between local centre and the nearest main centre	Difference in AM Peak and Inter-peak from transportdirect.info. Difference between car and PT compares AA (car) and transportdirect (PT). The AA car times appear more realistic from experience.				
			Portree - Glasgow						-6%		8%	3%										
TI03	Average public transport journey times	Transportdirect.info	Fort William - Glasgow		3:05		3:02	3:02	3:05		3:04	3:15		3:07						coach		
			Fort William - Inverness		2:00		1:46	1:55	1:50		1:46	1:56		1:54						coach		
			Inverness - Perth		2:15		2:15	2:04	2:52		2:12	2:00		2:10						train		
			Inverness - Elgin		0:50		0:44	0:47	0:39		0:40	0:42		0:43						train		
			Elgin - Aberdeen		1:31		1:31	1:29	1:30		1:34	1:38		1:27						train		
			Campbeltown-Tarbet (A83/A82 Junction)		2:59		3:02	3:02	3:11		3:05	3:09		3:07						coach		
			Inverness - Thurso		3:20		2:59	2:59	3:45		3:52	3:45		3:40						coach		
			Inverness - Wick		2:45		2:55	2:57	4:17		3:30	3:20		3:02						coach		
			Oban - Tyndrum (A85/A82 junction)		0:54		1:03	1:04	1:03		1:02	1:02		1:12						train		
			Elgin - Perth (via A95)		3:04		3:19	3:29	3:22		3:15	3:20		3:20						train		
			A82 on outskirts of Inverness transferring to A9 (Lochend to Daviot)		0:49		0:49	1:03	0:43		0:44	0:51		0:52						bus		
			Portree - Glasgow						6:49		6:49	6:55		7:00								
TI04	Competitiveness of non-car/truck modes	Difference in journey time between Car and PT from transportdirect. info	Fort William - Glasgow		23%		20%	23%	24%		8%	26%		26%	longer							
			Fort William - Inverness		40%		22%	32%	**26%**		**6%**	**10%**		**15%**	**longer**							
			Inverness - Perth		-13%		-13%	-19%	12%		-4%	-14%		-4%	quicker							
			Inverness - Elgin		-11%		-21%	-16%	**-30%**		**-55%**	**-30%**		**-28%**	**quicker**							
			Elgin - Aberdeen		-1%		-1%	-3%	**-4%**		-12%	**-2%**		**-6%**	**quicker**							
			Campbeltown-Tarbet (A83/A82 Junction)		36%		38%	38%	45%		26%	35%		38%	longer							
			Inverness - Thurso		37%		23%	22%	54%		40%	50%		60%	longer							
			Inverness - Wick		21%		28%	29%	88%		36%	43%		38%	longer							
			Oban - Tyndrum (A85/A82 junction)		10%		29%	31%	**29%**		**11%**	**3%**		**26%**	**longer**							
			Elgin - Perth (via A95)		-5%		5%	11%	**8%**		**2%**	**18%**		**12%**	**longer**							
			A82 on outskirts of Inverness transferring to A9 (Lochend to Daviot)		133%			185%	**95%**		**76%**	**132%**		**117%**	**longer**							
			Portree - Glasgow						39%		26%	38%		40%	longer							
TI05	Cost of transport freight	Diesel average price: www.petrolprices.com	Inverness		110.8		141.4	138.9	139.7	128.9		108.8		120.8		2015 data added		As at 06/09/13				
			Kirkwall		118.9		150.9	149.8	149.9	131.9		114.9		125.5								
			Stornoway		121.7		153.9	152.9	144.9	130.9		114.4		26.2								
			Fort William		111.4		142.4	144.7	144.9	130.9		111.4		123.7								
			Ullapool		117.9		149.9	152.9	149.9	136.9		114.9		124.9								
			Oban		111.7		142.9	146.2	144.9	131.9		109.9		122.4								
			Portree		115.4		148.4	145.9	143.9	131.9		110.9		120.9								
TI06	Accessibility of key employment/ service centres by public or community transport	SIMD accessibility figures - % popn within 30 mins of key service centre by public transport	Argyll & Bute		68%			75						77.0	3%	SIMD 2016 will be the next release; local authorities have been invited to input	More details on next SIMD to be released soon	Updated	No updated SIMD data available beyond 2009. Expected in late 2012.	Data resourced and checked, but no new data will be available until November 2012		
			Eilean Siar		46%			39						69.0	77%							
			Highland		66%			68						82.8	22%							
			Moray		73%			77						85.6	11%							
			Orkney Islands		47%			56						60.0	7%							
			HITRANS		**66%**			**69**						80.5	17%							
TI07	% of active travel trips to work % of active travel trips to work	Local Area Analysis of SHS data	**HITRANS**	**20.7**		**19.9**		**24.4**	21.5			23.1	**1.60**			2015 data				See footnote below		
		Local Area Analysis of SHS data	Argyll & Bute	21.4		17.6		*	23.3			28.4	**5.10**		2015 Data added from Transport and Travel in Scotland 2015 - SHS LA results		2012/13 data added 2012/13 data added	Updated	Added by LA active travel to work in order to assist comarison over time. Data taken from Local Area Analysis of SHS data, which also includes RTP fields.			
			Eilean Siar	16.3		8.2		12	*			7.1	**-4.90**									
			Highland	20.5		20.3		25.8	22.8			25.1	**2.30**									
			Moray	19.2		19.7		22.7	18.6			18.3	**-0.30**									
			Orkney Islands	21.7		25.9		17.5	*			23.0	**5.50**									
TI08	Access to health facilities: journey times by all modes	SIMD accessibility figures - % popn within 30 mins of a GP by public transport	Argyll & Bute		80%			81						91	10	SIMD 2016 will be the next release; local authorities have been invited to input	More details on next SIMD to be released soon	Updated	No updated SIMD data available beyond 2009. Expected in late 2012.	Data resourced and checked, but no new data will be available until November 2012		
			Eilean Siar		63%			58						85	27							
			Highland		73%			76						90	14							
			Moray		85%			86						97	11							
			Orkney Islands		54%			63						96	33							
			HITRANS		**75%**			**77**						**92**	15							

Datazones in the 15% most access deprived by LA	2004	2006	2009	2012
Argyll & Bute	37.7	42.60	56.6	43.4
Eilean Siar	80.6	75.00	86.1	83.3
Highland	43.2	44.90	43.5	41.8
Moray	24.1	27.60	27.6	27.6
Orkney Islands	63.0	59.30	66.7	59.3

KEY

- Adjusted existing data
- New data added
- 2013 Adjusted data
- 2013 New data added
- Other data also abstracted to compliment
- 2014 Adjusted data
- 2014 New data added
- 2015 Adjusted data
- 2015 New data added
- 2016 Adjusted data
- 2016 New data added

*When collating most recent data, an equivalent value to the data presented in 2007 was not available. The 2007 value has been replaced with the comparable value from the dataset used for the 2010 data to allow a direct comparison to be made

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