

Report to Partnership Meeting 5 February 2016

EUROPEAN PROJECTS

SPARA 2020 Project Report

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update Members on the progress made in developing the SPARA 2020 INTERREG IVB Northern Periphery Programme project that has secured funding from the Northern Periphery and Arctic Area INTERREG Programme with HITRANS as Lead Partner.

BACKGROUND



Smart Peripheral and Remote Airports 2020 (SPARA 2020) 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 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.



Northern Periphery and
Arctic Programme
2014-2020



EUROPEAN UNION

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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.

HITRANS is the lead partner. 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 in Australia are the other project partners.

BUDGET AND WORKSTREAMS

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 <i>Timrå</i> 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 Highlands and Islands area will benefit significantly as all the Scottish activity in the project will have a focus in the region.

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 Karlstad Airport in Sweden. HITRANS Officers have held a number of useful meetings as part of the scoping work on the individual pilot projects that we will deliver in our area. These meetings have been with Orkney Islands Council, HIAL, Energy Savings Trust and Transport Scotland.

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 location selected for these activities are Ireland West (Knock), Donegal, Inverness and Oban. HITRANS have been working with North West Regional Assembly (who are leading this work package) on the development of a consultancy commission related to this work package. We have also held discussions with HIAL and Argyll and Bute Council on where this could focus at each airport.

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.

Donegal Conference

The SPARA 2020 Project Partners held their second meeting at Donegal Airport on 5th and 6th November 2015. Holding the meeting at Donegal Airport allowed Partners to see first-hand airport operations and meet key airport management. The conference consisted of one full day meeting followed by a half day meeting with each Work Package lead presenting on progress to-date. Partners were pleased to welcome Anne Bonner, Pauline Sweeney and Eilidh Barrett from Donegal Airport to their meeting who provided an overview of the Airport's history, current statistics and future plans.

The next project meeting is scheduled to take place in May 2016 in Sundsvall, Sweden.

Progress Update

A conference call was held in December 2015 to discuss progress with Partners. HITRANS is working closely with partner councils, in particular Orkney, holding meetings with HIAL and EST regarding the development of EV infrastructure such as plug-in electric vehicles, linking with a wider low carbon strategy for Highlands & Islands.

The project website <http://spara2020.eu/> received a soft launch on Monday 2nd November 2015.

The electronic monitoring system (eMS) used for SPARA reporting is now live. Partners can access the system to collect and store all necessary project and programme information and communicate with beneficiaries electronically via a secure online communication portal.

The following dates have been suggested for future meetings:

- May 17th / 18th 2016 – Sundsvall, Sweden – Partner Meeting / Conference
- Nov 15th / 16th 2016 – Molde, Norway – Partner Meeting
- May 16th / 17th 2017 – Ireland – Partner Meeting / Conference
- Nov 14th / 15th 2017 – Trafikverket – Partner Meeting
- May 15th / 16th 2018 – UHI Inverness (Final Partner Meeting / Conference)

Recommendation

Members are asked to:-

1. Note the report.

Risk	Impact	Comment
RTS delivery	√	This work supports RTS objectives.
Policy	√	This work is designed to support delivery of our Aviation policy.
Financial	√	HITRANS share of SPARA 2020 project costs in 2015/16 and 2016/17 is included within the Business Plan. This project will attract ERDF funds at an attractive intervention rate.
Equality	-	No impact on Equalities issues.

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Date: 26th January 2016