

# **Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010**

## **Sustainable Economic Growth Statement**

### **HITRANS 2012/13**

#### **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 2011 updated its Economic Strategy as originally published in November 2007. This sets out the Government's clear priority to accelerate economic recovery, with a range of measures to tackle unemployment and promote employability. The Strategy focusses action on six Strategic priorities which will drive sustainable economic growth and develop a more resilient and adaptable economy. The priorities are supportive business environment, transition to a low carbon economy, leaning skills and wellbeing, infrastructure development and place, effective Government, and Equality. Transport is recognised within the Strategy as one of the key enablers for enhancing productivity and delivering faster, more sustainable, economic growth.

A Purpose Framework has been developed as part of the National Performance Framework and between them they provide a clear focus and direction for the whole of the public sector in Scotland. All public bodies are expected to align their activity in support of the Purpose, Purpose Targets and the National Outcomes set out in the Framework, and HITRANS Transport Strategy is linked through our monitoring framework with delivery of the Government's priorities.

#### **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.

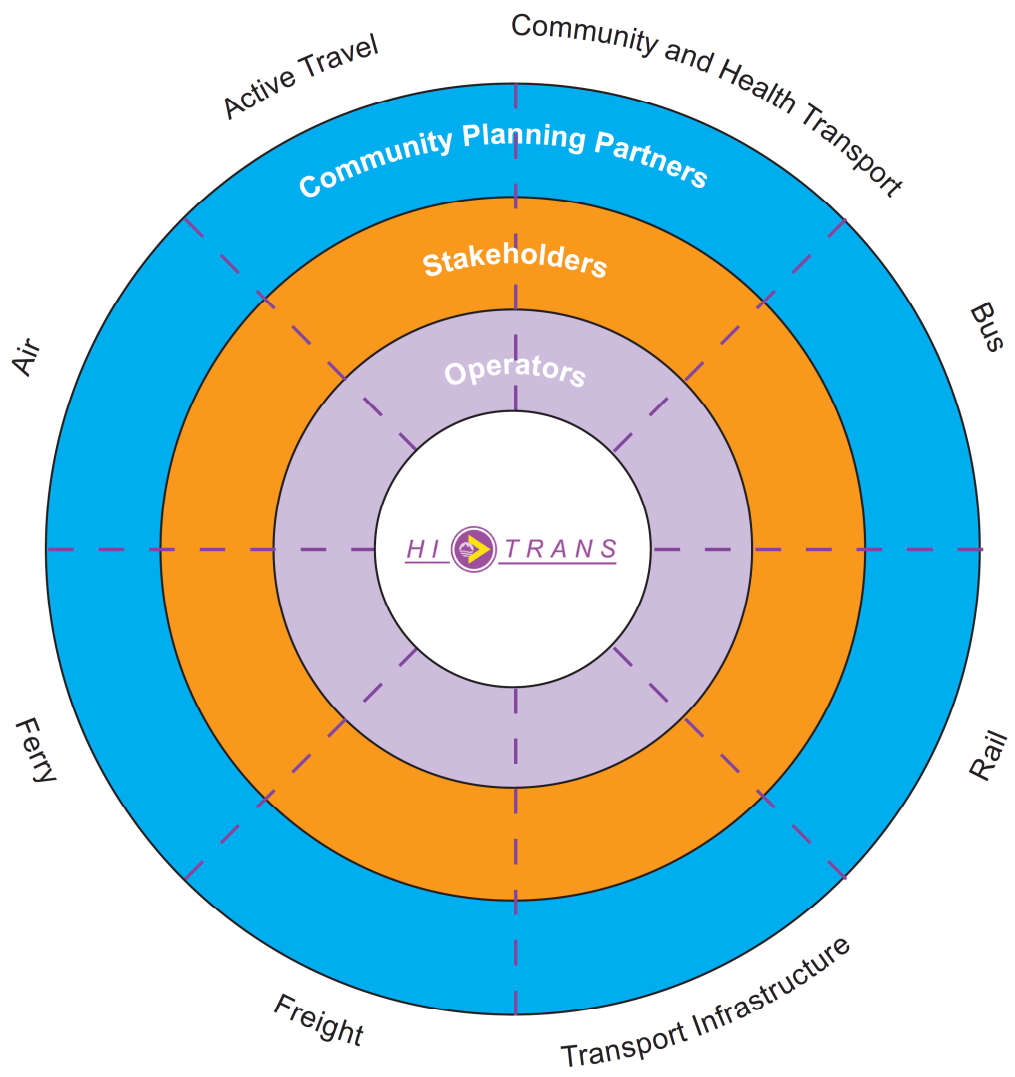
The partnership has identified eight areas in which it would aim to work towards improving services. These are listed in the table below:

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.



## What has been achieved in 2012/13?

- 1 Transport access to health and social care facilities and appointments is an area where we are striving to find better ways of working. HITRANS has worked with our partner Councils in Highland and Moray to develop two partnership projects. The NHS Grampian Travel Information Hub was launched in 2012/13 and covers the Moray area. This service gives patients support in planning public transport travel to appointments. The Lochaber Integrated Transport Provision Project is developing a partnership involving NHS Highland, Highland Council, the Scottish Ambulance Service for a transport coordination service that will deliver travel information and a booking service for access to appointments in the Lochaber area. Both projects are designed to deliver efficiencies in patient travel services.
- 2 HITRANS has worked with Government and Network Rail to ensure that the Rail Utilisation Strategy takes into account the needs of the Highlands in developing our railway. We have helped develop project priorities and secured some very positive commitments from Government and Transport Scotland.
- 3 HITRANS supported a useful exercise with the Outer Hebrides Tourist Industry Association that captured data on booking availability on Caledonian MacBrayne ferry services to the Western Isles. The purpose of this work was to survey deck space usage on major west coast routes during peak periods to identify when tourist traffic could be lost due to capacity constraints.
- 4 HITRANS has worked with Transport Scotland and ScotRail to support the introduction of improved rail services across the region including helping to develop a step change in service levels between Oban and Glasgow.
- 5 HITRANS has developed a strong case for the need for the region to be better connected to London. This formed the basis of our input to the Department for Transport's Aviation Policy Framework and has been a central plank in our submissions to the Airports Commission set under the chairmanship of Sir Howard Davies. International markets are particularly important to the Highlands and Islands as we have a strong outward facing economy that is built on the Energy sector, high quality food and drink industry, life sciences and tourism. Our economy needs good connections to international markets and Aviation is the key mode that connects the region to these markets.
- 6 HITRANS has been working with the Scottish Government on developing proposals for improvements on the Aberdeen to Inverness and the Highland Main Line Railways.
- 7 HITRANS has continued our support of the daily air service between Inverness and Amsterdam. This service provides the north of Scotland business community with much needed access to an international air hub and also gives a good option for inward travel to the region for tourism and business. The route is now available for codeshare bookings through the KLM / Air France booking system after this important agreement was reached between the route's operator FlyBe and KLM. The service adds to the attractiveness of the Highlands and Islands for inward investment.
- 8 In working to improve the reliability of road based transport, critical to business development, within the area, we have funded the installation of live eye cameras on a number of regional routes not currently covered by the Traffic Scotland network. We expect these to be particularly useful for road users in the winter to help journey planning decision making.
- 9 We have continued our partnership with West Coast Motors / Scottish Citylink and Argyll & Bute Council on the bus route development scheme on the Campbeltown to Glasgow coach service. This initiative has provided major improvements to one of the most remote UK mainland communities, increasing its attractiveness as a centre for investment.
- 10 In partnership with the Scottish Government, The Highland Council and Network Rail we

have funded the reopening of Conon Bridge station to increase the opportunity for sustainable commuting into Inverness. This project was completed in time to act as an important part of the mitigation of traffic disruption during the Kessock Bridge resurfacing works.

- 11 HITRANS supported a useful exercise with the Outer Hebrides Tourist Industry Association that captured data on booking availability on Caledonian MacBrayne ferry services to the Western Isles. The purpose of this work was to survey deck space usage on major west coast routes during peak periods to identify when tourist traffic could be lost due to capacity constraints.
- 12 The Upsticks study set out to determine the origin and destination of raw timber in the Highland area and thus provide a clear view of the use of the public road network and the deployment of the timber transport fleet. This will be useful in planning and managing such movements and will give local authorities a clearer picture of the demands on their road infrastructure.
- 13 In partnership with other European regional partnerships we have been working on the following projects in 2012/13 that are focussed on improving the economic sustainability of the regions involved.
  - The TransTourism Project is funded through the Interreg IVB Northern Periphery Programme. The project is developing a web based interactive travel tool kit which will encourage visitors to come to and travel within the Highlands and Islands using sustainable travel modes.
  - The START Project is funded through the Interreg IVB Atlantic Area Programme. The project has facilitated improvements to public transport access to and from our major transport hubs and improved the availability of real time information to passengers on a number of modes.
  - Working with The Highland Council the Active Travel Highland Project supported by the Highlands and Islands ERDF Programme is improving active travel infrastructure to help continue the increased mode share of walking and cycling within the region. This project uses the output from our Active Travel Audits as core data in identifying and prioritising need.
  - Lifting the Spirit is the title we have given our project being delivered with funding from the Food Port Project. Food Port is funded through the Interreg IVB North Sea Area Programme. Around 85% of all Scotch malt whisky is produced at the 77 malt distilleries which lie in the HITRANS area. The industry contributes £2.7bn of 'Gross Value Added'. Lifting the Spirit will see whisky product moved from Elgin to Central Scotland by rail rather than road. We are leading the project in partnership with Moray Council, HIE, the Scotch Whisky Association and Distillers.
- 14 We have worked closely with the other Regional Transport Partnerships to produce joint responses on a range of consultations and working documents covering Aviation, High Speed Rail, Rail Franchising and Active Travel.
- 15 Through the RTP Chairs forum we have worked to forge close links across the public sector particularly with CoSLA and Transport Scotland.

