

PE1610/H and PE1657/G

Scottish Government submission of 11 December 2017

Thank you for your points of clarification following my appearance at the Committee on the 23 November. I have outlined below details of the responses to each of the four clarifications raised by the Committee.

In respect of the first clarification requested on the economic profile of Dumfries and Galloway, details on business start-up rates, business survival rates, employment rates and migration patterns. This information is currently being compiled and will be issued as soon as possible.

In terms of the second clarification, regarding a 50 mph speed limit pilot for HGVs on the A77, whilst the Scottish Government wishes to see reliable and competitive journey times for all road users, including the freight haulage industry, achieving this has to be balanced against the safety and operational performance of the road network. Recent studies have identified a correlation between HGV speeds and the level of injury accidents taking place on this route, with a higher percentage of HGVs being involved in collisions compared to the national average.

There are no current plans to increase the HGV speed limit on the A77, or any other trunk road, as it is believed that there is insufficient evidence in this area to justify a change. A 50 mph HGV pilot is on-going on single-carriageway sections of the A9; however, this is due to the specific circumstances on that particular route. The trial will be evaluated after a three-year period, with any relevant lessons considered.

In response to the Committee's third request with regards to information on the road collaboration project, the Scottish Government is committed to working with local government to help to improve the condition and safety of all roads. This is undertaken through the Road Collaboration Programme (RCP) which is funded between national and local government. This programme demonstrates the Scottish Government's commitment to ensuring integrated service provision and providing efficient public services against a backdrop of reducing public sector budgets.

Following the outcome of the National Road Maintenance Review, a Road Collaboration Programme was set up specifically to take forward the "Option 30" collaboration and service sharing initiative. The Board is chaired by Colin Mair of the Improvement Service with representatives from Transport Scotland, the Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS representing local road authorities), the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SoLACE) and CoSLA making up the Board. This initiative is co-funded by all 33 road authorities and is expected to be utilised by all road authorities to support work around shared services. The RCP is currently supporting five cluster groups, these regional partnerships are outlined in **Annex A**.

Finally, with respect to the last clarification, on timescales for the South West Transport Study. Transport Scotland is currently procuring consultants with appointment expected in early 2018 and with the study expected to report in Autumn / Winter 2018. The emerging outcomes from the Study will inform the second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) which will report later in this

parliamentary session as it must take cognisance of the strategic outcomes from the new National Transport Strategy (NTS).

I trust this is of assistance.

Annex A – Road Collaboration Programme Regional Partnerships

Region	Participating Councils
Northern Roads Collaboration Forum	Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Moray, Highland, Orkney, Western Isles, Argyll and Bute, Angus
Edinburgh, Lothians, Borders and Fife Forum	Edinburgh City, East Lothian, Midlothian, West Lothian, Fife and Scottish Borders
Clyde Valley Roads Alliance	East Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire, Glasgow City, Inverclyde, North Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, South Lanarkshire, West Dunbartonshire
Tayside Roads Collaboration Board	Angus, Dundee City, Perth and Kinross,
South West Exploratory Group	Dumfries and Galloway, East Ayrshire, South Ayrshire, North Ayrshire