

North South Ministerial Council
Joint Secretariat



An Chomhairle Aireachta
Thuaidh Theas
An Chomhrúnaíocht

PAPER NSMC TRAN 1 (15) JC

NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

TRANSPORT MEETING

**NSMC JOINT SECRETARIAT OFFICES,
ARMAGH**

22 APRIL 2015

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

1. A North South Ministerial Council Transport meeting was held in the NSMC Joint Secretariat offices, Armagh on 22 April 2015. The meeting was attended by Mark H Durkan MLA, Minister of the Environment, Danny Kennedy MLA, Minister for Regional Development and Paschal Donohoe TD, Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport. Minister Durkan chaired the meeting.

REVIEW OF NORTH SOUTH WORK PROGRAMMES

2. Ministers had a discussion on the review of work programmes for the Transport Sector and noted that an update will be provided to a future meeting.

STRATEGIC TRANSPORT PRIORITIES

3. Ministers welcomed the continued co-operation between the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and the Department for Regional Development on Strategic Transport Priorities and noted the opportunities for cooperation in:-
 - developing the strategic road network;

- enhancing east west and north south connections; and
- driving modal shift to public and more sustainable modes of transport and the potential for shared cross border public transport services in border areas.

EU MATTERS/FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

4. Ministers welcomed the continued co-operation between the Department for Transport, Tourism and Sport and the Department for Regional Development on EU related Transport issues.
5. Ministers noted the opportunity to strengthen the TEN-T application process for each jurisdiction and agree to further exploration by departmental officials to develop Co-operation Statement templates which support project applications to the fund.
6. Ministers also noted the position with regard to the INTERREG programmes including the update on the INTERREG IV funding of the Belfast-Dublin Enterprise Service upgrade and Drogheda viaduct works.

CYCLING/CROSS-BORDER GREENWAYS

7. Ministers welcomed the continued investment by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and the Department for Regional Development on the promotion and development of sustainable transport options, including cycling.
8. They also noted that Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport officials are working with Department for Regional Development officials to scope out potential Greenway projects that may be eligible for INTERREG V funding.
9. The Council noted the update on the work being undertaken by the Northern Ireland Greenways Working Group in terms of the development of cross border Greenways.
10. Ministers recognised the benefits of collaboration in developing Greenway networks.

MAJOR ROAD PROJECTS

A5 Project

11. Ministers noted that public consultation on three reports informing the Appropriate Assessment process concluded in June 2014 and consultation on the fourth and final report concluded in November 2014.
12. The Council noted that work on the new draft Statutory Orders and a new Environmental Statement is now complete and when published, will be subject to public consultation which may lead to a further Public Inquiry.

13. Ministers confirmed that both Governments remain committed to the A5 scheme.

A8 Project

14. Ministers welcomed that construction work on the A8 project is progressing well and the road is expected to open to traffic by the end of May 2015.

MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF PENALTY POINTS

15. Ministers noted the good progress made by joint Steering and Working Groups on the issues identified, some of which are complex and difficult to resolve. Ministers also noted that Working Group will seek legal advice on issues related to equality of treatment, with a view to providing an update on those issues for the November 2015 NSMC meeting.
16. The Council noted that both jurisdictions will continue to carry forward work regarding the acceptance of postal summons by the courts, with a view to providing a report to the November 2015 NSMC meeting.

ROAD USER AND VEHICLE SAFETY

17. Ministers welcomed the continued sharing of knowledge and experience between officials from both jurisdictions on the delivery of road safety measures.
18. The Council noted progress on development of Ireland's Road Traffic Bill 2015 which will include measures to address drug-driving and proposals to make a number of amendments to legislation regarding penalty points, written-off vehicles, and the mutual recognition of driver disqualifications between Ireland and the UK.
19. They also noted progress on Northern Ireland's Road Traffic (Amendment) Bill which will include provisions to tackle drink driving and to reform the learner and restricted driver regime, introduce Graduated Driver Licensing and mandatory wearing of helmets when riding a quad bike on public roads.
20. Ministers noted the continuing co-operation to target a wide range of illegal activity within the goods haulage and passenger transport industries, including continuing liaison on successful cross border enforcement operations planned for 2015 in both jurisdictions.
21. Ministers welcomed the continued exchange between enforcement officers on use of new technology to enforce tachograph and drivers' hours regulations.
22. The introduction by Ireland was noted of a new speed limit sign for minor local roads and the publication of updated Speed Limit Guidelines.

23. Ministers noted the continuing engagement by officials on cross-border taxi and wedding car operations.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

24. The Council agreed to hold its next NSMC Transport meeting in November 2015.

**Joint Secretariat
22 April 2015**

Website www.northsouthministerialcouncil.org