



**Campaigning by the
Railway Development Society Ltd**

Department for Transport – Zone 2/14
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please reply to:

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For the attention of Fran McMahon

itblockconsult@dft.gsi.gov.uk

chris.page@railfuture.org.uk

5th March 2013

Consultation on Integrated Transport Block Funding

Dear Sir,

We are pleased to submit this consolidated national response on behalf of **railfuture**, which has been prepared by the Policy Group, with contributions from individual members. The document has been reviewed and approved by the Group.

Railfuture is a national voluntary organisation structured in England as twelve regional branches, and two national branches in Wales and Scotland.

We support the aim of promoting transport integration, and in particular easy transfer and connection between transport modes.

If you require any more detail or clarification please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours faithfully

Chris Page

Chris Page
Railfuture
Policy Group

www.railfuture.org.uk www.railfuturescotland.org.uk www.railfuturewales.org.uk
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Response to Consultation on Integrated Transport Block Funding.

Name of authority: Railfuture
Contact details in case of queries: chris.page@railfuture.org.uk

Q1. Do you have any objections to the principle of updating the formula to reflect current transport priorities?

No – the formula should be based on current and future needs with the aim of promoting integrated transport, and in particular easy transfer and connection between transport modes.

Q2. Do you think IT Block funding should continue to be based solely on need?

IT Block funding should be based primarily on need, with an incentive based on progress toward the objective of integrated transport.

Q3. Do you have any comments on the proposed new formula to eliminate perverse incentives?

Increasing casualties, congestion, air quality generally reflect increasing economic activity, therefore a formula based partially on improvement in these measures is likely to give more funding to deprived areas in addition to areas that are progressing toward the objective of integrated transport, so we support this approach.

Q4. Do you have any suggestions for trend data for any of the elements of the current formula?

No comments.

Q5. Do you have any views on the proposed balance (75%:25%) between 'need' and 'improvement'?

The 75%-25% split between need and improvement seems to be about right.

Q6. Do you have any further comments on Option 1?

No comments.

Q7. Should carbon be part of the IT Block formula?

Carbon emissions should be included in the formula. Road traffic levels have fallen generally since 2008, so a general fall in carbon would be expected. Schemes aimed at reducing the need to travel through the progressive elimination of car dependent developments should qualify for IT Block funding.

Q8. Do you have any comments on the suggested data set for adding a carbon element to the formula? Are there further alternatives you would like to suggest?

Deprived areas will have a higher proportion of older vehicles with higher carbon emissions. The use of national information for vehicle emissions means that this measure would not accurately reflect actual carbon emissions in each area. The measure should also take into account average vehicle age in each area.

Q9. Should economic growth be part of the IT Block formula?

Integrated transport is a key enabler for economic growth, so more funding should be given to areas with lower economic growth. Therefore economic growth should be part of the formula, but in inverse ratio.

Q10. Do you have any comments on the use of employee earnings for measuring economic growth? Are there further alternatives you would like to suggest?

People often have to travel from deprived to economically successful areas for work. Therefore if earnings are used as a measure, they should be calculated on the basis of where people live (ie household income) not where they work. Alternatively, unemployment levels at a local level could be used as a measure of economic success.

Q11. Do you have any further comments on Option 2?

No comments.

Q12. Do you have any comments on Option 3?

We support option 3 with the inclusion of the comments made above.

Q13. Do you have any suggestions for how walking and cycling data might be included in the funding formula?

We support the inclusion of this measure and suggest that the data set mentioned be used until a more definitive data set becomes available.

Q14. Do you think the Department should base weightings on current transport priorities, rather than historic spend patterns?

Weightings should be based on current and future needs rather than historic spend patterns.

Q15. Which elements in the formula should be given the heaviest weighting?

Ideally the formula would be based on the ease of interchange between modes of transport, but since this cannot be measured easily, public transport and congestion should be given the heaviest weighting.

Q16. The Department is not considering changes to the data sets used for four elements of the existing formula: Objective One Areas, public transport, accessibility and air quality. Do you agree with this approach?

'Public transport' should also include journeys on local heavy rail services (not just light rail) and station interchange facilities. Data should be available from ORR.

Q17. Do you have any comments on the two alternatives for the road safety element of the formula? Are there further alternatives you would like to suggest?

The road safety element of the formula should be based 75% on needs and 25% on improvement.

Q18. Do you see any problems with the current measure for congestion? Do you have any comments on the suggested alternative? Are there further alternatives you would like to suggest?

The current population based measure is not necessarily a valid proxy for congestion. Therefore the alternative measure of average journey times on local A roads should be used, as this is a direct measure of congestion.

Q19. The Government is keen for local authorities to provide more transparency around spending on small transport projects. Do you have any views on how this might be achieved?

Local authorities should be required to publish on their own websites a description of each scheme they have implemented with the funding, the cost and an explanation of why each scheme was chosen. Residents would then be able to form their own views on whether the schemes were value for money and whether the authority was allocating the funding appropriately.

Q20. Do you have any other issues that you would like to raise about the calculation or distribution of the IT Block Funding?

It is not clear how this grant promotes transport integration, ie ease of interchange between transport modes. We are concerned that cuts in funding for local bus services, have caused many services to be lost, reducing transport integration and contributing to deprivation.