



Consultation response

To: Policy Statement on Regional Strategies and
Guidance on the establishment of Leaders' Boards:
Consultation

Date: 30 October 2009

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Introduction

pteg represents the six English Passenger Transport Executives which between them serve eleven million people in Tyne and Wear ('Nexus'), West Yorkshire ('Metro'), South Yorkshire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside ('Merseytravel') and the West Midlands ('Centro'). Transport for London, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport and Nottingham City Council are associate members. However this response is on behalf of the six PTEs only.

Britain's PTEs are the driving force behind the development of public transport in some of Britain's largest City Regions. Their responsibilities include:

- producing the city region Local Transport Plan
- planning and managing local rail services (in partnership with DfT)
- planning and funding socially necessary bus routes
- working in partnership with private operators to improve bus services—for example through bus priority schemes
- running concessionary travel schemes—including those for older, disabled and young people
- investing in local public transport networks—including new rail and bus stations
- developing and promoting new public transport schemes—like light rail and guided bus networks
- providing impartial and comprehensive public transport information services—including by phone and internet
- managing and maintaining bus interchanges, bus stops and shelters

The PTEs have a combined budget of more than a billion pounds a year, and are funded by a combination of local council tax and grants from national government. They are responsible to Integrated Transport Authorities (ITAs), made up of representatives of local councils in the areas they serve.

Summary

The 'Regional Strategies and Guidance on the establishment of Leaders' Boards' consultation paper highlights three particular issues which are of relevance for **pteg**. These issues relate to the proposed strengthening of the sub regional approach to developing, structuring of the content, and implementation of Regional Strategies.

The issues are:

1. Passenger Transport Executives (PTEs) / Integrated Transport Authorities (ITAs) should be engaged and consulted in relation to the identification of the sub-regions on which relevant sections of the Regional Strategies will be based, and the development of relevant policies within the Regional Strategies.
2. The consultation paper does not set out explicitly how transport policy within the Regional Strategy will be implemented at the sub regional level. At the local level Local Transport Plans (LTPs) are identified as the mechanism to deliver transport priorities. It is therefore appropriate for implementation at the sub regional level to be considered. The strategies and programmes developed by PTEs and ITAs should be highlighted as a mechanism for implementing transport policy at the sub-regional level.

3. Annex 2 of the consultation paper sets out the agencies that will be Statutory Consultees on the Regional Strategy. PTEs / ITAs are not identified as Statutory Consultees. We would like to see PTEs and ITAs identified as Statutory Consultees given the objective of the Regional Strategies, to bring together planning and transport policy. It is important to link Regional Strategies with the work of ITAs given the increased devolved powers delivered through the Local Transport Act 2008.

Response to Specific Consultation Questions

1.3 Do you agree with the sub regional approach at paragraph 3.6. If not, what do you think needs to be improved?

We support the emphasis placed on identification of the sub regions through close stakeholder engagement. The consultation document identifies a range of bodies and programmes that should be taken into consideration when identifying sub regions. These include city regions, growth areas, Multi Area Agreements (MAAs) and Economic Prosperity Boards (EPBs). However Passenger Transport Executives (PTEs) and Integrated Transport Authorities (ITAs) are not included on the list, even though travel to work patterns are identified as an important factor in defining sub regions. There is widespread acceptance throughout Government Policy that the sub regional level is an appropriate spatial level for decision making to occur. PTEs and ITAs can inform the understanding of sub-regional travel to work patterns and transport networks. This can then feed into the identification of appropriate and workable sub regions that reflect functional relationships.

2.1 Do you have any comments on the proposed scope and detail of the proposed regulations set out at Annex 2?

We would question why PTEs and ITAs have not been included as Statutory Consultees. Section 77 of the Local Transport Act 2008 reinforced the importance of the sub regional level by devolving transport powers to ITAs. It is important that sub regional programmes and strategies being developed by PTEs and ITAs are considered when developing Regional Strategies. PTEs and ITAs have been identified as statutory consultees in the development of National Planning Statements. The role of PTEs and ITAs has therefore been recognised in relation to Infrastructure Planning at the National level and we would deem it appropriate to include PTEs and ITAs as statutory consultees on the development of the Regional Strategies. This would reinforce a joined up approach between both planning and transport, and between the different levels of policy making.