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**SOUTH WEST**  
Regional Assembly

European Commission  
Directorate-General for Energy and Transport  
TEN-T Revision  
Office: DM 247/16  
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For the attention of Martine Genoux-Stawiarski

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27 August 2003

Dear Sirs

**TEN-T – TRANSPORT REVISION**

The South West Regional Assembly is comprised of local authority members, together with representatives of social and economic partners in the South West of England. We welcome the opportunity to comment on the Van Miert report on behalf of the South West of England.

The Assembly's regional transport advisory group has met to debate the Van Miert report and the attached report represents the Officer view from the South West Region.

In the report I have set out the background which explains that the South West sees itself as a peripheral region which has identified the need for good transport links to London and Europe as essential to maintain the future competitiveness of the region. It may well be appropriate to draw closer links between transport infrastructure and the use of Regional Policy funds to address the issue of European Cohesion and inter-regional disparities. In reviewing TEN-T and in particular the funding problems that have been apparent, the wider issues of cohesion policy would seem to be a particular matter for consideration.

We welcome the revision of the TEN-T criteria and the identification of priority issues but would ask you to take account of the region's comments and concerns that are set out in the enclosed papers.

Yours sincerely

*Chris Mitchell*

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# SOUTH WEST REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

## RATOSG

21 AUGUST 2003

### TENs-T CONSULTATION

#### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform the group about the current consultation on the van Miert report and to set out a SW regional response.

#### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the report be forwarded to the EU and DfT as the SW region's response to the van Miert report.

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 The Assembly welcomes the opportunity to respond to the van Miert report on the review of TEN-T.
- 3.2 The Commission's intention to review the TEN-T guidelines in 2003 is an important consideration for the South West which is a region characterised by its peninsula geography and perceived to be peripheral to the main centres of economic activity in the UK and Europe.
- 3.3 The Region has identified peripherality as a crucial issue to be addressed in the Regional Transport Strategy. Transport is also seen by the SWRDA as a key factor affecting the regional economy.
- 3.4 The SWARMMS study highlighted the need for investment in the inter-regional network just to maintain accessibility to the South West, having regard to projections of future traffic growth and the impact of congestion. Without investment the competitiveness of the South West will decline resulting in increasing economic disparities between the Region and the South East and with parts of Europe.
- 3.5 The need for the review is understood and supported given the lack of progress with projects. The challenge of enlargement, all set within a context of increased traffic flows and congestion is acknowledged. The principle of focusing on international links and the cohesion of Europe is supported. The emphasis on finding alternatives to lorry transport for freight is welcome. The innovative approach to using water transport is conceptually strong but needs more work to define how it can be taken forward.
- 3.6 It is interesting to observe that the main trans-European axes may change to East-West with the shifting geography of Europe.
- 3.7 This could place the UK within the main axis and given the relative peripheral position of the South West it is essential that the UK plans effective links to the main corridor from all parts of the UK.



3.8 However the South West Region has concerns that there is an over concentration on problems associated with the candidate countries. /

3.9 The need to successfully tackle issues which have already been identified must not be forgotten. The importance of investment to deal with peripherality of the South West must not be lost. Cornwall has been identified as a peripheral region with Objective 1 status and "joined up" government requires action to enable investment to be completed to provide the conditions to support successful regeneration. Transport investment is seen as a key to unlocking successful regeneration supported by EU investment. /

3.10 The van Miert report confirms the need to identify the main transport axes – the core strategic network. One of the key principles guiding the choice of the main transport axes is the need to take into account peripherality.

#### **4. Detail Comments on Priority Issues**

##### **4.1 SEA Motorways**

4.2 The Assembly supports the concept of sea motorways and the associated development of short sea shipping to facilitate modal shift from road haulage.

4.3 With increasing levels of congestion on the road network there is perceived to be a medium term potential for coastal shipping.

4.4 The Irish Sea and English Channel "motorways" could well be served by South West ports and current policy set out in the SW RTS supports the development of ports to meet the challenge. The policy basis is therefore in place to facilitate the growth of short sea shipping.

4.5 At the current time there is a shortage of information available about the current flows of sea based haulage which is subject to commercial sensitivity. It is also difficult to judge the potential for this concept as national policy is to leave investment decisions to the market.

4.6 It is therefore difficult to see how the Assembly can be directly involved in the issue and how it could be implemented.

##### **5. TEN-T Network – Current Network**

5.1 The SWARMMS study looked at the main East-West corridor from London to the South West.

5.2 This identified the A30 as the main inter-regional route to the far South West. This position has been accepted by the Assembly which is advocating improvements to the route to enhance its role in the Region. The Secretary of State in responding to SWARMMS has accepted the strategic route and the Highways Agency are currently developing proposals for sections of the A30 which will be placed before Ministers this year.



5.3 The TEN-T network should be amended to reflect the fact that the A30 is the main strategic route to the far South West to support Cornwall's status as an objective 1 area.

## **6. Multi-Modal Links Ireland/UK/Continental Europe**

6.1 The links from the Midlands and North of England and Ireland to the continent from the Channel Ports and tunnel are key strategic routes. The priority project is focussed to improve these links.

6.2 It is important that the South West has access to these strategic corridor routes and the need for the South West to feed into them should be recognised. This has implications for how the network is developed including capacity issues along the routes. The position of freight terminals and routes within and around London is crucial. If the main access is to the East of London it is essential that the South West Regional Assembly works with Government and other Assemblies to ensure that the west can be connected into the freight corridor.

6.3 The Assembly also wishes to emphasise that from a strategic point of view it is unwise to focus on a few channel connections in the far South East of the country and that the channel ports in the West should also be recognised.

## **7. Integration of Systems**

7.1 If transport systems are to be integrated across Europe it is essential that issues such as ticketing systems and systems for future road charging are co-ordinated across international boundaries.

7.2 It is also important to recognise that the UK has specific characteristics in terms of its transport network such as our mixed rail system catering for both passenger and freight use. Also all transport connections outside the UK must cross the sea.

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