

North South Ministerial Council
Joint Secretariat



An Chomhairle Aireachta
Thuaidh Theas
An Chomhrúnaíocht

PAPER NSMC TRAN 1 (11) JC

NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

TRANSPORT SECTORAL FORMAT

**NSMC JOINT SECRETARIAT OFFICES,
ARMAGH**

9 FEBRUARY 2011

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

1. The tenth meeting of the North South Ministerial Council in Transport sectoral format was held in the NSMC Joint Secretariat offices, Armagh on 9 February 2011.
2. The meeting was attended by Edwin Poots MLA, Minister of the Environment, Conor Murphy MP MLA, Minister for Regional Development and Pat Carey, Minister for Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs, Transport & Communications, Energy and Natural Resources. Minister Poots chaired the meeting.

CITY OF DERRY AIRPORT

3. Officials from the Department of Regional Development and the Department of Transport are meeting shortly on this matter.

DUBLIN / BELFAST RAIL LINK

4. The Council discussed progress on the Dublin/Belfast rail link. It was noted that since the reconstruction of the viaduct at Malahide, passenger numbers have increased and stabilised. Ministers welcomed the additional stop on the Enterprise Service at Lisburn, which is now operational, and that a new Newry to Dublin early morning direct service arriving at approx. 08.35 hours is provisionally scheduled to commence by the end of March.
5. Senior officials from Iarnród Éireann and Northern Ireland Railways made a presentation to Ministers addressing issues raised in the Enterprise Rail Seminar report. The two companies are planning a number of measures, to be taken forward over the coming eighteen months, which align with suggestions made in the report, including provision of WiFi, a new PA system and improvements in reliability.

MAJOR ROADS PROJECTS

6. The Council discussed progress on the A5 and A8 road projects. Ministers noted that draft Orders and Environmental Statements were published for the A5 project (North West Gateway to Aughnacloy) in November 2010 and the A8 (Belfast to Larne) project in January 2010. A public inquiry is anticipated into the A5 project in May/June 2011. The Council also noted that the Cross Border Steering Group has produced an agreed report and that subject to final approval by NSMC Plenary a further request for drawdown of £11 million will be made.

ROAD SAFETY

7. The Council welcomed the continuing collaboration on road safety strategies and campaigns, work undertaken on the mutual recognition of penalty points, the vehicle keeper data exchange pilot scheme and on harmonising Blood Alcohol Concentration levels in both jurisdictions.
8. Minister discussed co-operation in relation to vehicle standards. They welcomed co-operation between the Driver & Vehicle Agency Enforcement Section, supported by the PSNI, and the Road Safety Authority supported by the Garda Síochána and the continuation of the joint intelligence led targeted operation in border areas for 2011 targeting buses, taxis, modified cars and goods vehicle.

COMMUNITY BASED RURAL TRANSPORT

9. A report and recommendations related to cross-border community based rural transport was discussed.

FREIGHT

10. The Council discussed progress made on the five priority areas of the All-Ireland Freight Forum and its proposed future activities. Ministers noted that this work will be taken forward by a steering group comprising representatives of the IBEC-CBI Joint Business Council, InterTradeIreland and senior officials of the Department of Regional Development and the Department of Transport.

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT

11. The Council welcomed plans for an all-island Bike Week 2011 (18-26 June), a cross-border schools' challenge event, to be held during Walk to School Week 2011 (16-20 May), and pilot Personalised Travel Plan initiatives in Adamstown (Dublin) and Galliagh (Derry-Londonderry).
12. Ministers welcomed the success of the Department for Regional Development and the Department of the Environment in securing Plugged in Places funding of approximately £850,000 from the Office for Low Emission Vehicles to support the installation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and that ESB will continue to play a role in ensuring the linking of plans throughout the island of Ireland.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

13. The Council agreed to meet again in Transport sectoral format in May/June 2011.

**Joint Secretariat
9 February 2011**