

## 9. Managing Supply - “Sweating the Corridor”

***“Traffic Growth and personal travel will continue unabated leading to greater congestion and more extensive and frequent standstills. Active and dynamic traffic management will be vital to counter long-term regular gridlock.”***

### Long Terms Goals

- ▶ Develop network operating strategies to effect a dynamic allocation of road space serving optional and non-essential movements, as well as high-value journeys and priority movements of freight.
- ▶ Introduce systems that dynamically control and advise traffic on the network to maintain traffic flow without adversely affecting the local environment.
- ▶ Work with local and regional bodies to agree access control arrangements based on need. Consider network prioritisation with priority lane access (e.g. emergency services, goods, High Occupancy Vehicles, etc).
- ▶ Develop route management strategies to include active and dynamic traffic management systems that respond to local needs and requirements. In some localities, prioritise collective transport and freight.
- ▶ Support regional economies through the improvement of the trunk road network: identify where regeneration and redevelopment will be supported by further development of trunk road network.

### Short Term Actions

- ▶ Promote greater use of priority lanes and the enforcement methods to go with them.
- ▶ Develop the technology for selective ramp metering, queue management and dynamic allocation of road space.
- ▶ Study characteristics and traffic routing through hotspots in order to understand current and future travel movements and behavioural response to traffic management information.
- ▶ Manage maintenance methods and schedules to minimise disruption and capacity reduction (e.g. off site assembly, round the clock working, penalties for delay, fit work schedules to periods of lower demand, plan alternative routes, information to reduce demand, co-ordination with Local Authorities, longer life maintenance investment).
- ▶ Make selective increases of capacity at hot spots – widening, junction improvements, bypasses.
- ▶ Improve incident response times, extend incident detection and signing.
- ▶ Introduce improved monitoring and early warning systems - bad weather.
- ▶ Promote travel information availability and incident response procedures through the introduction of strategies for preventing gridlock and gridlock recovery (e.g. Strategic and tactical traffic control, Variable Message Signing, etc).

- ▶ Develop key service level indicators for network performance - travel times, traffic throughput, journey time reliability, etc
- ▶ Review the operational strategy for the inter-urban road network to accommodate:
  - ▶ a reduction in the captive rush hour markets as work places and work hours adapt
  - ▶ a reduction in the lucrative business travel market
  - ▶ a growth in the optional leisure travel market

## **Case for Network Operator Action**

- ▶ Effective management of access to and from the strategic road network is essential for the effective movement of traffic already on the network.
- ▶ Major out-of-town or decentralised developments are increasing, generating more network-based journeys.
- ▶ There is general acceptance that 'predict and provide' is no longer a sustainable option
- ▶ Parts of the highway network operate at or near capacity for significant periods, with poor reliability. Small incidents can have knock on effects resulting in delays which undermine economic efficiency.
- ▶ Conditions of congestion lead to a deterioration in driver behaviour and higher levels of pollution. Emergency services cannot operate efficiently and accidents cannot be dealt with promptly.
- ▶ Journey time reliability and predictability will become increasingly important for customers - private and business (freight)

## **Supporting Information**

- ▶ More than ¼ of trunk road traffic uses sections of the network prone to recurrent congestion. HA Strategy Plan.
- ▶ Congestion is estimated to cost in excess of £19 billion each year. (IHT) Business is concerned about congestion undermining competitiveness.
- ▶ New capacity and liberated road space will have to be managed actively if the extra capacity is not to be surrendered unwittingly to traffic growth or latent demand.
- ▶ Car use accounts for 80% of journeys made with traffic volumes forecast to increase 60% by 2031 (1996 base).
- ▶ Without intervention, journey times are predicted to increase considerably by 2031, especially on urban motorways. Average journey times on rural motorways are also predicted to increase substantially, especially in the peaks (NRTF 1997).