Purpose of the report:

- To update members on the East of England Freight Quality Partnership.

Recommendations:

1. The EEFQP requests that the RTF considers mandating the Partnership to develop a briefing note for the region in response to the recommendations made in the National Lorry Parking Study and to provide this to the next RTF meeting for further consideration.

2. RTF to discuss the relationship with the LEPs and the emergent Local Transport Bodies as they develop, and how the EEFQP can contribute to discussions relating to economic growth, management of the increased requirement for freight transport and the welfare of the East of England.

1. Introduction

1.1. The EEFQP last reported to the RTF in October, 2012 when revised Terms of Reference and the Membership of the Partnership were noted. Since that time the EEFQP has met and a further meeting is scheduled for February 2013 which will be held at Dubai Ports World – London Gateway to view progress on this important development of the Port and the associated Logistics Park offering portcentric facilities in Essex. The Partnership will consider at the meeting work it has in progress and would ask the RTF to confirm that use of the EEFQP’s energies in this regard are beneficial.

2. DPW – London Gateway

2.1. I attended recently a meeting with the Port as Chairman of the EEFQP. The construction continues apace, with the quay sufficiently developed to take delivery of the ship to shore cranes from China by vessel. The first commercial container ship to arrive is scheduled in October, by which time rail connection capable of handling containers on regular daily services to the Midlands, North and Scotland will be in operation and the road access will have been improved. The RTF will be aware of this development which over the future years will progressively become a major employer handling a large share of the freight movement in and out of the UK. The EEFQP would like to continue to report on the progress at London Gateway to the RTF.
3. Lorry Parking

3.1. In 2011 the Department for Transport asked AECOM to prepare a report on Lorry Parking in the UK, and this entered the public arena last year. The EEFQP received a presentation on the report in 2012 and many members of the RTF will be aware of the content.

3.2. In short the Study states that the East of England faces the worst problem in the UK with regard to commercial vehicles parking on roads and in lay-bys with over six hundred vehicles seeking to park each day. Parking for commercial vehicles off road in operator’s sites and in other commercial premises were recorded as 80% full. The South East Region comes second in terms of unfulfilled demand. I attach the relevant part of the AECOM Report and would draw attention to the Conclusion – Section 3.5 which summarises the situation.

3.3. The report also called for local, regional and national effort to solve this problem. The EEFQP is currently unaware of any effort being made in the East to address this problem and would like on behalf of the RTF to work on seeking practical solutions, and a way forward in a joined up way. The problem is likely to get worse over the years as more freight is moved, and demand for secure lorry parking increases. Researching solutions will involve examining potential commercial developments of safe, secure facilities for parking close to major routes with appropriate facilities for driver accommodation and welfare. Planning applications already submitted and new ones should be viewed in the light of the needs in the East, and indeed the whole UK. At some stage, possibly in April, 2013, this research may require funding to support it and the RTF should give consideration please to such a request when it becomes necessary.

4. Commercial Vehicle Routing, and Mapping Applications

4.1. During 2012 the EEFQP has been developing a better understanding of the routing systems used operationally by commercial vehicle operators, which have implications in terms of road use, adequacy and repair, together with issues of security, safety and local acceptability. Width and weight restrictions can also be infringed by the use of inappropriate routes.

4.2. Operators of large commercial fleets generally use software packages to route vehicles and give the driver defined routes that are risk assessed in advance, and then followed in making collections and deliveries.

4.3. Smaller organisations and those involved in direct distribution to home or store rely on driver knowledge and satellite navigation systems. Such deliveries tend to be made on smaller rigid vehicles.

4.4. Non UK Operators are more likely to use driver knowledge combined with satellite navigation.

4.5. Development by operators of more sophisticated applications to aid routing and through GPS systems to maintain an ability to know a vehicle’s position, are continually expanding, and if it becomes possible to link systems better with more information being given to drivers as they work, the problem of off route running could be reduced. Isotrak is one such system that is now well developed and used by major retailers. Some operator systems enable the transport manager to create Geo-grid protection zones around key features such as weight limits for example. The key could be providing reliable access to highway asset information, and such developments
may well overtake the need for conventional approaches to mapping by dynamically linking existing systems and information sources.

4.6. The EEFQP in 2013 will consider the best approaches and will make recommendations to the RTF in due course.

5. Conclusion

5.1. The EEFQP requests that the RTF considers mandating the Partnership to develop a briefing note for the region in response to the recommendations made in the National Lorry Parking Study and to provide this to the next RTF meeting for further consideration.

5.2. The EEFQP is anxious to understand the relationship with the LEPs and the emergent Local Transport Bodies as they develop, and how the EEFQP can contribute to discussions relating to economic growth, management of the increased requirement for freight transport and the welfare of the East of England.

David Bell

Chairman – The East of England Freight Quality Partnership

17th January, 2013