

# Scottish Democratic Alliance

## Transport – Executive Summary

Updated 10-06-2009

\* **The essential purpose of the transport network is to enable our society to meet its basic needs of work, freight transport, school, leisure, shopping, sport and travel. The uneven spread of population across Scotland requires a diverse range of transportation to enable our society to operate effectively.**

\* The transport network in Scotland is composed of a combination of roads, railways, airports, ferries, bridges, shipping harbours, footpaths and cycle ways. Under the previous governments there has been **insufficient investment** in our transport infrastructure with the result that much of our transport networks fall beneath the standard available to our Scandinavian, Southern and Continental neighbours.

\* Scotland needs a long term strategy and a **structured programme** of continuous investment to upgrade our "A" class roads, provide a nationwide high-speed electrified rail network and inter-connect these networks with upgraded ferry and airline links.

\* A reliable, nationwide, **inter-connecting, bus and rail, park and ride linked**, public transport network should be the target to aim for in a structured ten year programme. The **SDA** supports the Scottish government's travel initiatives and efforts to provide on schedule, inter-connected, environmentally friendlier, public transport networks around our expanding population centres as a realistic alternative to the use of private vehicles.

\* Due to our extensive rural areas the high cost of fuel incurred by the various forms of domestic and commercial road transport has a significant negative impact on business and domestic expenditures. The **SDA** advocates that to promote growth, protect jobs and living standards the tax on fuel should be reduced and be commensurate with other oil producing states.

\* The bulk of our manufactured goods and food products are transported by road and the **SDA** advocates that we stop penalising freight companies and seek to **lower the Freight Vehicle Excise Duty**. They will still be paying a fair share for the wear on roads due to the amount of fuel tax they pay. It would be more beneficial to the environment to encourage the use of more energy efficient vehicles and timely freight train services.

\* All authority for managing the rail networks in Scotland must be devolved to Scotland. The Scottish Network Rail management must be held more **accountable** for managing the joint needs of the paying customers, the train operators and the track providers.

\* Domestic **ferry services** and those linking to other countries need to be sustained and expanded in order to develop our domestic and tourism industries. To sustain our outlying communities a **Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) for ferries** is required for the Clyde, the Hebrides and the Northern Isles ferry routes. Likewise every effort must be made to support and expand our **air transport** network which is currently under severe financial and regulatory pressures from the undemocratic European Union.

\* The **SDA** Transport Policy is still under development. Please return later.

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