

13th May 2003

First new SLM values since 1996 show true economic and environmental benefits of Freight

The SRA have today announced new Sensitive Lorry Mile (SLM) values, which will encourage more freight to be carried by rail rather than road.

The values, which are used as a means of quantifying the benefit of shifting freight from road to rail, are used in the calculations of Freight Facilities Grant (FFG) and Track Access Grant (TAG) and have not been updated since 1996.

The new values, agreed with the Department for Transport (DfT), reflect more accurately the costs to society of HGVs on roads and the economic and environmental benefits to be gained from shifting freight from road to rail.

In determining the new values, the SRA and the DfT have agreed to seven different road categories. These have been developed to take into account the different type and level of impacts of lorries on different locations, different roads and under different conditions. The road categories represent an amalgamation of the road classifications that are available in the DfT's National Transport Model. The new SLM values are as follows:

- Low congested motorway 4p
- Medium congested motorway 27p
- High congested motorway 69p
- Conurbation - Trunk & Principal £1.38
- Conurbation - Other £1.74
- Rural & Urban - Trunk & Principal 53p
- Rural & Urban - Other 45p

The new rates will apply to both rail and waterways freight facilities grants, rail track access grants and the forthcoming rail company neutral grant scheme. The SRA, Department for Transport, Scottish Executive and Welsh Assembly Government will use the new values as part of the assessment process for awards of grants made from April 2004. This will coincide with the re-opening of the SRA's grant scheme (subject to budget confirmation). A web-based application designed to aid in the calculation of benefits is being developed and will be made available in the Autumn.

Jonathan Riley, SRA acting Executive Director for Freight, said:

"These new SLM values help to make the case for rail freight. They are part of the coming of age of UK Rail Freight and my team will be working with colleagues and customers to capitalise on this momentum."

Notes to Editors

1. Further details on the SLM rates, including definitions of the road categories and maps, contact the Department for Transport Rail Press desk.
2. Work on the new values has been carried out by both Arup Transport Planning and L.E.K. Consulting. Additionally, the SRA has consulted extensively with the Department for Transport (DfT), Scottish Executive and the Welsh Assembly Government, and in particular the Railways Economics and Major Projects department (REMP). These discussions and analyses have informed the SRA's decision on values and road classifications.
3. The Freight Facilities Grant (FFG) and Track Access Grant (TAG) schemes were suspended in England in January 2003. The SRA expect to reopen the schemes in late 2003, subject to confirmation of budget for 2004/05.

For further details contact the Department for Transport Rail Press desk: 020 7944 3248