Evaluation of the Multi-Modal Study Process

Final Report
Executive Summary

ES1 Multi-modal studies (MMS) represent a significant new approach to developing integrated transport strategies, examining how all modes can contribute to developing long term solutions to some of the country's most severe transport problems. The studies use the New Approach to Appraisal (NATA) to develop and evaluate alternative options, as set out in the Government's Guidance on the Methodology for Multi-Modal Studies (GOMMMS). A key element of this framework is consulting widely with local and regional interests to ensure their views and knowledge feed into the study process.

ES2 The Department for Transport (DfT) commissioned AEA Technology, ITS Leeds and John Bates Services to evaluate the effectiveness of the MMS process.

ES3 The objectives of this evaluation were to examine the 21 ongoing or completed MMS to establish:

- The effectiveness of the MMS process in delivering integrated and robust transport strategies assessed in accordance with the GOMMMS methodology.
- The extent to which technical feasibility and cost of recommendations has been assessed by the studies.
- The extent to which the studies have been carried out within a transparent open process which has helped to build consensus in support of study recommendations.
- The time and costs of producing strategies which meet the GOMMMS requirements and whether there are ways in which the studies could be carried out more quickly and cost effectively.
- Areas for improving the study process, both for on-going studies and any future studies which may be commissioned, in particular by identifying examples of good practice and pitfalls to be avoided.

ES4 The evaluation was carried out between September 2002 and June 2003. During which period most of the multi-modal studies either had completed or were close to completion. The evaluation comprises four phases in total, as shown in Table A.

Table A: Phases and timing of this evaluation

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<th>Initial meetings with DfT and its Advisory Group to better understand their priorities and refine the work programme accordingly.</th>
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<td>Overview phase: (Sept – Dec 2002)</td>
<td>Assessment of MMS reports and discussions with key national stakeholders to build up a picture of how MMS worked in practice, who was involved at each stage, how different stakeholders contributed to the processes and recommendations, and how the studies fitted into Government’s wider transport policy objectives. All ongoing and completed studies were examined.</td>
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<td>Assessment phase: (Jan – Mar 2003)</td>
<td>Detailed evaluation of a sample of MMS, looking at the procedural and technical approaches used, including stakeholder consultation processes and issues associated with transport modelling and appraisal. This involved the review of relevant papers and face-to-face interviews with a wide range of stakeholders from selected studies.</td>
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<td>Reporting phase: (Apr – Jun 2003)</td>
<td>Synthesis of results from the evaluation and preparation of reports. An advisory group meeting was held during this phase to confirm the findings of the evaluation and test/refine its recommendations.</td>
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All MMS had steering groups comprising 12 or more key stakeholders (typically including the Highways Agency, Strategic Rail Authority, local authorities, passenger transport executives, regional development agencies, environmental groups and business groups) and wider references groups of over 50 other individuals and groups who contributed views at key stages of the MMS process. During this evaluation we interviewed over 100 stakeholders including representatives from Government departments and agencies, Government Office project managers and staff, lead consultants and subcontractors, steering group members and wider reference group members. We are very grateful for all their inputs to the evaluation.

In conducting this study we have addressed 7 key questions relating to the efficiency and effectiveness of the MMS process. Our findings and recommendations are summarised below.

1. Did the contractual framework, specification and terms of reference of each study provided a sound basis for the studies to be carried out in an effective and efficient manner?

- A review of the terms of reference for the studies shows that most were well written and reasonably clear on the tasks expected of the consultants and deliverables, in terms of the report required. However, the terms of reference were weak on defining how the outputs would be used, what information was already available and how far the studies should progress in developing recommendations for implementation. This lack of clarity has been the root cause of many of the problems encountered during the studies. For future studies we recommend the use of a scoping study or scoping inception phase to tighten the specification.

- Because of the somewhat open-ended nature of the work, the contractual framework, based on a mixture of firm and variable price components up to a maximum sum, was well suited to the management of the studies and should have given the Government Office project managers tight control over the study costs. For future studies we recommend that this mixture of firm and variable costs is maintained but that the client project manager is given authority to reallocate budget between variable cost tasks as the work progresses.

2. Were the studies managed efficiently and were DfT’s co-ordination and inputs timely and effective?

- While most of the studies have overrun on both time and cost, this commonly traces back to gaps in the project scope, third party factors (e.g. foot and mouth which delayed survey work on a number of the studies) or unforeseen gaps in data. Tranche 2 and 3 studies commissioned since 1999 have performed considerably better than the early studies, suggesting that many lessons have already been learned and implemented. For example, the average overrun for a Tranche 1 study was 78% of original costs while for Tranche 2 it was only 21%.

- There is a widely held recognition that efficiency gains could have been achieved on most studies. Key areas include more targeted stakeholder consultation, better tracking of costs and management of variations, and improved co-ordination between studies. In particular, there were issues over relating expenditure to progress, which were manifested in difficulties providing adequate justification and supporting evidence for contract variations. Our report identifies a number of practical measures that could be introduced to improve the
management of future studies, such as clearer progress reporting and better feedback systems.

- **ES11** We feel that many of the studies could have been managed more efficiently by both the consultant and client but overall we believe that most individuals performed well considering the resource constraints they faced. Not all of the GO Project Managers had the skills and experience required to manage the studies and some training in project and procurement management is recommended for future study managers.

- **ES12** DfT provided a useful role in providing ad hoc advice, bringing GOs and consultants together to discuss best practice, encouraging information sharing and issuing relevant guidance. However, some of the guidance was issued rather late and DfT could have made a greater contribution to supporting the study teams and ensuring consistency in approach if they had had more resources or if the study programme had been introduced more slowly.

3. **Were the steering groups effective in contributing independent and wider views to the studies?**

- **ES13** Steering groups provided a valuable role in ensuring that studies took account of relevant views and local knowledge. They also provided an educational role for local and regional stakeholders that should be useful for future transport planning activities in these regions.

- **ES14** However for many of the studies the role of the steering group was not defined clearly enough. In some cases, group members did not feel that their views were taken into account fully, in others the group widened the scope of the project by demanding extra work, which resulted in cost increases.

- **ES15** For future studies we recommend using a smaller project management group comprising just the client organisation, DfT and key delivery agencies, with other stakeholders such as environmental and business groups contributing at a higher advisory group level on a less frequent basis.

- **ES16** Wider reference groups also provided valuable sounding boards to test findings from each step of the process and elicit views from different organisations and individuals. These groups were most effective where they used interactive methods such as working in small groups to identify or solve problems.

4. **Was stakeholder consultation carried out effectively and were stakeholder views fully taken into account in the study recommendations?**

- **ES17** We believe that the stakeholder consultation activities have been a useful component of the multi-modal study process. Specifically, the steering group and wider reference group consultation activities were particularly useful, and a number of the consultants have commented that the studies could not have been carried out without input from the steering group and the wider reference group.

- **ES18** Public consultation and awareness-raising activities were also an important part of the MMS process. However, with the exception of smaller area studies, many stakeholders indicated that the public’s contribution to developing strategies and recommendations was less significant than the contributions of the steering and wider reference groups.
ES19 For future strategic studies we believe that there is a need to shift the emphasis away from public consultation and towards awareness-raising and the provision of information for the public, which would normally take place later in the studies as potential plans take shape. More participatory approaches are more suitable for smaller area studies.

ES20 The extensive public consultation carried out on some studies did not represent good value for money and we recommend a maximum of 10% of total study budget is allocated to consultation activities for future studies, unless there are specific reasons for allocating more.

ES21 It is clear that the consultation has improved the openness and transparency of the decision-making, though not to the level of satisfaction of all respondents. Stakeholder views were taken into account when developing recommendations but it wasn’t possible to please everyone. This is perhaps unsurprising considering the deeply polarised views of some of the stakeholders at the outset of the process.

5. Did the appraisal framework provided by GOMMMS give an effective framework for comparing options and prioritising solutions?

ES22 Our overall conclusions on appraisal are that the GOMMMS advice was fit for purpose. There is an opportunity to learn from the experience of the MMS in relation to strategic appraisal and to approaches to sifting and screening.

ES23 Further work could be done to develop the advice further on sustainability, social inclusion and regeneration. But we believe that the evidence shows that the appraisal framework was sound and that the methodology was implemented satisfactorily.

6. Does the multi-modal study process provide an effective basis to progress recommendations into actions?

ES24 It is too early to tell how effectively recommendations will be progressed into actions but the involvement of a wider range of stakeholders in the study process is likely to help, and some of the working relationships developed during the studies have continued into the implementation phase.

ES25 Stakeholders have voiced strong feelings over the deliverability of the results of the studies. There is broad agreement that the recommendations of the studies are feasible technically, but less consideration has been given to the cost and affordability of the recommendations and many are not deliverable over the short term (by 2010) because of financial constraints. The latter is particularly true for rail and local transport measures.

ES26 There is disagreement over the integrated nature of the recommended packages and the extent to which all parts of a strategy have to be implemented for it to work. It is most likely that the effectiveness of some of the measures will depend greatly on integration within a package while other measures could be implemented effectively in their own right.

ES27 It is important therefore that the interdependence of measures is considered carefully when decisions are made on individual schemes. Particularly
careful attention needs to be given to the role of road user charging and the impact it has on other recommendations in some of the study packages.

- **ES28** A number of stakeholders have expressed concerns that the study recommendations are not detailed enough to be implemented without much more work required. This problem tracks back to what one stakeholder referred to as the “schizophrenic” nature of the studies balancing long-term strategies with detailed project plans.

- **ES29** Overall we believe that the study process does provide a useful step towards progressing recommendations into actions but the delivery agencies will need to do more work before the schemes are realised and final decisions must fall to ministers. In future, delivery agencies should be more fully integrated from the start.

### 7. Did the studies offer value for money or could the results have been delivered more cost effectively or more quickly in other ways?

- **ES30** Stakeholder views are sharply divided over the value for money of the studies. Some feel that the studies have broken new ground in identifying multi-modal solutions to long-term transport problems and feel that the cost of the studies represents a small fraction of the financial benefits which will be generated from the implementation of the recommendations. Others believe that the philosophy of the studies was flawed and that the same outputs could have been generated far more quickly and cheaply.

- **ES31** All parties recognise that there was scope to achieve efficiency gains, particularly in the areas of stakeholder consultation, modelling and co-ordination between studies. Our view is that, in principle, the processes used by the studies were valuable and have had a useful educative role as well as building some consensus. While there is scope to improve the cost-effectiveness of future studies, the costs incurred by most of the studies reflected the novelty, complexity and scale of the study process. Value for money was also adversely influenced by the size of the study programme and the pressure to deliver it quickly, which led to skill shortages and staff overload for many of the parties involved.

- **ES32** It is difficult to reach a definitive view on the value for money of the MMS process. The studies have genuinely attempted to take a multi-modal approach and some studies have developed solutions that may not have been identified by previous approaches. However, the studies have introduced an extra layer in the appraisal process that has taken around 2 years to complete and cost over £30 million. There is some evidence that later studies have performed better against budgets.

- **ES33** Overall we believe adding the MMS as a further layer in the decision making process was a good idea and has added value. Studies of this kind which seek to address the balance between investment, demand management and public transport measures in a regional planning context are very likely to be required in future. Such studies will be needed where there is significant interaction between transport and land-use, where there are high-level choices to be made between demand management and the provision of new capacity and where there is significant interaction between demand for public and private transport. In our view, appraising individual schemes or other elements without an overall strategic context is dangerous in such circumstances.
We agree with the many stakeholders who have told us that the value for money of the studies will depend ultimately on whether the studies provide a sound framework for guiding investment decisions in the study areas and how the recommendations are taken forward.
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1 Introduction

1.1 BACKGROUND

1. The Department for Transport appointed a consortium of AEA Technology, ITS Leeds and John Bates Services to evaluate the multi-modal transport study process to establish:

1. The effectiveness of the study process in delivering integrated and robust transport strategies assessed in accordance with the Guidance on Methodology for Multi-Modal Studies (GOMMMS).

2. The extent to which technical feasibility and cost of recommendations has been assessed by the studies.

3. The extent to which the studies have been carried out within a transparent open process that has helped to build consensus in support of study recommendations.

4. The time and costs of producing strategies which meet the GOMMMS requirements and whether there are ways in which the studies could be carried out more quickly and cost effectively.

5. Areas for improving the study process, both for on-going studies and any future studies which may be commissioned, in particular by identifying examples of good practice and pitfalls to be avoided.

1.2 DfT further requested that the evaluation investigated a series of key issues.

1. The contractual framework, specification and terms of reference of each study provided a sound basis for the studies to be carried out in an effective and efficient manner.

2. The studies were managed efficiently and DfT’s co-ordination and inputs were timely and effective.

3. The steering groups were effective in contributing independent and wider views to the studies.

4. Stakeholder consultation was carried out effectively and that stakeholder views were fully taken into account in the study recommendations.

5. The appraisal framework provided by GOMMMS gave an effective framework for comparing options and prioritising solutions.

6. The multi-modal study process provides an effective basis to progress recommendations into actions.

7. The studies offered value for money or whether the results could have been delivered more cost effectively or more quickly in other ways.
1.3 The evaluation has been carried out between September 2002 and June 2003. During which period most of the multi-modal studies either had completed or were close to completion.

1.2 MULTI-MODAL STUDIES

1.4 The Multi-Modal Study (MMS) programme was an outcome of the Government’s strategic review of the roads programme, as described in “A New Deal for Trunk Roads”, published by DETR (now DfT) in July 1998. This review was done in the context of the Government’s White Paper “A New Deal for Transport – Better for Everyone”, published earlier that year.

1.5 When the current Government came into power in 1997 there were around 150 road studies awaiting a decision. A few high priority schemes were fast tracked while others were abandoned. Some highly localised road improvements and were taken forward as road based studies by the Highways Agency (HA). A decision was taken to apply a multi-modal approach to the remaining schemes and DfT went out to consultation working with the Government Offices (GOs) to canvas regional views.

1.6 A process was developed to integrate the remaining schemes into a manageable framework and to decide priorities. This is shown in a simplified form in Figure 1.

![Diagram of Multi-Modal Studies and Roads Based Schemes]

Figure 1: Selection of Multi-Modal Studies and Roads Based Schemes
1.7 The resulting programme of MMS, announced on 23 March 1999, was split into three tranches. The first two Tranche 1 studies (Access to Hastings and the West Midlands Area MMS) started in November 1999 and the remainder were started by April 2000.
2 Evaluation methodology

2.1 The methodology for this evaluation is shown in Figure 2. The study was broken down into 4 phases.

Task 1 – Project Inception

2.2 This phase was used to refine the methodology and to agree the work programme with DfT.

Task 2 – Overview of the Studies

2.3 This task took an overview of the multi-modal study process and progress with the studies. Through assessment of study reports and discussion with key national stakeholders, we were able to build up a picture of how MMS have worked in practice, who was involved at each stage, how different stakeholders contributed to the processes and recommendations.

2.4 An aspect of this overview was to identify commonalities and differences between the MMS. This allowed us to identify patterns in how studies were commissioned, managed and undertaken, and how they involved and informed stakeholders.

Task 2.1- Data collection and analysis for all Multi-Modal Studies

2.5 This task involved a desk review of documentation (e.g. terms of reference, consultants briefs, reports etc) to map the processes for each MMS from commissioning to recommendations. Information was collated using a matrix approach to facilitate cross-comparison between studies and the identification of trends and patterns across the 22 studies, including:

- Scope and size of each MMS
- Status of the study
- Study location
- Type of study (e.g. corridor)
- Contractor team composition
- Details of the steering group
- Methods used for stakeholder consultation
- Modelling approach
- Approach to appraisal
- Treatment of environmental issues
- Performance against proposed time table
- Performance against budget

2.6 On modelling and appraisal, we were able to review the main modelling and appraisal document for 14 of the 22 Multi-Modal studies. The others were not available at the appropriate stage of the evaluation.
Task 2.2 - Interviews with key national stakeholders

2.7 These interviews were based on a structured questionnaire to gain an overview of the perceptions of national stakeholders to the multi-modal study process. People and organisations interviewed are included in Annex 1.

Task 3 - Detailed evaluation of a sample of multi-modal studies

Task 3.1: Detailed evaluation of sample Multi-Modal Studies

2.8 This task addressed the procedural and technical approaches followed by six of the MMS, including contractual frameworks, management procedures, the role of the steering group, stakeholder involvement and decision making processes. The MMS studied in detail were the A453, London to Ipswich (LOIS), London to South West and South Wales (SWARMMS), South and West Yorkshire (SWYMMS), Thames Valley (TVMMMS) and Tyneside Area (TAMMS) multi-modal studies. This sample was chosen to provide a mixture of smaller and larger area studies, earlier and later studies, and different geographical regions. Task 3 built on the picture formed from Task 2 and generated more detailed information on the management of the studies.

Task 3.2: Interviews with key stakeholders for selected Multi-Modal Studies

2.9 Consultation with a wide range of stakeholders was based on semi-structured questionnaires and face-to-face interviews using a team of interviewers. Interviews explored how transparent and open the stakeholder consultation process has been perceived to be, and the extent to which it helped build consensus in support of study recommendations.

2.10 We interviewed 10-15 stakeholders per selected MMS, drawn from the following groups:

- Study contractors, including the main contractor and those responsible for specific stakeholder consultation activities.
- National stakeholders involved in the MMS process, e.g. Highways Agency, Strategic Rail Authority, Network Rail.
- Regional and local stakeholders involved in the MMS process, e.g. Government Offices, Local Authorities, transport operators.
- Informed/consulted local stakeholders such as lobby groups.

Task 3.3: Analysis of modelling and appraisal issues for selected Multi-Modal Studies

2.11 This task explored issues and problems experienced by consultants undertaking these elements of the MMS, the perceived utility and practicality of models and the effectiveness of the GOMMMS appraisal framework. A separate study of modelling and appraisal methods was originally intended to feed into this part of the study but it was not completed.

2.12 This task involved collating technical reports and papers for the four studies selected, reviewing the key issues for each study, interviewing consultants and key stakeholders associated with the study (e.g. DfT, HA and SRA) and preparing a report on each study.

2.13 At this stage we also reviewed the relevant technical and working papers, preparing a list of questions, conducting one or two meetings with key participants in the modelling and appraisal work. The meetings included both the consultant responsible for the studies and key stakeholders.
Task 4 – Synthesis and reporting

2.14 The findings of tasks 2 and 3 have been synthesised to produce a final report. Initial findings and recommendations were discussed with the project advisory group at a workshop on the 15 May.
INCEPTION PHASE

TASK 1
Initial review and meetings

Agree detailed approach & methodology

Sep 2002

OVERVIEW OF STUDIES

TASK 2.1
Data collection & analysis for all 22 MM Studies

INTERIM REPORT & selection of sample studies

Dec 2002

TASK 2.2
Interviews with key national stakeholders

DETAILED ANALYSIS

TASK 3.1
Detailed evaluation of sample MM studies

Working papers

Mar 2003

TASK 3.2
Interviews with key stakeholders for selected MMS

Draft conclusions & recommendations

TASK 3.3
Analysis of modelling and appraisal issues for selected MMS

SYNTHESIS & REPORTING

TASK 4
Report preparation & stakeholder workshop

Draft guidance

Final report & seminar presentation

Jun 2003

Figure 2 Task Structure
3 Status of the studies

3.1 This section provides an overview of the 21 completed and ongoing Multi-Modal Studies (MMS). A further study to address the A34 north of Southampton is included in the Government’s announced programme but has not yet started. Further information is available from the individual study web sites, which can be accessed from the DfT web site [www.dft.gov.uk](http://www.dft.gov.uk).

3.1 TYPE AND LOCATION

3.2 The types and locations of all completed and ongoing MMS are shown in Table 1. Each study has an acronym that will be used in the remainder of this report. Two of the studies have alternative names:

- M1MMS – this is sometimes known as the East Midlands MMS or EMMMS.
- TVMMS – the Thames Valley MMS was previously known as London to Reading.

Table 1: Completed and ongoing Multi-Modal Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Study title</th>
<th>Type of study</th>
<th>Location (GO regions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 A2H</td>
<td>Access to Hastings</td>
<td>Area</td>
<td>SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 CHUMMS</td>
<td>Cambridge to Huntingdon</td>
<td>Corridor</td>
<td>East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 SEMMMS</td>
<td>South-East Manchester</td>
<td>Urban area</td>
<td>NW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 WMAMMS</td>
<td>West Midlands Area</td>
<td>Urban area</td>
<td>WM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 MIDMAN</td>
<td>West Midlands to North West</td>
<td>Corridor</td>
<td>WM &amp; NW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 SWARMMS</td>
<td>London to South West and South Wales</td>
<td>Large area</td>
<td>SW &amp; SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 M1MMS</td>
<td>North/South Movements in the East Midlands</td>
<td>Corridor</td>
<td>EM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 A453</td>
<td>A453 (M1 to Nottingham)</td>
<td>Corridor</td>
<td>EM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 TAMMS</td>
<td>Tyneside Area</td>
<td>Urban area</td>
<td>NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 SWYMMS</td>
<td>South and West Yorkshire</td>
<td>Large area</td>
<td>YH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 ORBIT</td>
<td>London Orbital</td>
<td>Orbital</td>
<td>SE &amp; East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 A1MMS</td>
<td>A1 North of Newcastle</td>
<td>Corridor</td>
<td>NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 HUMMS</td>
<td>Hull East-West Corridor</td>
<td>Corridor</td>
<td>YH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 SoCoMMS</td>
<td>South Coast Corridor</td>
<td>Corridor</td>
<td>SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 LSM</td>
<td>London to South Midlands</td>
<td>Area</td>
<td>SE, East &amp; EM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 LOIS</td>
<td>London to Ipswich</td>
<td>Corridor</td>
<td>East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 M60 JETTS</td>
<td>M60 Junctions 18 to 12</td>
<td>Orbital/Corridor</td>
<td>NW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 TVMMS</td>
<td>Thames Valley</td>
<td>Area</td>
<td>SE &amp; SW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 W2EMMS</td>
<td>West to East Midlands</td>
<td>Corridor</td>
<td>EM &amp; WM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T3 20 N2P</td>
<td>Norwich to Peterborough</td>
<td>Corridor</td>
<td>East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 A52</td>
<td>A52 Corridor (Clifton Bridge to Bingham)</td>
<td>Corridor</td>
<td>EM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3 Differences in type of study explain some of the differences in approach to stakeholder consultation and modelling & appraisal that are identified later in this report.

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1 At the time of writing, these links are provided in a document entitled “About Multi Modal Studies” available from [www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_transstrat/documents/pdf/dft_transstrat_pdf_023653.pdf](http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_transstrat/documents/pdf/dft_transstrat_pdf_023653.pdf)
For example, the options for public consultation are quite different for a small urban area study such as Access to Hastings and a large area study such as SWARMMS.

### 3.2 STATUS OF STUDIES

#### 3.4 Table 2 shows the status and timing of all completed and ongoing MMS at the time of the evaluation study, and the availability of key study reports. Reports marked (X) are available on request but have not been published on the study web site.

**Table 2: Study timing and availability of reports**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Start date</th>
<th>Completion date</th>
<th>Consultation</th>
<th>Validation</th>
<th>Final</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A2H</td>
<td>Nov-99</td>
<td>Dec-00</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHUMMS</td>
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<td>Aug-01</td>
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<td>(X)</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Sep-01</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WMAMMS</td>
<td>Nov-99</td>
<td>Oct-01</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIDMAN</td>
<td>Dec-99</td>
<td>Jan-02</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWARMMS</td>
<td>Apr-00</td>
<td>May-02</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M1MMS</td>
<td>Dec-99</td>
<td>May-02</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A453</td>
<td>Dec-99</td>
<td>Jun-02</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAMMS</td>
<td>Mar-00</td>
<td>Nov-02</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWYMMS</td>
<td>Mar-00</td>
<td>Sep-02</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORBIT</td>
<td>Feb-00</td>
<td>Nov-02</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1MMS</td>
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<td>May-02</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>(X)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUMMS</td>
<td>Sep-00</td>
<td>Jul-02</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SoCoMMS</td>
<td>Apr-01</td>
<td>Sep-02</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSM</td>
<td>Sep-00</td>
<td>Jan-03</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOIS</td>
<td>Sep-00</td>
<td>Nov-02</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M60 JETTS</td>
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<td>Dec-02</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>(X)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Dec-02</td>
<td>X*</td>
<td>X*</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>May-03</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N2P</td>
<td>Jan-02</td>
<td>Dec-02</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Sep-02</td>
<td>Mar-04</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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</table>

### 3.3 CONSULTANTS USED

#### 3.5 Table 3 shows the consultants for each MMS and the specialist consultants (if any) used for the stakeholder consultation and environmental appraisal elements of the studies.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MMS</th>
<th>Lead Consultant</th>
<th>Consultant</th>
<th>Environmental Specialist</th>
<th>Transportation Planning &amp; Research Planner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N2P</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>WS Atkins</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W2EMMS</td>
<td>WS Atkins</td>
<td>Jacobs</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Jacoby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WMNS</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>WS Atkins</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TWMNS</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>WS Atkins</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M60 JETTS</td>
<td>ERM</td>
<td>Mott MacDonald</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOS</td>
<td>ERM</td>
<td>Mott MacDonald</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSM</td>
<td>ERM</td>
<td>Mott MacDonald</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIDMAN</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Arup &amp; Scott Wilson</td>
<td>Arup &amp; Scott Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWARMMS</td>
<td>ERM</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>HS Atkins</td>
<td>HS Atkins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUMMS</td>
<td>ERM</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Arup &amp; Scott Wilson</td>
<td>Arup &amp; Scott Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A453</td>
<td>ERM</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>WS Atkins</td>
<td>WS Atkins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTMNS</td>
<td>ERM</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>A453</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TANNS</td>
<td>ERM</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Aspyn Browne Cocker</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A453</td>
<td>ERM</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Aspyn Browne Cocker</td>
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</tr>
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<td>WMMANS</td>
<td>ERM</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Aspyn Browne Cocker</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEMMMS</td>
<td>ERM</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Aspyn Browne Cocker</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHMMMS</td>
<td>Mott MacDonald</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Aspyn Browne Cocker</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2H</td>
<td>Mott MacDonald</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>HS Atkins</td>
<td>HS Atkins</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Consultants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mott MacDonald</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS Atkins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspyn Browne Cocker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arup &amp; Scott Wilson</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Consultants used for MMS
4 The Multi-Modal Studies process

4.1 METHODOLOGY FOR MULTI-MODAL STUDIES

4.1 The MMS were heralded in the Roads White Paper and subsequently, in the Ten Year Plan, referred to in confident terms: “These reject the old approach of focusing on one-dimensional solutions and instead look at the contribution that all modes of transport and traffic management might make – including road, rail, bus and light rail, as well as walking and cycling. They will take a comprehensive look at transport problems, and offer solutions in which all types of transport can play a part.”

4.2 The novelty of the studies lay in three areas. Firstly, they were wide area studies, in that most of them sought to investigate problems and options at a broader sub-regional level than has been typical UK practice, especially outside the cities. Secondly, they were intended to be open-minded about solutions; demand management, public transport and new capacity were all on the agenda and needed to be compared. This was particularly the case for some very large schemes remitted from the Road Review, which needed to be checked for robustness against other potential solutions. Thirdly, the studies were to have a strong regional focus. They were to be managed by the Government Offices with Steering Groups representing stakeholder interests. The hope was that these arrangements would help to achieve a measure of consensus.

4.3 The MMS were not a complete break with the past. Multi-Modal studies have been conducted in this country since the late 1960s when the London Traffic Survey changed into the London Transportation Study. In London a suite of planning models capable of investigating multi-modal issues has been in continuous development for more than 30 years, and the London Assessment Studies in the 1980s had some aims in common with the current MMS. Other antecedents include the suite of planning models for Greater Manchester in the mid 1990s. The 1994 SACTRA report had called for an approach to the assessment of major schemes and strategies that was similar to the design of the MMS.

4.4 Despite the regional focus, it was essential to maintain a good degree of consistency across the studies. To bridge the gap between “uncontrolled” regional studies and the requirements of the New Approach to Appraisal (NATA), the Government commissioned a document of Guidance on the Methodology for Multi-Modal Studies (GOMMMS).

4.5 The full methodology for multi-modal studies is described in DfT’s Guidance on the Methodology for Multi-Modal Studies (GOMMMS), which can be found on DfT’s web site at www.dft.gov.uk. The following diagram is taken from GOMMMS and summarises the processes involved.
Figure 3: An overview of the multi-modal study process from GOMMMS

4.2 THE MMS MANAGEMENT PROCESS

4.6 The management processes for the studies follow a common sequence.

- Project development:
  - Formation of steering group;
- Development of project scope and objectives.

- Procurement:
  - Call for expressions of interest;
  - Tender exercise.

- Project and contract management:
  - Project management;
  - Inception and refinement of work programme;
  - Progress monitoring and communications with the consultant;
  - Steering Groups;
  - Approving deliverables and invoices;
  - Management of variations.

- Handover and implementation.

4.7 We have also looked at key generic issues that transcend the phases of the studies, e.g. communications between DfT and Government Offices, and co-ordination between neighbouring studies.

4.2.1 Project development

4.8 The Government Offices (GOs) were asked to manage the studies. While the GOs had limited experience of managing studies of this kind they had close links with the relevant stakeholders, local knowledge and many of the skills required. The GO project managers came from a variety of backgrounds including the Highways Agency and transport planning consultants. It was expected that the Regional Planning Bodies (RPBs) would take greater responsibility for the management of the final three MMS and for any subsequent studies. DfT’s March 1999 announcement said “... in the future we expect Regional Planning Bodies, rather than central Government, to commission and lead their own multi-modal studies.”

4.9 The GOs worked with the Multi-Modal Studies Unit (MMSU) and the RPBs to develop the project briefs using the Roads Review as a starting point. Advice was provided by steering groups, which the GOs had also assembled. The composition of these steering groups varied between studies but included representatives of national and local stakeholders (see Section 8 for further discussion of steering groups).

4.2.2 Procurement

4.10 A single contract notice was issued for all Tranche 1 studies. This requested interested parties to list the contracts they wished to be invited to tender for. However there was a very high response rate and a lot of consultants expressed interest in a large number of studies that generated a lot of work for the GOs in developing a shortlist for interview. The issue was resolved for Tranche 2, where separate and more detailed and tightly specified contract notices were issued for each study. The GOs adopted different approaches to developing shortlists.

4.11 The tendering process was co-ordinated by DfT PPAD and managed by the GOs. The nominated GO project manager was responsible for chairing the tender evaluation panel and writing the tender evaluation report. Some GOs made extensive use of their steering committee in the selection process, often at the interview stage, but the final selection was always made by the GO.

4.12 DfT PPAD provided a standard framework of Terms & Conditions and pricing schedules. The contracts comprised fixed and estimated cost components to deal with
uncertainties in work requirements. The selection of the contractor was based on the overall value for money of the proposal and consultant team rather than price. Budget costs for the studies were recommended by MMSU based on advice and experience from the Highways Agency, and refined by the GOs for individual studies.

4.2.3 Project and contract management

4.13 Management of the project and the contract was split between the GO project manager who was responsible for the delivery of the project and for approving payments within the agreed budget ceiling, MMSU who managed the overall study budget and PPAD who provided procurement advice and approved the original contract and contractual variations, as this was outside the remit of the GOs and MMSU.

4.14 The GO project managers monitored technical and financial progress on a regular basis, by phone and e-mail contact with the consultant’s project manager. Studies had formal progress meetings, usually on a monthly basis, though in some cases the frequency of the meetings slipped. These progress meetings between the GO and the consultant’s project manager were often held on the same day as steering group meetings which were used to provide strategic guidance and advice on key decisions. However, the role of steering groups was not always well specified and in some cases they asked the consultants to do extra work which resulted in increased expenditure.

4.15 GO project managers were responsible for approving project deliverables and monthly invoices. Contract variations needed to be approved by the GO, DfT MMS Unit and DfT PPAD. In keeping with standard DfT practices, variations required a supporting business case for consideration. Once the GOs and MMSU were satisfied that the variation was justified and provided value for money, PPAD gave contractual approval and formally notified the consultant.

4.2.4 Handover and implementation

4.16 Not all of the studies were complete at the time of the evaluation. Where studies have completed, the level of detail provided in the study recommendations and the amount of work required to turn the study outputs into recommendations suitable for submission from RPBs to Ministers for funding decisions has varied greatly. In general, and as expected, the studies which have covered small areas have developed recommendations which are closer to the point of implementation than the large area strategic studies. Recommendations relating to remitted road schemes are generally the most developed, partly because detailed work had already been done on these schemes before the Roads Review.

4.2.5 Communication and co-ordination

4.17 It was the role of DfT MMSU to provide national level co-ordination between the studies. It provides guidance to the study teams and organises seminars and workshops to share information. Where there was more than one study running in a GO area there were common members of the steering group and the GOs encouraged liaison between the consultants’ teams. Where studies overlapped or needed to integrate, e.g. the London to the South West and South Wales study and Thames Valley, the GOs had representatives on each other’s steering groups and encouraged effective liaison between consultants.
5 Performance of the studies against timetable and budget

5.1 In the early stages smaller studies were expected to take between a year and 15 months to complete while the larger studies were between 18 months and 2 years. Budget costs were expected to be around £750k to £1m for the smaller studies and around £1.5M for the larger ones.

5.2 Figures 4 and 5 show an analysis of project performance against the contracted project duration and budget for the 21 ongoing and completed studies, as of May 2003. Current forecasts have been used for the ongoing contracts. All but 2 of the 21 studies have slipped in time or overspent. GO project managers told us that contracts were based on fixed and estimated cost elements with no contingencies even where there was evidence that further work would be required. This may suggest that a certain degree of cost “overrun” was inevitable, and does not necessarily reflect inefficiencies in the studies. The approach of using estimated costs was essential because it was not possible to tightly specify the deliverables for all tasks of the study. However there seems to have been confusion between parties over whether the estimated price was a maximum sum or not. This is discussed further in Section 6.

5.3 Four studies have slipped by more than 50% of the contract duration while 8 studies have overspends of more than 50% and 4 studies have spent more than double the original budget. Tranche 2 studies have performed better than the Tranche 1 studies in terms of both time and cost, which suggests improvements have been made in response to earlier lessons and that estimating has improved. On average the original cost of a Tranche 1 study was £995k and the final outturn was £1,677k, an increase of £682k or 78%. In comparison, the average original cost of a Tranche 2 study was £1,355k and the final outturn was £1,533k, an increase of £179k or 21%. Similarly an average Tranche 1 study had a planned duration of 18 months and was extended by 8.1 months (47%), while an average Tranche 2 study had the same planned duration but was only extended by 4.3 months (29%).
5.4 The main reasons for late delivery and overspend are analysed in Figure 6 and 7. These figures were taken from information provided by GO project managers to DfT on factors that lead to overruns. No information was provided on the relative contribution of these factors. Delays in model development have been by far the most commonly cited reason for late delivery; while model development and stakeholder consultation most frequently had an impact on overspend.
Figure 6: Reasons given for extensions in time

Figure 7: Reasons given for extensions in budget
6 Study specification and contractual framework

6.1 VIEWS FROM STAKEHOLDERS

6.1 The views represented below have been collected from interviews with a range of national stakeholders, a workshop with the Government Office project managers and discussions with stakeholders involved with the 6 multi-modal studies that were evaluated in detail. Stakeholders interviewed during the detailed evaluation stage include Government Office project managers and staff, lead consultants and subcontractors, steering group members and wider reference group members.

6.1.1 Scope and specification

6.2 Most stakeholders recognised that the scope of the studies was largely defined by the roads review and support the studies as a fresh approach and positive step forward. It was also recognised that the pressure to respond promptly to the findings of the review meant that the studies were scoped and contracted to tight deadlines. However a number of stakeholders are critical that the processes involved in developing the scope of the studies could have been more transparent. Some stakeholders, particularly those with an interest in economic regeneration and those representing the business community and motoring groups, take a more negative view. These see the studies as a device for pushing difficult decisions on the road-building programme into the “long grass” (i.e. hidden and deferred) and are critical of a perceived lack of national vision to set a context for the studies.

6.3 Some of the statutory bodies and environmental groups feel that the scope of the studies did not always cover broad enough issues, e.g. studies focused upon inter-urban corridors but failed to account fully for the impact on rural areas around them. They also feel the scope and specification of the studies did not encourage environmental impacts to be considered at an early stage and gave too much prominence to mitigating environmental damage rather than improving the environment.

6.4 A number of stakeholders questioned the boundaries of the study areas and the variation in scale between large-area studies e.g. SWARMMS and much more localised studies such as the A453. Others have questioned the priority given to some of the studies e.g. the logic of carrying out a detailed study on access to Hastings ahead of the regional south coast corridor study. Some stakeholders with expertise in the rail sector have commented that the study boundaries do not map well onto the rail network and that ideally the MMS process should have looked at study areas that took account of the origins and destinations of both road and rail flows. There has also been criticism over the co-ordination of studies in adjacent areas and the wide variation of approaches adopted. This was highlighted on many occasions particularly in relation to road user charging, but more generally some stakeholders have questioned how strongly the recommendations of a given study reflect the technical background of the lead consultant. The concern was encapsulated in a comment of one stakeholder who told us that they know what direction the study would take from the day the consultant’s name was announced.
6.1.2 Resources

6.5 At the outset of the studies resources in both DfT and the Government Offices were stretched. DfT had only a single person working on the MMS at this stage. She worked hard to meet demands but more support would have been appreciated by the GOs. The GO project managers came from a variety of backgrounds. Some, but not all, had transport planning backgrounds. While they were keen to get involved with the studies many felt that they lacked experience of specifying, initiating and managing large complex projects and would have valued more help and training. They also felt that they were resource limited at the outset and it was difficult to recruit staff with the necessary experience as consultants were competing for the available skills in order to bid for the imminent studies. Delayed delivery of GOMMMS meant GOs did not feel that they had sufficient guidance for the first tranche of studies.

6.1.3 Tender Documentation

6.6 Most GOs and steering group members felt that the innovative nature of the studies made it difficult to specify the work programme tightly. This was particularly true for the stakeholder consultation element of the studies where experience was very limited. Consultants felt that the quality of the Terms of Reference varied between studies. Many were reasonably well written and clear on the tasks and reporting. However nearly all were less clear on the level of detail and on the depth of analysis required, i.e. whether the studies were strategic overviews or detailed plans. Consequently, there was a large range of bid price, which made selection difficult. In one extreme case the bid prices ranged from £250k to £1.1m. Some consultants have commented that early Tranche 1 tender documents assumed that the consultants had a good knowledge of GOMMMS even though it was still under development and had only recently been made available in draft form.

6.1.4 Tender Process

6.7 GOs felt that a generic contract notice used for the first tranche studies had been a problem as it had resulted in them being swamped with replies. This wasn’t a problem for later studies as contract notices were specified more tightly for individual studies. Some GO project managers felt that pre-tender meetings with bidders had helped to elicit good quality proposals while others expressed concerns that this approach could hinder impartiality.

6.8 It was common for members of the steering group to sit on the tender evaluation and interview panel, which meant that the panel size could be as large as 20 people. Some consultants considered this an unusual practice but most didn’t consider it a problem. To ensure steering group members could not benefit from seeing commercial information relating to potential competitors, pricing details were kept separate from the technical proposal. This put some GOs in a difficult position because some members of the evaluation panel were making forceful recommendations based on the technical aspects of the proposals without being aware of significant differences in price.

6.9 GOs stated that the selection of consultants was based on value for money and with the quality of technical skills and track record of the consultants carrying a very high weight. Subsequent experience of managing the studies has shown that greater emphasis should have been placed on project management and communication skills. For example, it has been suggested that only project managers with recognised qualifications should be appointed to lead MMS and that the consultant’s project manager not project director should be requested to lead the interview presentation.
6.10 Some proposals did not have sub-contractors fully signed up at the bid stage, which resulted in problems during the study when lead contractors could not secure input from the specialist sub-consultants when required.

6.11 In general consultants and evaluation panel members felt that the selection process had been fair and operated well. Some panel members felt the proposals submitted by consultants were too long but in the one of the studies examined in detail the proposal length had been restricted to 30 pages which caused significant problems during the management of the study because it had not been possible to specify the deliverables clearly enough in the space available.

6.1.5 Contractual Framework

6.12 On the advice of contracts experts in (DETR) DfT, contracts comprised firm and estimated price components to deal with uncertainties in work requirements. Tasks that had clearly specified deliverables were firm price while other tasks were variable price with agreed rates up to a maximum sum. GOs felt that this approach was essential because of the difficulty in specifying a tight work programme. DfT’s contracts experts developed costing spreadsheets for each study based on the GO project managers suggested task structure. Consultants had mixed views over these costing sheets. They were felt to be very useful when the consultant’s task structure matched the suggested breakdown on the costing sheets. However some consultants chose to structure their project in a different way. These consultants then found that the information that they were using to manage the project internally didn’t match the information required by the GOs and DfT.

6.13 Some consultants and some GO project managers failed to understand the full implications of the contractual framework. All understood that the contract had a maximum price but many had not realised that each individual variable price task was also subject to a ceiling and that budget could not be moved from an underspending task to an overspending task without a clear justification, approval by the MMSU and a formal contractual amendment. This subsequently caused problems and delays in agreeing variations during the contract.

6.14 Another important factor is that for the early studies many of the consultants felt that proposals would be selected predominantly on the lowest price proposal which met an adequate threshold of quality. Many based their bidding strategy on this belief and consequently the prices submitted in bids tended to reflect the lowest price for which the contract could be completed, i.e. a minimum specification that did not allow for contingencies. It was recognised by both consultants and GO project managers at the outset of many of the early studies that contract variations involving price increases would be required to complete the study. However this wasn’t communicated clearly to DfT or reflected in the predicted cost of the studies until the work was well underway.

6.1.6 Scoping Studies and Inception Phases

6.15 Some GOs found that an inception phase was helpful in clarifying the details of the work programme and setting a ceiling on the budget. Others had found a scoping study useful in tightening the specification of the work programme.
6.2 OPINION OF THE RESEARCH TEAM

6.2.1 Policy Context

6.16 While some stakeholders have been critical of the lack of a strategic national vision at the outset of the studies, the Roads White Paper and the Ten Year Plan did set out a vision which offered a sense of new direction and was in general well received by the transport community and the general public. The Ten Year Plan talked of the studies rejecting the old approach of focussing on one-dimensional solutions and instead taking a comprehensive look at transport problems and offering solutions in which all types of transport can play a part. Against this background there was a strong momentum at the outset for the studies to take:

- a long term perspective and explore innovative solutions unconstrained by short term problems and institutional frameworks, and
- an inclusive approach, engaging stakeholders to build consensus and ownership of the recommendations.

6.17 This momentum had a significant impact on the initial direction of the early studies and subsequently had an impact on both the deliverability of study recommendations in terms of costs and timescales and the costs of the studies themselves.

6.18 Another key factor that impacted on the studies was DfT's desire to respond very quickly to the findings of the roads review. This urgency put considerable pressure on stretched resources in both DfT and the Government Offices and while all of the individuals involved performed professionally and effectively there is no doubt that, given the innovative nature of the MMS concept, the scope and specification of the early studies could have been improved if more resources or time had been available to develop a greater understanding of the issues and potential consequences. For GOs, Steering Groups and consultants, the most significant unanswered question was considering that the studies were to be area wide and strategic, how far should the schemes be developed and in how much detail. As a consequence the early project tender specifications were weak in this area. We recognise that DfT had envisaged this problem and some advice was included in GOMMMS. However at the tender stage of the first studies GOMMMS was still in draft form and had not been fully assimilated by the transport community. There was also a pressure to start particular studies as early as possible. This led to Access to Hastings starting before the more strategic South Coast regional study.

6.19 The desire to carry out a number of large innovative studies in parallel over a relatively short time also impacted on the consultancy sector which started to compete for the available talent in order to bid for the expected contracts. This in turn denied skilled resources to the Government Offices.

6.2.2 Scope and Terms of reference

6.20 The study areas were based on remitted schemes from the Roads Review and refined through regional consultation. This had a number of consequences.

- The studies were extremely heterogeneous. They varied greatly in scale ranging from local studies to areas covering more than one English region containing strategic rail and road corridors within them. Some were conurbation studies, some were defined on inter-urban corridors, and others covered areas with more than one urban centre and a wide range of transport movements.
- Studies in adjacent areas took very different approaches. This was particularly highlighted by the treatment of road user charging in different studies.
• With the exception of London to South West and South Wales, the study boundaries did not coincide with the rail network, which meant that rail recommendations could often have impacts outside of the study region or rail solutions needed investments outside of the study areas.

6.21 GOMMMS was developed as a framework to ensure some consistency between the studies but GOMMMS is more prescriptive in some areas than others giving the studies a large degree of freedom. Against this background management of the co-ordination of the studies became a vitally important aspect.

6.22 A review of the Terms of Reference (ToRs) for some of the studies shows that while they vary in quality, most were well written and reasonably clear on the tasks expected of the consultants and the deliverables in terms of reports required. However, the early ToRs were weak on defining how the outputs would be used and how far the studies should progress in developing recommendations for implementation and the level of detail required in support of each of the recommendations. Consultants struggled with this lack of clarity that resulted in a very wide range of bid prices. Some studies found scoping studies benefited in helping to clarify the scope of the study.

6.2.3 Scoping Studies

6.23 There have been mixed views over the benefits of using a scoping study to refine the work programme before going out to tender for the main study. Most stakeholders said that a scoping phase was useful but some were concerned that it placed the consultant who carried out the scoping study in an advantageous position to win the main contract. While it is possible to bar the scoping contractor from bidding for the main contract most stakeholders felt that this would be too restrictive.

6.24 Two of the six studies evaluated in detail used scoping studies. This phase had been very useful on one study but less so on the other. There were too few examples and too many variables to draw any firm conclusions from our findings but it is worth noting that the successful scoping study was considerably bigger than less successful one and in the successful example the contractor who carried out the scoping study also carried out the main contract. There are tentative indications that the less successful scoping study did not provide enough detail to usefully clarify the scope of the main contract and that the contractor who carried out the main study did not feel ownership of the scoping study findings.

6.25 From our discussions with stakeholders and our review of the studies it is clear that clarifying the programme work is essential to ensuring that the study is successful and cost effective. A scoping study can be used for this purpose but some of the later multi-modal studies have used a scoping inception phase followed by a formal review point as the first task of the main study, and this format seems to be working well.

6.2.4 Tender Process

6.26 The process used to select consultants followed a relatively standard format and was generally felt to have worked well. Both the evaluation panels and the consultants considered the process to be fair and managed professionally. It is less certain that the interview panels needed to be as large as they were but this may have helped build some ownership by the steering group. The final decision was taken by a small group, including the GO Project Manager who had evaluated the financial proposal as well as the technical proposal, and for most studies the GO and steering group felt that the process had selected the best consultant for the work.
6.27 There has been some debate over whether the length of proposals should be limited. Some selection panels felt that the proposals presented by many of the consultants were too long, making the proposal evaluation exercise unnecessarily onerous. However one of the multi-modal studies limited the proposal length to 30 pages, which caused subsequent problems during the management of the study because it had not been possible for the consultant to fully specify the deliverables covered by the quoted price in the space available. In hindsight, the restriction on proposal length should have been targeted at supporting documentation and sufficient space left for a detailed description of the work programme and deliverables.

6.28 One lesson from the early studies was that it is important to test the interpersonal and communication skills of the consultant’s proposed project manager at interview. These skills became critical success factors during the studies.

6.2.5 Contractual Framework

6.29 The contractual framework developed by DfT’s contracts unit was well suited to the management of the studies. The open-ended nature of the studies meant that it would have been difficult to use a firm price strategy. A firm price contract would have forced the consultants to spell out their approach and deliverables far more clearly but this would have then severely limited the steering group’s ability to influence the direction of the study. It would have also meant that the consultants would have built large risk contingencies into their bids increasing the prices. The use of a mixture of firm and variable cost elements potentially gave the Government Office project manager good control over the project. There was, however, confusion on some of the early projects over the variable cost elements. While it was clearly set out in the contracts, some consultants and GO Project Managers failed to recognise that not only was the contract subject to a maximum sum, each individual variable price task also had a cost ceiling. Some tasks needed to remain flexible so it may have been better to avoid specifying a maximum sum for each individual task but instead rely on the maximum sum of the contract to act as a cap on expenditure. This would have allowed GO project managers to reallocate budget across tasks as the work programme clarified without having to go to DfT to formally amend the contract.

6.30 Lack of clarity on the contractual framework could have been resolved by reviewing contractual issues at a project inception meeting, with a contracts specialist attending if required. There would also have been value in GO and departmental project officers receiving some procurement and project management training before they managed these major and complex projects.

6.31 The individual task costing sheets developed by DfT worked well for some of the studies but broke down badly when the consultant chose to structure the job in a different way.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

6.32 Our main recommendations relating to contractual frameworks for future studies are:

- Tighten the specification of future studies so that stakeholders are clearer about what the study is aiming to deliver and the gaps in data and knowledge that need to be filled. If this cannot be done at the outset then commission a scoping study or use a scoping inception phase followed by a formal review point as the first task of the main study.
• Continue to use a mixture of firm and variable cost elements for the contract, which fits the research nature of the studies. Ideally as many tasks as possible should be specified tightly enough to allow firm price to be used but there are likely to be some tasks which need to remain flexible. Do not set a contractual maximum sum for individual variable cost tasks so that client project managers can reallocate budget across tasks as the work progresses.

6.33 We also recommend the following practical measures are taken for future studies:

• Review contractual issues at a project inception meeting, with a contracts specialist attending if required.

• Give consultants the opportunity to submit an alternative approach as a variant bid.

• Ensure the consultants are aware of the selection criteria.

• Restrict the length of supporting documentation in proposals, if necessary, but do not reduce the space available to describe the programme of work.

• Test the interpersonal and communication skills of the consultant’s proposed project manager at interview.
7 Study management and co-ordination

7.1 This section discusses the management and co-ordination of the multi-modal studies, and the roles played by Government Office (GO) project managers and consultant project managers. The management and contribution of steering groups is addressed separately in the next section.

7.1 VIEWS FROM STAKEHOLDERS

7.2 The views presented below are largely taken from interviews and workshop discussions with GO project managers, and interviews with the consultants who managed the 6 multi-modal studies that were evaluated in detail. The views of other stakeholders, including DfT representatives and members of steering groups and wider reference groups, have also been taken into account.

7.1.1 Roles and relationships

7.3 The GOs managed the studies. Their role was to guide and monitor the consultants and chair the study steering groups. The consultants were responsible for delivering studies to meet the objectives. Typically the consultant team would include a project manager responsible for day-to-day management and co-ordination and a project director who would oversee the project and attend meetings with the GO and steering group. DfT was the budget holder for the studies and there was a representative from DfT MMSU on each study steering group.

7.4 For some of the earlier MMS, there was initial confusion over responsibilities and authorities. GOs were responsible for managing the studies but did not have financial authority to agree variations to the contract. Some GOs felt that the process would have worked better if they had held the budget themselves, while others were happy with the existing system. The processes for invoicing and contract variation are discussed in the next section.

7.5 As discussed in Section 6.2.3, for some studies GOs were disappointed that project directors fronted selection interviews but did not subsequently make a major contribution to the study. The consultants’ project managers who actually led these projects were technically competent but had less authority and less ability to communicate with non-specialists.

7.6 GO project managers were expected to manage the consultants and the steering group, and liaise effectively with DfT and adjacent multi-modal studies. This required strong project management skills, some technical understanding, an appreciation of local issues and politics, and good chairmanship skills (except where more senior GO colleagues chaired the steering group). This was a challenging project management role and in some cases GOs felt under-prepared. Many would have appreciated project management training tailored to the needs of the MMS process, as was provided by GO East Midlands (GOEM) for their study managers. Some GOs suggested that DfT could have provided such training or produced a project management guide. However, DfT has pointed out that Departmental procurement and project management guidance was
already available and MMS-specific guidance would have taken some time to produce and may not have covered all the issues that arose in what was a new approach.

7.7 GO project managers found they had to devote much more time to the early MMS than had originally been envisaged, and resource constraints were a major problem. This was a particular issue for GOs that were managing more than one MMS or a roads-based study at the same time. However, GOs did comment that managing more than one study helped them to move up the learning curve more quickly and lessons were learned that benefited concurrent studies.

7.8 Consultants required a blend of technical and non-technical skills to manage the study and ensure effective communication with the GO project manager, subcontractors, steering group members and other stakeholders. The technical skills of the consultant teams were generally considered good although there were some weaknesses in the modelling area, particularly the on the rail side (modelling is discussed in Section 10). Non-technical skills such as consensus building, project administration and communication to non-specialists were variable, with some good and some bad examples. In the worst cases, consultant project managers were seen as poor at presenting information to a non-technical audience and came across as arrogant and condescending in front of their steering groups.

7.9 Some GOs were disappointed that the work produced by consultants was over-detailed technically, full of acronyms and didn't provide the clear understanding and interpretation that they were looking for. This created extra work for the GOs, who had to provide the interpretation themselves, modify deliverables and provide coaching for consultants before steering group meetings.

7.10 GOs felt that it was important to have a single point of contact with the consultant, and consultants felt the same way about the GO. Turnover or unavailability of key consultant staff caused some problems for a few studies, as did multiple customers on the GO side. Both issues were significant for one of the studies we examined in detail, where the project director was unavailable for a period of time, the consultant project manager changed and there were several contacts at the GO with associated lack of clarity in responsibility.

7.11 A more important consideration appeared to be the personal relationship between the GO project manager and consultant project manager. In general these relationships were good, with the GO project manager being made to feel part of the team and the consultant appreciating their input. However, there were cases where the relationship started to break down, leading to lack of trust and greater involvement by the GO in the day-to-day management of the study.

7.12 Delays in approving contract variations and paying consultants sometimes threatened the relationship, although the consultants usually attributed these delays to DfT rather than the GO. This issue is discussed in the next section.

7.13 Where the relationship between client and contractor was good, GO project managers met several times a month with consultants and interacted by phone and e-mail on a daily basis. Frequent meetings were easier and more likely where the consultant’s office was located close to the GO.

7.14 Some consultants said that they would have appreciated more direct feedback on their performance from GO project managers. This lack of feedback was also evident from some of the interviews, where GOs expressed concern over aspects of the consultant’s performance but the consultant was unaware that there had been any problems.
7.1.2 Project management

7.15 Monthly progress meetings were held between the GO and consultant for all of the studies we examined in detail. Monthly progress reports were usually prepared in advance of these meetings but the content of these reports was variable. Some GO project managers felt that reporting was unclear and that difficulties were not flagged up early enough. In one case the GO suspected that the consultants deliberately obscured overruns because they thought DfT would pay for additional work as long as this work contributed to study objectives. While we found no evidence of this intention, the perception clearly soured the relationship between the GO and the consultant.

7.16 Many of the studies overran their original timescales and budgets, for the reasons discussed in Section 5. Poor project management was not generally cited as a reason for delay by the GOS, but some steering group members felt that the studies could have been managed more efficiently. For example, some steering group members commented that projects should have been planned better to avoid rushing at the end, and others said that the consultants were not always fully prepared for steering group meetings. Some GOS did criticise their consultants for being too optimistic about delivery dates and/or allowing insufficient contingency within the work programme.

7.17 GO project managers generally considered that the cost breakdown structure provided by PPAD was helpful in tracking expenditure against progress. However many GOS found that the consultants did not provide enough detail on their invoices to allow expenditure to be related to progress and deliverables in each of the tasks. Some consultants were more critical of the cost breakdown structure, saying that it did not map well onto the categories of work undertaken. Some consultants had got around this problem by keeping their own project management systems in a preferred format and then converting to DfT’s format for progress reports and invoices.

7.18 Consultants used spreadsheets, MS Project™ or other in-house systems to manage their projects. Some reported that MS Project™ was unsuitable because the research nature of the work meant frequent revisions, but others used it effectively. The choice of project management system appeared to be dictated by personal preference and the normal working practices of the consultant.

7.19 Invoicing was generally done on a monthly basis, but payment of these invoices was delayed if the expenditure related to a proposed contract extension or an extension of the financial limit on a specific task. This caused some cash flow problems for consultants where contract variations had been requested but not yet authorised.

7.20 Many GOS felt that the process for agreeing contract variations was inefficient and overly time-consuming. Contract variations typically took 2-3 months to process, and in one case it was over 4 months. So that work could continue, GOS often had to ask the consultant to proceed on the basis of a verbal agreement. GOS commented that this lack of contractual control and decision-making power sometimes made it difficult for them to maintain credibility with the consultant and the steering group. DfT reported that the business cases accompanying variation requests were often not sufficiently robust, and delays were incurred in obtaining supporting information to clarify gaps in these cases. This tracks back to an inability by the GOSs and consultants to relate project deliverables to invoiced expenditure.

7.1.3 Co-ordination between multi-modal studies

7.21 Efforts were made to co-ordinate studies addressing overlapping or adjacent areas, such as cross-representation on steering groups and specially convened meetings. Some overlapping studies made arrangements to share data or hold joint consultation
exercises, but this didn’t work well when the two studies had different timescales or used different modelling approaches. One study identified co-ordination between overlapping studies as a particular weakness, with lack of clarity over responsibilities leading to delays and duplication. Because resources were limited, GOs and consultants were often unable to meet with neighbouring studies on a regular basis, particularly where those studies were managed by a different GO.

7.22 The GOs and consultants found DfT MMSU approachable and helpful. The Unit has a co-ordinating role and provided guidance on a wide range of issues as the studies progressed. Many would have welcomed greater input by DfT MMSU to encourage the exchange of information and experience, to co-ordinate studies with overlapping or adjacent areas and to promote consistency across studies and greater quality control. However stakeholders recognise that the unit was limited in its ability to take on a wider role by resource constraints. This was particularly true when help was most needed at the start of the studies.

7.23 The input from DfT ITEA was also valued, both ad hoc advice and technical seminars at DfT. However, some consultants felt that they would have liked earlier guidance on certain technical aspects such as projecting future demand for transport and dealing with road user charging. This is discussed further in Section 10.

7.2 OPINION OF THE RESEARCH TEAM

7.2.1 Roles and relationships

7.24 The GO project manager role was demanding in terms of project management and communication skills. Many GO project managers would have benefited from training in project management, tailored to the needs of the MMS process. Such training could have been co-ordinated by DfT, which would have provided an early opportunity for GO project managers to meet with different DfT staff and with peers managing other MMS. An experienced manager was needed to provide the authority and communication skills required for the role.

7.25 The GO project manager also required access to sufficient technical understanding, which came from the project manager’s own experience or from colleagues or external experts (e.g. HA or DfT ITEA). Where the GO project manager was a technical expert, they were more likely to take a more hands-on role and there was some danger of micro-management. Consultants, who encouraged such GO project managers to work closely with the study team, generally welcomed this technical expertise. However, other stakeholders sometimes became suspicious that the GO and consultant were too close and are making decisions without taking account of wider views. On balance it may have been better to appoint GO project managers with strong project management and communication skills rather than strong technical skills, if this choice had to be made. Technical understanding could have been supplemented by experts on the steering group or a technical advisor, although we appreciate such skills were in short supply in the early stages of the MMS programme. This should be less of a problem in future as it is unlikely so many studies will be undertaken concurrently again.

7.26 The consultant project manager role was yet more demanding. The personality, communication and negotiation skills of the consultant project manager are key success factors for the studies, and they also required high levels of technical understanding over a range of disciplines. Few individuals had all these qualities and the study project managers tended to be stronger on the technical side and weaker on softer skills. In some cases project managers came across badly in front of steering groups because they could not communicate well with non-experts. A good project director sometimes helped
to mitigate this weakness and ensure results were well presented and understood by all parties. As highlighted in Section 6.2.3, it was considered important that the project manager’s presentation skills were tested at the selection interview and that project directors did not front the presentation unless they were also available to front the project. Greater contribution from project directors and/or the appointment of more experienced project managers would have increased the quality but also the cost of studies. As noted in Section 6.1.5, consultants perceived that they were bidding on price at the proposal stage, which may have discouraged them from using expensive staff.

7.27 Resource constraints were a major issue for both GOs and consultants when the MMS were first set up. The rapid introduction of so many studies put a strain on the industry, which led to a skills shortage and poaching of skilled staff by competitors. In retrospect it may have been better to introduce the studies more slowly to avoid this problem and allow later studies to learn from the experiences of earlier ones. However, we recognise that this may have been difficult in the circumstances as there was pressure from Ministers, politicians and business groups for the studies to deliver.

7.28 A good relationship between the GO project manager and consultant project manager was a key success factor for the studies. This was partly a matter of personality but process aspects such as regular face-to-face meetings and transparent progress reporting also helped.

7.29 The performance of consultants could have been improved by better feedback. Many consultants were unaware of criticisms made by the GOs and this information was not fed back into the selection process except through the grapevine.

7.2.2 Project management

7.30 Arrangements for progress reporting did not provide sufficient information to GO project managers in many cases. The usual practice of monthly progress reports followed by progress meetings was fine but the reports often did not give the right information. All progress reports should have clearly stated which tasks had been completed and when outstanding tasks would be completed, and highlight any tasks that were additional to the original contract. They should also have contained financial progress information under the same categories so budget implications of variations to the programme of work could have been clearly identified.

7.31 Another key element in progress reporting was to ensure that the categories used in invoices mapped against those used in the proposal and in progress reports. As recommended in Section 6.3, consultants could have been given the option of using an alternative task structure to the standard PPAD costing sheet in their proposals. If an alternative task structure had been adopted, all parties should then have used it as a basis to manage the contract.

7.32 An early meeting between the GO, consultant and DfT budget holder could have helped to speed up the process for approving any subsequent contract variations.

7.33 The current arrangements for budget holding left GOs feeling that they had responsibility without power. They were expected to manage the study to tight budgets and timescales but did not have the authority to agree variations to the contract, which sometimes introduced time delays resulting in slippage of deliverables or extra cost as the consultant compressed tasks to catch up. The existing system could have been made to work well providing the work programme in the contract was clearly written, the consultants understood the system and were tolerant of any resultant delays, and the financial proposal clearly mapped onto the programme of work. However, these
conditions were not met in many cases and the resultant delays caused frustration for both GOs and consultants.

7.34 It may have been better if the budget holder had been given a greater involvement so that variations could be processed efficiently, with full knowledge of the financial and time implications. One possible solution would have been to transfer budgets to the GOs. This would have simplified the process and improved responsiveness, but DfT would have lost its central oversight of cost increases and it is not clear how cost overruns would have been financed. A better approach might have been to give GOs greater flexibility to manage studies within an agreed budget ceiling, through the ability to switch funds between different tasks. An alternative approach would have been to have increased DfT’s involvement in the studies such that they could have approved variations as the need arose. This would have required closer co-ordination between the GO, DfT MMSU and DfT PPAD, and could have been difficult to implement without an increase in staffing levels at DfT.

7.35 Some GOs have suggested that a project management system like PRINCE 2 should have been used across all of the studies. It is our understanding that PRINCE 2 provides a high-level management framework for Government programmes and projects rather than a day-to-day tool for project managers. We believe that the introduction of PRINCE 2 or a similar tool would have been useful for structuring reporting requirements, risk analysis and training GO project managers in the supervision of projects. However, we see no advantage in a standardised project management tool for consultants working on MMS. Most consultant project managers used either spreadsheets or MS Project™, and both were shown to work very effectively in the right hands.

7.2.3 Co-ordination between multi-modal studies

7.36 Cross-representation on the steering groups of adjacent and neighbouring studies helped to encourage data exchange and consistency of approach but resource limitations meant this was rarely a priority for GO project managers. It may have been better to limit steering group attendance to certain key meetings and to introduce specific agenda items for cross-study learning. This was less of a problem where the same GO managed the two studies, but even here communication could sometimes have been improved.

7.37 Information sharing between consultant teams on different studies was variable, with some good examples of data sharing and joint activities. Good examples included joint consultation exercises between the A453 and North/South Movements in the East Midlands studies and co-operation on modelling work between the London Orbital and London to South West and South Wales studies. Where the process was not managed well, responsibilities became blurred leading to delays and wasted effort. Key success factors for information sharing included clarity of responsibility, careful planning, compatible study timescales, the ability of all parties to meet delivery promises and good communication.

7.38 DfT MMSU and DfT ITEA together had a valuable role in providing ad hoc advice, bringing GOs and consultants together to discuss best practice, encouraging information sharing and issuing relevant guidance. The DfT seminars held on road user charging were particularly welcome although there was some criticism that guidance should have been issued earlier. Central co-ordination is particularly important at the start of any new initiative, and there has been criticism of the lack of DfT resources in the early stages of the MMS. If more resources had been made available, DfT could have contributed further to supporting the study teams, promoting consistency and ensuring quality control. For example, a multi-modal studies web site could have been set up for
GOs and consultant teams, comprising administrative and technical guidance, study reports (or appropriate links) and notification of forthcoming seminars and meetings.

7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

7.39 Our main recommendations relating to the management of future studies are:

- Appoint an experienced client project manager with strong project management and communication skills, if necessary supplementing technical understanding by involving other experts. Provide project management and procurement training if required.

- Ensure good project management practices and procedures are followed. Specific examples are set out below.

7.40 We recommend the following procedures are followed for future studies:

- Take account of the amount of senior time allocated by the consultant when assessing proposals.

- Give preference to consultants who are willing to meet with the client project manager on a frequent and regular basis.

- Explore proposed procedures for progress monitoring and reporting during the selection process, to ensure they are adequate.

- Ensure that all progress reports clearly state which tasks have been completed and when outstanding tasks will be completed, and highlight any tasks that are additional to the original contract.

- Ensure progress reports contain financial progress information under the same categories as the technical progress reporting so the implications of variations to the programme of work can be clearly identified.

- Introduce a structured but simple feedback system such as a checklist and quarterly phone call between the client project manager and consultant project director.

- At the end of projects, complete a contractor performance feedback form and make it available to DfT and other Government customers to inform the selection of consultants for future studies.
8 Steering Groups

8.1 This section discusses the role and operation of steering groups, and their contribution to the multi-modal studies process.

8.1 VIEWS FROM STAKEHOLDERS

8.2 The views presented below are taken from interviews with GOs, consultants and about 40 steering group members from six selected multi-modal studies. Interviewees included representatives from the Highways Agency (HA), Strategic Rail Authority (SRA), local authorities (LAs), passenger transport executives (PTEs), regional development agencies (RDAs), regional planning bodies (RPBs), environmental groups and business groups.

8.1.1 Role of the steering group

8.3 All parties considered the steering group an essential part of the study process. Steering group members provided the consultants with a wider range of experience, including in-depth knowledge of local issues and a greater understanding of economic and environmental concerns. Most steering group members found it a challenging but valuable activity and welcomed the opportunity to hear other views and learn more about the transport issues in their area. It is expected that the steering group process will facilitate delivery of study recommendations by providing some degree of consensus on what needs to be done in a study area, but this is largely untested to date.

8.4 Steering group members expressed a variety of views on the primary purpose of the steering group, including monitoring progress, making decisions, driving the process and providing technical and local expertise. While steering groups were intended to provide guidance and advice on key decisions, their role was rarely well specified. As a consequence consultants sometimes felt that the steering group was asking for additional tasks that resulted in additional costs. Some went as far as carrying out the additional work without securing a contract variation. DfT and GOs commented that steering groups require clear terms of reference (ToR) and several studies had developed ToR at early meetings.

8.5 A key aspect was whether steering group members felt they were there as an advisory sounding board or as a decision-making group. In some studies the consultants complained that the steering group was given equal power to the GO client, so they had multiple and conflicting customer demands to meet. In other cases steering group members felt that they had had insufficient influence over the content of the study, and that the consultant had dictated the agenda.

8.6 There was uncertainty at the final reporting stage whether steering group members were expected to endorse study recommendations or just confirm that the process had been followed correctly. This was a particular problem for environmental representatives who participated actively and were largely happy with the process but were then unable to sign up to the final report because they couldn’t be seen to agree with road building plans. In some cases GOs drafted a covering letter to the report which indicated how far steering group members signed up to the recommendations.

8.7 Go East Midlands (GOEM) employed a different approach for the studies in its region, with a high level steering group overseeing a number of multi-modal and roads based studies and a separate project management group for each study. The idea was...
that the steering group would include more senior people within organisations, and would encourage a more strategic overview of regional transport solutions. Most stakeholders felt that this approach worked well, although there were some overlap in the roles and membership of the two groups.

8.1.2 Chairing of the steering group

8.8 Steering group meetings were chaired by the GO with two exceptions. A local authority representative took the chair for some of the meetings on the London to Ipswich MMS and the Norwich to Peterborough steering group meetings were chaired by the Regional Assembly.

8.9 Most consultants and steering group members felt that the GOs chaired the meetings well. They were praised for making sure that all views were heard, for emphasising partnership and for building consensus. This was a challenging role, particularly where steering group members came with strong vested interests and high expectations of their ability to direct the study process.

8.10 On some studies consultants felt that they didn’t receive sufficient backing from the GO chairman or that they were not left with clear messages on how to respond to steering group comments. In one study, the chairman elicited views from each person around the table and the consultant was left to decide how best to address these often contradictory comments.

8.11 Where the chairman was more forceful, some steering group members felt that their views had not been taken into account in decisions. In one particular study, several members commented that decisions had been rushed through and the steering group had been expected to rubber stamp decisions made by the consultant and GO.

8.1.3 Participation in the steering group

8.12 GOs felt that in some cases the effectiveness of steering groups has suffered from inconsistency in participation from members such as the Regional Development Agencies, the SRA and business community.

8.13 It was recognised that SRA in particular had limited resources to devote to the studies and could not attend all meetings, particularly where meetings conflicted in terms of timing. Also, the SRA (in shadow form) had only been in existence since July 1999, when studies were already starting. However, the lack of SRA participation in steering group meetings was felt by other steering group members to have adversely affected study progress, with rail schemes considered in detail and then later rejected when the SRA attended a later meeting. This was less of a problem for the London to the South West and South Wales. London to Ipswich and Thames Valley studies, due to their more significant rail components.

8.14 It was often difficult to get the business community involved, which led some studies to organise separate meetings with local business representatives. This was not a problem for SWARMMS, where the CBI provided a valuable input.

8.15 The pace and composition of steering groups varied during the course of projects. Initially there was a slow pace and members tended to focus on details; later there was no time to make detailed comments as everything was accelerated to meet deadlines. The early focus on detail led to some steering group members nominating junior colleagues to attend later meetings, which perhaps diminished the contribution of those organisations and their ability to help shape final recommendations.
8.16 Most participants felt that steering groups had about the right number of participants, with typically 10-15 attending each meeting. They recognised that meetings would have been more difficult to manage if any more people had been involved. In spite of this view, many steering group members commented that it would have been valuable to include additional people in the group. Suggestions included the statutory bodies, passenger transport user groups, experts in social aspects and motoring organisations. All of these organisations participated in wider reference groups instead, and the statutory bodies were consulted directly at key stages during the study process.

8.1.4 Frequency of steering group meetings

8.17 Most studies had steering group meetings every 2-3 months at the start of the process and about monthly towards the end. The meetings also got longer in the later stages as there was more data and results to discuss. In general steering group members and GOs were happy with the frequency of meetings but most consultants felt monthly meetings were too frequent. Several consultant project managers commented that the cycle of preparing meeting papers, presenting results and addressing steering group comments took much more of their time than they had anticipated, and detracted from the technical work required to complete the study. This was a particular problem for the A453 study, which had three-tier structure comprising a strategic level steering group, a project management group and a modelling and appraisal expert group. This approach had some advantages, as discussed earlier, but it meant that meetings were held every two weeks and sometimes more frequently, which was very demanding for the consultant.

8.18 Steering group members requested that meetings take no longer than half a day, with a preference for the morning. They noted that the location of meetings was important, with convenient central locations encouraging greater levels of participation and noisy or stuffy meeting rooms making concentration more difficult.

8.1.5 Preparation of steering group papers

8.19 The late delivery of papers for steering groups was widely criticised. All studies suffered from this, to a greater or lesser extent. In the worse cases, papers were e-mailed the day before or tabled at meetings. This meant that steering group members often hadn’t read the papers and so could not contribute adequately to discussions. This got worse towards the end of studies, when meetings became more frequent and there were more results to review. The lack of time to read papers was a particular issue for non-experts who would have liked to discuss the papers with relevant experts within their organisations.

8.20 There was also some criticism over the level of detail in technical papers, although this wasn’t consistent. While non-experts considered many papers to be too technical and detailed, those with greater expertise (e.g. HA representatives) sometimes complained that short summary papers produced for steering group meetings didn’t give sufficient information.

8.1.6 Consultants’ interaction with the steering group

8.21 Consultants’ presentations at steering group meetings were very variable, perhaps reflecting their different attitudes to the steering group as well as their ability to convey technical information to a partly non-technical audience. In the best cases, consultants presented clearly and tried hard to modify their presentations to meet the needs of a range of different individuals. In the worse cases, presentations were unclear, riddled with jargon and incomprehensible for many non-experts.
8.22 Steering group members expected the consultant to put their case positively and then take account of steering group comments before final decisions were made. They felt that some consultants didn’t formulate and sell their own ideas sufficiently well and relied on steering group members to suggest how to proceed. Other consultants were criticised for being too dominant and not listening to views expressed by the steering group.

8.23 Where consultants did make an effort to engage the steering group at and outside meetings, this was very much appreciated. Good practice examples included one-to-one surgeries with steering group members and training sessions on modelling for non-experts.

8.24 In three of the six studies examined in detail, steering group members felt that the consultants viewed the steering group as a nuisance to be overcome rather than a source of information and expertise. The consultants were considered defensive, unresponsive and, in one case, arrogant and condescending. In one study, non-expert steering group members said that they had been reluctant to comment in meetings for fear of being shot down by the consultant and made to feel stupid.

8.2 OPINION OF THE RESEARCH TEAM

8.2.1 Role of the steering group

8.25 Steering groups provided a valuable role in ensuring that studies took account of relevant views and local knowledge. They also provided an educational role for local and regional stakeholders that should be useful for future transport planning activities in these regions. The third key role was that of promoting consensus on study recommendations and helping to identify major stumbling blocks to be avoided. This last role has not been tested as most study recommendations have not yet gone through the planning process, and there is some concern that lobby groups have been “keeping their powder dry” to object at that point. Delivery aspects are discussed further in Section 11 of this report.

8.26 Confusion over the role of steering groups has lead to frustration and delay in some cases. In our view their role should have been to make sure the study process was followed correctly, to provide specialist knowledge and to ensure the consultant was aware of all relevant political, economic and environmental issues. It should not have been their role to manage the study or the consultant. Steering group members should have been made aware that they didn’t have the authority to commission additional work, and also made aware of the cost and timescale implications of any additional work that they recommended. Clear terms of reference were essential, but the GO project manager and steering group chairman should also have reinforced them during the study.

8.27 To some extent the role of the steering group depended on their trust in the consultant. Where this trust started to break down, steering group members sometimes delayed the process by asking for additional work to confirm findings or micro-manage the content of deliverables. The level of trust was determined by the perceived technical competence of the consultant and also by their interpersonal skills and their ability to sell study findings in reports and presentations. As discussed in Section 7.1.1, many consultant project managers had the technical capability but were weaker in the softer skills of stakeholder consultation.

8.28 The delivery agencies, particularly HA and SRA, had a particularly important role on the steering group to ensure that study recommendations were feasible, deliverable
and consistent with wider priorities. Their role in this process is discussed in the later section on deliverability (Section 11).

8.29 The two-tier approach adopted by GOEM had the advantage of clearly separating the strategic and operational roles of stakeholder groups. A regional steering group can give a broader perspective while a study-specific project management group addresses local and study-specific issues. In general, it may have been more efficient to have had a smaller project management group comprising just the GO, DfT and delivery agencies, with other stakeholders such as environmental and business groups contributing at a higher advisory group level.

8.2.2 Chairing of the steering group

8.30 Good chairing of the steering group was a key success factor for the studies. Chairmen needed to ensure that all steering group members had an opportunity to comment and that consultants addressed their comments appropriately.

8.31 The GOs were well equipped to take on this role and many steering group members thought they performed it very well. Particular strengths included consensus building and ensuring all parties felt included and able to contribute. In some cases, this ability to involve participants and listen to their concerns came at the cost of providing clarity and direction for the study. Consultants sometimes left the meeting room with conflicting advice rather than a clear steer as to which steering group requests should be accommodated and which should not. This meant that consultants were vulnerable to criticism later for not responding to steering group comments, and is likely to have contributed to additional work and delays.

8.2.3 Participation in the steering group

8.32 In general, steering groups included the right organisations and the right level of seniority. There might have been merits in including additional participants, particularly the statutory bodies, but we believe this was outweighed by the disadvantages of a larger group. The cost of administering steering group meetings was already a significant component of study costs and this would have been made worse by having larger groups.

8.33 Some studies suffered from the non-attendance of key representatives, notably the SRA and business representatives. The SRA didn’t have sufficient resource to participate in all of the multi-modal studies and sensibly gives higher priority to those studies with a major and strategically important rail component.

8.34 The business community provided valuable input to some studies but was generally difficult to engage. Again this was largely due to resource constraints. The frequency, length and perceived lack of structure of steering group meetings were also barriers to participation by business. On balance, it would have been better for the business community to be engaged through the Wider Reference Groups rather than steering groups. Separate meetings held at breakfast time or in conjunction with other events helped in some cases, but this meant business representatives were not able to hear the views of other steering group members.

8.35 Participation by senior level representatives could have been improved by ensuring that meetings started and finished on time, that they had a clear agenda and objectives and that meetings were only held when there was new information to discuss. However, we recognise that meetings should not be too short as there is value in encouraging steering group members express their views, so that they feel included in the process and more able to buy in to the outcomes.
8.2.4 Frequency and length of steering group meetings

8.36 Steering group meetings were too frequent and too long for many of the studies, particularly early in the process when there was less to discuss. Shorter and less frequent meetings in convenient locations would have helped ensure meetings were well attended and had new information to discuss. It would also have reduced the burden on consultants and made it easier for them to meet deadlines.

8.37 A separate sub-group on modelling was sometimes used to advantage as it allowed some of the technical discussion to be delegated to experts and freed up time for steering groups to discuss other aspects of the study.

8.2.5 Preparation of steering group papers

8.38 Consultants should have been managed to send out papers earlier before meetings. Reducing the frequency of meetings, as discussed above, would have made this easier to achieve. The GOs should also have ensured that papers were written with the audience in mind and did not contain unnecessary technical detail and jargon. Clearly there was a balance to be struck, and some detailed technical papers were required to inform and engage technical experts.

8.2.6 Consultants’ interaction with the steering group

8.39 Some consultants were good at interacting with steering groups and made a real effort to engage and inform them. In these cases the steering group members appreciated the effort and were better able to contribute to the study. They were particularly appreciative of the opportunity to speak with the consultant outside steering group meetings and one-to-one meetings and surgeries have proved effective.

8.40 Unfortunately some consultants appeared unable to relate to steering groups, whether through lack of communication skills or lack of will. Too often the consultants were defensive and unresponsive to steering group comments. We believe that it was the responsibility of the GO project manager to ensure that the consultant presented results in a clear, jargon-free way and responded positively to steering group contributions.

8.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

8.41 Our main recommendations relating to steering groups for future studies are:

- Continue with the steering group concept but consider using a smaller project management group (client organisation, DfT and key delivery agencies) with a larger advisory group of wider stakeholder interests.

- Ensure that each group has clear terms of reference and that the chairman reinforces these terms of reference as the study progresses.

- Select chairmen who have skills in summarising and reconciling disparate views, and are willing to be forceful at times in refusing requests from group members. In general, more senior managers are more likely to have the necessary skills and authority for this role.

8.42 We also recommend the following practical measures are taken for future studies:
• Ensure that all meetings start and finish on time, that they have a clear agenda and objectives and that meetings are only held when there is new information to discuss.

• Hold advisory group meetings every 6-8 weeks at key stages of the study. If necessary, members can be kept informed of study progress between meetings by short e-mail reports.

• Ensure that meetings take no longer than half a day and are held in convenient locations with suitable meeting environments.

• Manage consultants to send out papers at least 5 working days before meetings.
9 Stakeholder consultation

9.1 This section discusses stakeholder consultation including wider reference groups and public consultation; steering groups are discussed in the previous section.

9.1 OVERVIEW

9.2 The framework for undertaking the consultation activities within the MMS has been prescribed in GOMMMS. Guidance is offered at a very general level, so as to allow the individual studies the flexibility to develop a consultation strategy appropriate to the particular study area. GOMMMS suggests that this consultation strategy should distinguish between:

- **Information provision** – a one way process to keep those involved in the study informed
- **Consultation** – where the view of the general public or sectional interests are sought at particular stages of the study and the results are input back into the process
- **Participation** – either through the steering group or through other means by which the public and other interests have a direct influence in the outcomes of the study.

9.2 STAKEHOLDER GROUPS INVOLVED IN THE MMS PROCESS

Figure 8 shows the types of stakeholder involved in the MMS process.

![Figure 8: Stakeholders involved in the MMS process](image)

9.4 The extent of involvement of each stakeholder group varies between studies. In general key national stakeholders (DfT, HA, SRA etc.) and certain local stakeholders (e.g. Local Authorities) are closely involved in the study through participation in the steering

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2GOMMMS volume 1 pp8. "It is for the individual Steering Groups, who understand the local circumstances and history best, to decide when and how to involve the public, on advice from the consultants if appropriate".
group. Other interested local stakeholders and the statutory bodies are consulted through Wider Reference Groups, workshops and interviews, and the general public is informed and consulted through public exhibitions, newsletters and web sites.

9.3 EXPENDITURE ON CONSULTATION

9.5 The proportion of the MMS study budgets that have been spent on the consultation tasks has varied from study to study. This may partly reflect the diversity of the study areas covered, but also the amount of guidance on the required levels of consultation from DfT. Information was provided by the GOs on the estimated or actual costs of consultation activities, and these figures have been compared with the total study costs to identify the proportion of the study budget that was spent on consultation (see Figure 9). We note that these figures do not include costs associated with steering group meetings and may not include all the costs incurred by consultants in attending workshops and one-to-one meetings with individual stakeholders.

![Figure 9: Expenditure on consultation as a proportion of total study budget](image)

9.6 Key stakeholders have suggested that the budget for consultation should be approximately 20% of the total study budget, which was a little more than the average percentage spend calculated for the studies. However, interestingly, many stakeholders including most of the GOs and consultants commented that too much effort had been spent on consultation, particularly in the early stages of the studies. This 20% rule of thumb recommendation may therefore be based on the perception that studies typically spent more on consultation, or stakeholders may have included activities such as steering group meetings under the general banner of consultation.

9.7 As can be seen from Figure 9, expenditure on consultation was less than 15% of the total study budget for eleven of these studies, and for one study consultation expenditure was below 5%. By contrast, there were two studies where consultation activities accounted for more than 25% of the total budget.
9.8 Of the six studies considered in detail, three had spent less than 10% on consultation and the other three had spent less than 15%. For the selected studies, there did not appear to be any great desire from stakeholders for more consultation activities to be carried out. In most cases, stakeholders felt that the amount of consultation was about right, or that some activities could have been removed as they were of limited value.

9.4 CONSULTATION PROCESSES

9.9 This section provides an overview of the different consultation processes used in the studies, split between consultation with key stakeholder groups and public consultation.

9.4.1 Consultation with Key Stakeholder Groups

9.10 The main processes used for informing, engaging and consulting key stakeholder groups are steering groups, wider reference groups, workshops, focus groups, meetings and interviews.

9.11 All studies have steering groups (sometimes known as project management groups); the role of the steering group has been discussed in detail in Section 8.

9.12 Wider Reference Groups (WRGs) consist of between 50 and 250 individuals/organisations drawn from wider interest groups in the area of the study. These may include local authorities, user groups (e.g. Freight Transport Association, Rail Passengers Council, Sustrans), Statutory Environmental Bodies (Environment Agency, English Nature, English Heritage, Countryside Agency), other environmental organisations (e.g. Transport 2000, Council for the Protection of Rural England), public transport providers (e.g. Network Rail, bus operators), business groups (e.g. CBI) and other organisations such as disabled passenger groups and the English Tourist Board. Workshops are held with the WRG on a periodic basis, usually at key points in the study such as the problems and issues phase.

9.13 Other forms of consultation with key stakeholders include topic group meetings (e.g. land use planning, freight), meetings with user groups and the business community, and interviews with policy makers and community leaders.

9.4.2 Public consultation

9.14 Consultation with the public is an important element of the “open government” agenda, and has been identified as a key task within the GOMMMS process. Figure 10 summarises the public consultation processes used by 20 Multi-Modal Studies for which information was available. We were unable to include the A52 corridor study as it is still at an early stage.
9.5 STAKEHOLDER VIEWS ON CONSULTATION

9.15 This section summarises the views on consultation processes from our interviews with the national stakeholders and the key local stakeholders that were involved in specific studies. Since both sets of stakeholders held broadly consistent views on the consultation process, the findings are presented as one. Stakeholder views on steering groups are summarised separately in Section 8.

9.5.1 Consultation with key stakeholder groups

Wider Reference Group

9.16 Most respondents considered the wider reference groups (WRG) to be an effective part of the consultation process. The WRGs provided a valuable sounding board to test opinions on the findings from each step of the process, as well as providing a mechanism to disseminate information, and a forum for building consensus in the study outcomes.

9.17 Some respondents criticised the WRG format in that it could become dominated by a single issue or individual. However, the fact that groups with opposing views were brought together by the WRG to discuss the options, was seen as a positive aspect of the process. In some cases attendance of the WRG meetings has been poor, which has limited the value of the process. The studies that had the most successful WRG consultation were those where WRG members were given tasks to complete during meetings. For example, a study could set WRG members the task of prioritising a list of thirty measures for alleviating congestion and getting them to think about which were the least and most objectionable of these measures.

9.18 The extent to which respondents felt that their views have had a direct influence upon the studies has been variable. In some cases respondents questioned the extent to which their views had been taken on board by the consultants. However, overall it is clear from the views of stakeholders that the WRG process was very valuable to the whole MMS process.
Statutory Environmental Bodies

9.19 The statutory environmental bodies have at times felt excluded from the process, and in some cases felt that they have been given insufficient opportunity to contribute to the studies. In particular they have felt that the consultants did not involved them early enough in the studies and, when they were involved, they were often given very short timescales within which to make their comments. This has led to cases where these bodies have doubted the quality of the appraisal, and have been unwilling to accept the outputs from the study without further amendments being made. In other instances, the consultants have found it difficult to engage with the statutory bodies, with the statutory bodies failing to turn up to pre-arranged meetings. The statutory bodies’ understanding of the MMS environmental appraisal process was considered variable. For example there was some confusion over how the environmental impacts are “scored” in the appraisal summary tables (ASTs), which may be partly explained by difficulties providing the expected level of detail for ASTs from strategic appraisal.

9.20 The interviewees identified the following issues relating to the role of the statutory bodies in the MMS studies:

- **Clarity of role** - the local statutory body representative, the consultant and the GO managers being unsure as to what role the statutory body should play in the process, and at what stage they should be involved;
- **Resource constrained** - the statutory bodies have been limited in terms of the time that they can commit to the studies;
- **Level of training** – there has been an apparent lack of training for the statutory representatives in both the environmental appraisal methodology, and also the wider objectives of the study process. Where training has been provided it has often been too late in the study process;
- **Environmental appraisal methodologies** – the consultants have encountered difficulties completing the environmental appraisal methodology. As such, they failed to provide a sufficient level of analysis to satisfy the requirements of the statutory bodies.
- **Quality control** – there was uncertainty about the role that the statutory bodies played in the quality checking and quality control of the environmental appraisals. Some statutory body representatives felt it was their role to undertake a quality check of the appraisal outputs, whereas others felt the responsibility should lie elsewhere, e.g. with the GOs. In all cases, it was recognised that this should be an important part of the process.

9.21 There has been a general consensus that the multi-modal studies would have benefited from a greater involvement in the process from the statutory environmental bodies. Different views were expressed as to the best way of securing this involvement. Several respondents (statutory bodies and others) suggested that the statutory bodies should have been invited to steering group meetings, whilst acknowledging that this would have required extra resources to have been made available.

Business community

9.22 Many studies have found it difficult to engage the business community, and have had to arrange separate meetings or attend meetings already set up with business groups – a factor which may have limited the amount of dialogue between different types of groups.

9.23 The business community expressed frustration that they have invested a great deal of time in consultation activities, but have not seen the results of their efforts. A more effective use of business input was suggested, which would be to involve businesses at a more strategic level when developing the study terms of reference.

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3 The statutory bodies responded to meet part of this requirement by putting together internal training courses and guidance, once this limitation had been identified.
9.5.2 Public consultation

9.24 Mixed views were expressed on the value of public consultation to the multi-modal studies. The majority view was that whilst the public consultation process provided important benefits, it did not always represent good value for money.

9.25 Consultation with the public was considered to offer three main benefits. Firstly, it played an important PR role, by increasing awareness of the study, and building a degree of consensus in the outputs from the study. Secondly, the process has had an educational benefit in that it increased the public’s understanding of transport issues in a particular region. Finally, the public consultation provided the consultants with some validation and support of their findings. Whilst these benefits have been widely acknowledged by the respondents, several have suggested that the wider reference groups provide a more effective means of achieving similar results.

9.26 A widely held view from stakeholders was that the studies found it difficult to engage with the general public due to the strategic nature of the studies. In particular, the public found it difficult to comment effectively upon schemes that were complex, or that covered large areas, or that were planned over long time horizons. Consultation was considered more effective where the options were better formulated and presented in a local context, as was done for local studies such as the A453 study and Access to Hastings. It was also suggested that the consultants could have been more creative in the way that the options were presented, so as to assist the public to conceptualise the options.

9.27 For a number of the studies, specialist consultants were subcontracted by the main consultants to undertake the stakeholder engagement tasks. The innovative approach to consultation that some of these consultants brought to the process has been praised. However, in some studies the specialist subcontractors have been criticised for their lack of knowledge of transport issues.

9.28 In some instances, stakeholders referred to a situation of “consultation overload” where the same stretch of road had been under consultation on several separate occasions.

9.29 The following section discusses individual public consultation mechanisms in more detail.

9.5.3 Consultation mechanisms

9.30 Consultation methods varied from primarily information provision (web sites and newsletters) to more participatory mechanisms such as questionnaires, public exhibitions and focus groups.

Websites

9.31 The study websites were considered to be a cost-effective mechanism for delivering information to the general public. The frequency of updates varied between studies, as did the level of detail. Also web-based information dissemination may not adequately inform some disadvantaged groups.

Newsletters

9.32 Newsletters were considered by many to be one of the least cost-effective consultation mechanisms, given the high cost of production and postage, and the uncertainty as to whether recipients read or even receive them. One respondent noted
that the costs associated with production and distribution of newsletters accounted for more than half of the total consultation budget. For those studies where a breakdown of consultation costs is available, it appears that between 10% and 50% of the consultation budget was spent on newsletter production and distribution. Several studies encountered problems distributing the newsletters effectively to all postcodes.

**Questionnaires**

9.33 Questionnaires were adopted on many studies as a mechanism for consulting with the public. Again, the performance of this mechanism (in terms of response rates) was variable. Questionnaires were also criticised in that questionnaire respondents are self-selecting, and those that respond are not necessarily representative of the wider view. Several stakeholders suggested that response rates could be boosted by offering an incentive for returning completed questionnaires.

**Public Exhibitions**

9.34 Public exhibitions were used as a mechanism for both informing the public of progress with the study, and consulting with them on how to take the study forward. For some studies the exhibitions were extremely expensive and poorly attended, whereas in other studies the exhibition provided a good source of feedback.

9.35 Traditional public exhibitions where strategic ideas were presented on static boards in a community location were found to be particularly ineffectual, as the public could not engage with such proposals. The most successful forms of public exhibition were those where interactive tasks were included as part of the exhibition. Examples that were successfully used on some studies include setting up a “market stall” in a community location (e.g. a shopping centre) where members of the public could interactively vote on different transport proposals, and setting up “citizens’ panels”, where members of the public could discuss local transport issues.

9.36 Stakeholders also noted the choice of venue for holding an exhibition was important. On some studies, the venues at which exhibitions were held were difficult to find, and as a consequence, the turnout was noticeably low.

**Other methods**

9.37 Focus groups were used on some of the studies to discuss issues with specific groups of the public in more detail. Of the six studies evaluated in detail, only one (TVMMS) used this method and it was stopped after the first phase of consultation, as it was not deemed to be useful. It is difficult to draw any general conclusions on the usefulness of focus groups from this experience.

9.38 One stakeholder suggested that an effective method of engaging with the public might be to hold radio phone-ins on the subject of transport issues in the localities in which the studies are taking place. At least three of the studies not evaluated in detail (WMAMMS, ORBIT, and N2P) are known to have used radio phone-ins/interviews as a consultation method.

**Guidance**

9.39 The guidance offered by GOMMMS is not supposed to be prescriptive. However, it has been considered by the stakeholders that further guidance would have been beneficial on for example on the appropriate scale of the consultation. Furthermore, the outcomes of the consultation phase are often poorly represented in the consultants’ final report, and this would warrant further guidance.
9.6 OPINION OF THE RESEARCH TEAM

9.40 The overwhelming opinion has been that the stakeholder consultation activities have been a useful component of the multi-modal study process. Specifically, the Steering Group and WRG consultation activities were felt to be particularly useful, with a number of the managing consultants noting that they did not feel that the studies could have been carried out without input from the Steering Group and the WRG. Importantly, this view was shared by all involved in the process, and not just those with a vested interest. It is clear that the consultation has improved the openness and transparency of the decision-making, though not to the level of satisfaction of all respondents. However, it is important to note that the benefits in consulting with the public, business community and local stakeholders will be of limited value if the study findings are not taken forward in a clear and transparent way.

9.6.1 Expenditure on consultation

9.41 Analysis of the expenditure on consultation has shown that the proportion of the study budgets allocated to this activity varied significantly from study to study. There is no clear correlation between study size and the proportion of the budget spent on consultation and neither is there clear evidence that greater expenditure led to more effective consultation. Most of the studies that we investigated in detail spent no more than 10% of their budgets on consultation, which was less than the average for all studies. Nevertheless, the stakeholders we spoke to felt that the amount of consultation carried out was adequate, with a number of people feeling that the amount of consultation could have been reduced. In particular, many studies carried out extensive consultation on problems and issues which did not add much to existing knowledge.

9.6.2 Key stakeholder consultation

9.42 Consultation with the key stakeholders (e.g. Wider Reference Groups) was generally considered more valuable to the MMS study process than public consultation, although both mechanisms provided benefits. We believe that consultation with key stakeholders was generally effective but could have been better focussed by giving more thought to the objectives of the consultation process, and the appropriate balance between information, consultation and participation-driven activities.

9.43 The consultants managing the studies did not always have a clear plan of how the consultation process was going to involve each of the key groups. This plan should have included details of how and when to involve the statutory bodies, the general public, and the business community, taking into account factors such as the amount of consultation that had already taken place, and the size of the study area. Whilst this approach was described in GOMMMS, it is not clear that it was followed in all of the multi modal studies.

9.44 These consultation plans should have acknowledged that different approaches needed to be used for the different stakeholder groups. For example, consultation with the public was likely to be more effective when the options are at a more developed stage. Specifically, the issue of the public being more interested in specific plans that affected them rather than generic and strategic issues was raised on numerous occasions by various stakeholders. On the other hand, many senior business representatives felt that they should have been consulted on the strategic issues early in the process but not involved in the detail.

9.45 The studies have adopted a wide range of consultation techniques with varying levels of success. Stakeholders have indicated that more interactive forms of consultation were found to be more successful than traditional, non-interactive methods.
Interactive methods included setting study-related task-based activities for WRG members to carry out at meetings, such as identifying problems, identifying measures for alleviating/eliminating problems and prioritising measures.

9.46 We agree with the GOs and consultants who have told us that more guidance on choosing and using consultation methods would have been helpful. In a separate exercise, guidance of this kind has been developed for the Highways Agency. It might also have been useful to develop a central library of information to assist with the consultation; for example, descriptions of common options (e.g. road user charging).

9.47 Consultation, particularly with the Wider Reference Groups, has allowed stakeholders to have some influence over the direction of the studies, and the consultants’ decision-making. However, this has often not been communicated back to the group members effectively. Consequently stakeholders have sometimes not recognised that their input has been valued and used. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that not all consultees’ inputs can or should be used in developing study recommendations. Given the size of most WRGs, it is inevitable that some stakeholders will feel that their views have not been taken on board. This is particularly true for some of the larger studies where the range and nature of consultee inputs can be very varied, and trying to build a consensus view is almost impossible. This situation could not have been avoided and the consultants leading the studies could have made a better job of managing the expectations of the Wider Reference Group during the consultation process. Further guidance on the reporting of consultation results would have been useful.

9.48 The statutory environmental bodies did not have a sufficiently clear or effective role in the MMS process. This was partly because of resource constraints but there were also concerns over their understanding of appraisal techniques used in the MMS process. Efforts were made to train representatives but this should perhaps have been done earlier. If the statutory bodies had had greater resources and understanding of the process it is possible that they could have worked with the consultants to develop transport solutions that offered environmental benefits, rather than simply minimising damage.

9.6.3 Public consultation

9.49 Overall, the public consultation activities have raised public awareness of transport problems, and have presented opportunities for the public to express their views. Indeed a number of studies have gone to great lengths to consult with hard to reach groups. There is also some evidence that public consultation has influenced the direction of studies. For example, public consultation for the South and West Yorkshire MMS informed decision making on the environmental side by providing information on noise and air quality impacts in the Sheffield region.

9.50 However, we agree with the GOs and consultants who consider that the public’s contribution to developing strategies and recommendations was of less significance than the contributions of the Wider Reference Groups. This was particularly true of larger strategic studies, where the options were less well defined in a local context.

9.51 It might have been better for these larger strategic studies to limit their public consultation activities to awareness raising through web sites and newsletters, rather than using expensive participatory methods such as questionnaires and interactive public exhibitions. These sort of methods were more suitable for smaller area studies, such as the A453 to Nottingham study, where local residents could appreciate on the likely implications of the various options to themselves and their communities.
9.52 This approach would also have helped to avoid duplication of consultation efforts in strategic study areas, as further consultation will be required when schemes are worked up in more detail later. Consultation overload is a potential problem for all the study areas and it would be beneficial for the delivery agencies taking forward study recommendations to make full use of the MMS consultation findings, where possible within the constraints of the data protection act.

9.53 Some of the methods used have not always been successful in engaging the public. In particular there have been concerns regarding the cost-effectiveness of holding basic public exhibitions (i.e. those that are unmanned or do not provide some form of interactivity), and the production and distribution of MMS newsletters.

9.54 It was commonly reported that the public were not interested in engaging with the strategic proposals presented at many of the public exhibitions, and that they only became interested if there was information on specific schemes in their locality. By introducing interactive elements to the public exhibition process, we believe that the studies would have had a better chance of successfully engaging with the public, as they would have had more opportunity for understanding the problems and issues in their area. For example, the market stall approach discussed in Section 9.5.3 could have been more widely used.

9.55 Newsletters were frequently employed as a way of providing information to large numbers of people in one shot. This was a fairly effective tool for information provision but it did not contribute significantly to engaging the public in the process. It may have been valuable to consider other more innovative ways of providing information and raising awareness. For example, radio phone-ins could have been used as a method of gaining publicity for the study, raising awareness of the issues, and engaging the public.

9.56 Questionnaires were used by most studies as a way of gauging public opinion. This was considered useful, particularly for smaller area studies, respondents were self-selecting and therefore the views submitted may not have been wholly representative of the wider community. There was also an issue with regard to the response rates to questionnaires on the different studies; on some studies, relatively low response rates were achieved, whilst on at least one study the response rate was as high as 25%. The reasons for these marked differences are not clear, but it is likely that response rates could have been improved by offering some form of incentive to potential respondents; for example, the names of questionnaire respondents could be entered into a raffle/lottery with the opportunity to win a small prize such as a £50 supermarket voucher. The response rate could also have been improved by following up with reminders.

9.7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

9.57 Our main recommendations relating to stakeholder consultation for future studies are:

- Allocate a maximum of 10% of the total study budget to consultation activities, unless there are specific, well-defined reasons for allocating more.

- Develop a consultation plan at the outset of the study describing the objectives of the consultation process, how each stakeholder group will be informed/engaged and the timing of each activity.
• Review guidance on consultation prepared for the Highways Agency in the context of multi-modal studies and, if appropriate, link it to GOMMMS.

• Provide training to statutory environmental bodies on MMS appraisal techniques and the wider study process. This may require additional resources to be made available.

9.58 We also recommend that the following practices are considered:

• For wider reference groups, use more interactive methods such as assigning problem identification or solution finding tasks to small groups.

• Continue to use newsletters to raise awareness but also consider more innovative techniques such as radio phone-ins, which can raise awareness and also provide an opportunity for the public to contribute ideas.

• For large strategic studies, limit public interaction to information provision through web sites and newsletters, and focus this effort towards the end of studies when recommendations are available.

• Use more participative approaches such as questionnaires and focus groups for consultation on smaller area studies, where local stakeholders can contribute usefully to the study process at different stages.

• Make public exhibitions more interactive.

• Consider using incentives and follow-up activities to improve the response rate from questionnaires.
10 Modelling and Appraisal

10.1 This section discusses modelling and appraisal aspects of the multi-modal studies. Because of the nature of the topic, this section is more technical than other parts of this report and it is also structured differently. Sections 10.1 and 10.2 provide an introduction and context for the subsequent review of modelling and appraisal aspects in Sections 10.3 and 10.4 respectively, while Section 10.5 discusses study reports and their availability.

10.2 This section represents the views of the ITS and John Bates Services team. These have been formed from a reading of study documents from fourteen of the MMS in stage 2 of the project, and interviews with the modelling and appraisal consultants in four of the studies in stage 3 – London to Ipswich (LOIS), South and West Yorkshire (SWYMMS), Tyneside Area (TAMMS) and Thames Valley (TVMMS). We are very grateful to the consultants, but our views are not necessarily theirs. ITS and John Bates Services are also grateful for inputs from AEA Technology on environmental and rail aspects of the studies.

10.3 We have assessed the studies as we found them and our comments and recommendations have been made accordingly. DfT has its own research programme, of which we are only partially aware. In some cases research may already be in hand to address our points, and we have noted particular cases of which we are aware.

10.1 INTRODUCTION

10.4 As discussed in Section 4.1, the MMS process was novel but it built on earlier work in London and Greater Manchester, and broadly followed the recommendations of the 1994 SACTRA report. The MMS were novel in three ways: (a) they were wide area studies (b) they were intended to be open-minded about solutions, including demand management, public transport and new capacity, and (c) they had a strong regional focus and stakeholder representation. To bridge the gap between “uncontrolled” regional studies and the requirements of the New Approach to Appraisal (NATA), the Government commissioned a document of Guidance on the Methodology for Multi-Modal Studies (GOMMMS). In relation to appraisal, the Guidance was rather prescriptive, in relation to modelling less so

10.5 Many of the technical difficulties the studies encountered relate back to one or other of these contextual points. These points are, in our view, critical to an understanding of the modelling and appraisal issues that are discussed below. In the following section, therefore, we consider the general implications of the study context.

10.2 CONTEXT FOR THE STUDIES

10.6 In order to understand the problems that the GOs, their Steering Groups and their consultants faced, it is first necessary to consider a number of characteristics of the MMS.

10.7 Firstly, they are extremely heterogeneous in nature. In terms of study area, they range from large towns and small cities to areas larger than an English region containing within them strategic road and rail corridors. Some are conurbation or part-
conurbation studies, some are defined on inter-urban corridors, others are defined on areas with more than one urban centre and a wide range of transport movements. From the outset, this made the ‘Multi-Modal Study’ a rather open concept, and created a situation in which different modelling approaches were likely to develop. Furthermore, in terms of the problem addressed, some studies are far more important from a national perspective than others.

10.8 Secondly, there is a crucial issue at the heart of many of the studies which goes right back to their genesis in 1997. Were the MMS intended to be area-wide strategic studies? Or were they intended to come up with (packages of) identified schemes? How far were the problems and aims associated with the road schemes remitted from the Roads Review intended to dominate? The MMS Guidance states:

“In seeking solutions to the problems to be addressed in the study, the contributions of all modes should be considered, including walking, cycling, air transport, shipping and pipelines, as well as roads, railways, buses and other forms of public transport. Solutions may also relate to non-transport policies, for example land-use, health and education. Although the genesis of the initial programme of Studies lies with problems on the trunk road network, the focus of the Studies will not primarily be on ways of providing additional road capacity. However, proposals for road improvements, whether through better management, widening or new alignments, are not ruled out and could be an output if such a solution were shown to be the most appropriate in the circumstances. Indeed, some schemes put on hold by the Roads Review have specifically been remitted for the Studies to consider in more detail.”

“The output from the Multi-Modal Studies will be a number of different options aimed at addressing the problems within the study area. These options will be in the form of plans, that is, a collection of quite specific and individual interventions. In some Studies, it may also be appropriate for over-arching strategies to be developed for the study areas, that is, general area-wide policies which could influence the use made of the transport system, such as land-use policies and policies for transport-using sectors, such as health and education.”

10.9 The question of whether it is necessary to develop a strategy before going down to the Plan level is left open. DfT’s key requirement of the MMS was that they should develop plans i.e. packages of projects and interventions. It was left up to each study to decide whether they needed to develop a strategy en route to the plan stage.

10.10 We think that there has been a series of tensions in the studies, from the formulation of the terms of reference, through their interpretation in a more or less strategic way, to the creation of solution packages. In practice, individual studies have had to resolve these tensions in their own terms with relatively little overarching guidance. The result is that some studies have taken a more strategic interpretation of the remit while others have focused on a narrower set of implementable schemes, which may be a mixture of roads and public transport.

10.11 We have noted that the outcome in many cases appears to be dependent on the particular dynamics of client and consultant teams. It is legitimate to pose the question – had study A been undertaken by consultant 2 for client 2, and study B by consultant 1 for client 1, would the study approach and outcome have been quite different? This issue recurred throughout our investigations. A particular example of this is the treatment of road user charging in the various studies.

10.12 Turning to the ‘multi-modal’ aspect of the studies, we found that the Terms of Reference of some of the studies had been written more restrictively than others, and that this influenced the Study outcomes. Whilst some studies took as their main focus the

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4 GOMMMS, Vol 1, Para 1.1.7
5 GOMMMS, Vol 1, Para 1.1.8
development of an area-wide multi-modal strategy and plan to address the Government’s five objectives, others took as their main focus certain study specific problems and objectives, such as the reduction of congestion on the trunk road network in the study area. This narrowing of the focus by some studies was found by the consultants and clients to make the problem more tractable and the Terms of Reference ‘tighter’ – in turn making the Study easier to bid for and to manage. One consequence of this narrowing of focus is that, in these studies, public transport improvements and rail freight measures tended to be relatively ineffective in meeting the objectives as formulated, and hence tended to be ruled out as significant solutions to the problem as defined. While this is perfectly legitimate, it may be in some conflict with the expectations generated by the term “multi-modal studies”. We note that a number of studies (e.g. ORPHEUS on Tyneside) have been launched that seek to fill this gap.

10.13 A related issue was the omission of urban transport authorities from steering groups and urban problems from the analysis in several studies. Urban transport and city-centre to city centre inter-urban journeys are two markets where public transport has a potential competitive advantage. Elsewhere, the dispersed pattern of origins and destinations limits the scope for mode shift in the short-to-medium term. The lack of focus on urban or urban-based journeys in several of the MMS naturally restricted the potential for public transport and other non-car based solutions.

10.14 A key strategic decision was to commission the 22 studies, at an originally estimated cost of £24m (though the subsequent outturn was £32m) in a relatively short space of time. This meant that the opportunities for learning by doing were to a large degree lost, at least within the period while the studies were active. It also meant, as others have commented, that massive pressure was placed on the capacity of the consultants and clients to handle this volume of demanding work. Nowhere was this more evident than in the modelling and appraisal stream of the work. One serious consequence on the consultants’ side was a bidding war for qualified staff, with established teams being broken up. Furthermore, most of the GOs were short of technical expertise and the DfT centre was itself desperately short of the resources needed to fill the gap. Only the Highways Agency was able to commit a reasonable level of resources to supporting the studies and even the HA was selective in its approach. We think the skill shortage in transport modelling needs specific consideration within the Transport Planning Skills Initiative.

10.15 Nevertheless, because of the strong stakeholder consultation ethos of the studies, the modelling and appraisal work had a powerful educational function within the studies. A number of consultants remarked that without the model as a central discipline around which to organise communication with the Steering Group, the study process would have been much more difficult. Of course, while this is to be welcomed, it does raise questions about transparency, ease of exposition and timing of the modelling in relation to the study process as a whole. In a small number of studies, the modelling and appraisal results came too late for meaningful feedback with the Steering Group. In future, regional and sub-regional studies will need to take this requirement on board as part of the critical path.
10.3 MODELLING

10.16 We have provided a technical report to DfT giving our review of modelling issues arising from the MMS. It is difficult to summarise these without doing damage to the arguments and/or being unfair to professionals who have carried out extremely testing work faced with many practical constraints of time, resources and data availability. Therefore, we here provide a checklist of items where we think improvements to current practice is required, and additional guidance. We are aware of the DfT’s on-going efforts in connection with advice on modelling in a number of contexts, but since these are not yet complete, we have not attempted to consider how far they will meet the checklist. In passing, we think it is most important not only that a unified format should be adopted, but also that the information should be selectively available, so that modellers are not required to become proficient in all aspects, but can focus on their particular problems.

10.17 Generally, we believe that the concept of a Reference Case in which transport costs are unchanged has much to recommend it: it separates the essentially demographic aspects from the specific aspects of transport policy. However, insufficient attention has been given to the forecasting of the Reference Case in a multi-modal context. DfT has provided, in TEMPRO, important resource covering the key planning variables, for base and future years, together with the implications for travel demand. Nevertheless, much more guidance is required, both as to the appropriate level of detail (in terms of segmentation, etc.), and the process by which existing TEMPRO information can be used. Further, although we have not discussed it significantly, there is a further important issue, in cases where the reference growth would give rise to a large increase in congestion, as to how the Do-Minimum forecast should be derived from the Reference Case.

10.18 The calibration and validation of appropriate demand models also requires much more guidance. It is clear that the general level of expertise in this area is low, and in this context, it would be appropriate for the DfT to provide default guidance. This will need to interact with the remarks in the previous paragraph: indeed, except when policies with a major impact are being tested, it is likely to be the case that the most important role for the demand model is to move from the reference case to the Do-Minimum. Whether demand models are individually developed or use is made of default parameters and structures, clear advice must be provided about the requirements for model validation, typically relating to elasticity tests.

10.19 In this context, we recommend further research into the level of detail which is in fact appropriate to the problems being modelled, and suggest that it would be useful to consider to what extent the forecasts made by SWYMMS and TVMMS, which differ substantially in terms of their segmentation, are affected by the chosen level of detail.

10.20 More guidance is required as to how Land-Use and Transport Interaction (LUTI) models can profitably be integrated into the overall modelling process. The fact that land-use data depends on the particular strategy being modelled, rather than externally given, causes problems in the calculation of user benefit when using conventional cost benefit techniques as in TUBA. Given this position, it is essential that the models used have the facility to “turn off” the impacts on land-use when testing policies against the Do-Minimum. We support the involvement of land-use and development specialists in generating realistic regional land-use scenarios, leading potentially both to improved reference cases (via impact on TEMPRO) and Do-Minimum. On the other hand, we incline towards the view that in terms of policy testing, LUTI models should perhaps be confined to major impacts, such as substantial charging, estuarial crossings etc.

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10.21 For the larger-scale studies, there remains a need to operate at different spatial levels, and even though increasing computing power may make it possible to operate at greater detail, we do not see that this issue will recede significantly. **In our view, the inherent problems have not been at all resolved within the corpus of MMS studies, and more research is required into an appropriate methodology.**

10.22 Rather similar, and related, remarks can be made in connection with the **treatment of equilibrium between supply and demand.** Although this is a highly specialised area, some default recommendations could be given both to convergence strategies (e.g. the method of successive averages) and to the development of appropriate indicators of convergence.

10.23 There are general aspects of guidance related to public transport network modelling, and crowding in particular, which need to be better developed in the context of multi-modal studies, since there is much less experience in this area than in the related aspects of highway network modelling.

10.24 DfT circulated a note by Paulley on modelling road user charging (RUC) that in our view offers sound advice but it appears to have had little impact. Consequently, most of those studies that included RUC as a policy to be tested have used relatively *ad hoc* methods. **There is therefore a case for giving explicit guidance on testing RUC variants, and this guidance will need to be related to the level of detail in both the demand and supply models, to ensure that it is realistic.**

10.25 Finally, in terms of overall lessons learnt, our assessment on the modelling is as follows. The problems confronted in the MMS are very testing ones in modelling terms and require a range of scarce specialist skills to be brought to bear. Some practitioners were struggling with modelling problems a degree more difficult than those that they were used to. We have seen rather little substantive development of the crucial demand modelling capability, and it is probably fair to say that the best efforts in this respect came from teams that already had considerable experience in this area. There are lessons here for DfT for the way it structures and procures the modelling components of future transport strategy studies, and in terms of the continuing need for explicit, sound and practical guidance on modelling for such studies.

### APPRAISAL

10.26 As noted earlier, the appraisal guidance was, understandably, more prescriptive than the modelling guidance, since DfT was building on established work on cost-benefit analysis, the New Approach to Appraisal, and the Appraisal Summary Tables used for the 1998 Road Review. Also, whereas a variety of modelling approaches might be appropriate, a standardised appraisal framework was required for purposes of comparability.

10.27 We were interested in four questions, and our findings are summarised below:

- How effective was the appraisal framework?
- How well did the analytical tools work in a multi-modal context?
- How well did the appraisal regime interface with the process of formulating conclusions and recommendations from the studies?

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How well did the appraisal perform in terms of testing financial sustainability and practicality, and were there issues of appraisal consistency, particularly on the rail side?

10.4.1 Effectiveness of the Appraisal Framework

10.28 The Appraisal Framework and the guidance in GOMMMS were generally found to have worked well. However, we agree with the view that the Appraisal Summary Table, as configured, is less well suited to the assessment of Strategies than Plans. The principal reason for this was that some aspects were designed around detailed project-level data, which is not well suited to the less specific nature of Strategies. A particular problem arises in the representation of environmental impacts such as biodiversity, heritage, water run-off and landscape that are associated with particular land-take.

10.29 The advice on strategy versus plan appraisal in GOMMMS emphasises the role of analysts in making judgements where a full analysis is not possible. Interviewees reported that they found this difficult. Nevertheless, we believe that a combination of quantified appraisal results for some of the entries in the AST, combined with judgement on others, is the correct approach at the strategic level. The SWYMMS Phase 6 report provides an example of how a strategy level appraisal can be done.

10.30 Although GOMMMS does give some limited guidance on applying the method to option selection and sifting, the consultants on the Studies found they had to develop the method further before it became operational. As a result, different studies have used different methods to select and sift options. A small number of studies chose to select using a subset of the Government’s five criteria, focusing on road congestion reduction or other operational criteria such as volume to capacity ratio or achieved speeds. The practical implication was that options oriented towards a sustainable environment and better quality of public transport were not judged on their own strengths; environmental performance entered as a constraint rather than as an objectives in these cases.

10.31 Notwithstanding these problems, most participants in the multi-modal studies reported that the appraisal framework served its purpose satisfactorily as a structure for key information and support for decision-making. Several interviewees commented that the results of the analysis helped to build consensus within the Steering Group.

10.4.2 Effectiveness of Analytical Tools

10.32 The multi-modal cost-benefit analysis appears to have been implemented successfully and in line with the GOMMMS guidance. As noted earlier, there remains an unresolved issue over the appraisal of variable land-use cases.

10.33 Overall, the consultants we interviewed appeared to have found the appraisal framework sufficiently flexible to be able to go into greater detail where appropriate in their Study. The TUBA software, developed for the multi-modal studies, was generally found to function as advertised, after some initial problems. The main shortcoming reported was the lack of an overnight batch processing facility, though we understand this has been addressed in the current version (1.5) of TUBA. For studies with a large number of zones, run time also became an issue. We recommend that the possibility of re-coding future releases of TUBA to reduce the memory requirement be investigated.

10.34 A number of other points emerged in the course of our investigations:

10.35 Economic regeneration and social inclusion are important topics where the GOMMMS guidance is relatively weak and capable of improvement.
10.36 Further extensions of the multi-modal cost-benefit analysis to incorporate monetary values of noise, local air quality and greenhouse gas emissions are, we understand, in development by DfT. We support this direction, with the cautionary note that those impacts that cannot easily be quantified should not be neglected.

10.37 **We recommend that the guidance relating to the appraisal of land take type issues be reviewed, in consultation with the statutory environmental bodies.**

10.38 A further concern with the appraisal framework was the treatment of cumulative environmental impacts. Although supplementary guidance was issued by DfT part way through the studies, not all studies appear to have treated these impacts adequately. Indeed, GOMMMS is generally weak on the guidance it offers on the assessment of sustainability.

10.39 Appraisal of the physical fitness and journey ambience sub-objectives was generally considered to be less appropriate to transport appraisal at the MMS scale.

10.40 In some studies (e.g. TVMMS), crowding effects on rail were modelled and the quantitative results (but not monetary values) reported in the NATA framework. In other cases (e.g. LOIS), crowding effects were modelled and then valued within the cost-benefit analysis. It is important that benefits associated with (reduction in) crowding on rail be explicitly recognised within TUBA, given that the modelling methodology is widely accepted.

10.41 There was a technical issue over the ability to separate private sector and public sector toll revenues in TUBA, when the Strategy includes pricing on some publicly operated roads and some privately operated roads.

10.42 One omission from GOMMMS and the MMS appraisal that has been highlighted is the costs of disruption to users from major construction work. We understand from DfT that future advice on this will emphasise the need to include time lost by users – on all modes – as well as any revenue losses to public transport operators.

**10.4.3 Interface with Decision-Making**

10.43 A number of lessons came out in this area. The first relates to the critical path of the studies. Since the time to do a model run and consider the output for the more complex studies was in the region of 1-2 weeks, there was a limit to the number of scenarios and policy packages which could be tested. In some studies, having collected data, developed and run the model, and generated appraisal results, the amount of testing of alternatives was in our view too limited, either because of time or budget constraints or both.

10.44 A further point is that there seemed to be relatively little testing of the performance of the individual elements of the packages. There may be an unresolved point of tension here between the Steering Groups, who may have perceived their mission as developing a balanced and integrated package, the consultants with limited time and resources for policy testing, and the delivery agencies whose interests is naturally in the performance of “their” elements of the strategies. We recommend that in future, clear guidance is given requiring

- appraisal of strategies as a whole;
- appraisal of key elements within the strategy;
- appraisal of elements occurring part way through the study;
identification of any synergistic effects where a strategy is dependent on individual elements which are not justified on a stand-alone basis. This is important for delivery agencies because such cases, if well-founded, raise questions of whose budget is to be used to fund them.

10.45 A more general comment is that the relationship between conventional tools of transport planning and more modern forms of democratic inclusion is in its infancy. Participative decision-making is a key theme in the initiatives on Better Governance in the UK and the EU, and there may be some value in investigating its role in regional transport planning further, beyond the multi-modal studies.

10.4.4 Appraisal and Deliverability

10.46 The Affordability and Financial Sustainability Analysis part of GOMMMS provided a framework for analysing and reporting the effects of Strategies on the costs and revenues of key organisations, in the public and private sectors. With the benefit of hindsight, we do not think the importance of these was stressed sufficiently throughout the process to the GOs and the Steering Groups. As a result, some studies may have generated strategies which were outside the zone of affordability from public budgets. It is necessary to ensure that strategies are within the right public budget ballpark, otherwise the plan ceases to be real and becomes a wish list. We conclude that it would have been preferable to set indicative public budget ranges for planning purposes so that Steering Groups and their consultants would have been forced to make realistic trade-offs.

10.47 An issue that has arisen in the context of the MMS is the consistency of appraisal treatment of rail and road schemes. A particular issue stems from the advice in the SRA Appraisal Guidelines relative to the use of behavioral values in evaluation. For example, the values of non-working time in the London and South East rail schemes are currently 29% above national average values on this basis. There is an inconsistency here that may have arisen because of the assumption underlying the SRA Appraisal Criteria that rail user benefits should, as far as possible, be captured in the farebox. Similar issues are likely to arise in the appraisal of toll road schemes. We note that the DfT currently has its value of time policy under review and is considering approaches that may reduce or eliminate this inconsistency.

10.4.5 Conclusion on Appraisal

10.48 Our overall conclusions on appraisal are that the GOMMMS advice was fit for purpose, and that the TUBA software worked. There is an opportunity to learn from the experience of the MMS in relation to strategic appraisal and to approaches to sifting and screening. Further work could be done to develop the advice further on sustainability, social inclusion and regeneration. But we believe that the evidence shows that the appraisal framework was sound and that the methodology was implemented satisfactorily.

10.5 REPORTING ON MODELLING AND APPRAISAL

10.49 Although each of the studies has produced a large volume of reports, these vary greatly in terms of structure and detail. In some cases, the Final Report contains reasonable information about the modelling and appraisal structure, while in other cases, these details are scattered among a series of reports, often poorly linked. In yet other cases, we have, in fact, not been able to find any significant information about modelling at all.
Most studies have made much use of websites, either specific to the study or as a subsection within the relevant Government Office website. Here again, the quality of linking is very variable: in some cases, reports are split into a large number of separate files, dealing with individual chapters, figures etc. It is not clear to us on what criteria it has been decided to mount reports on the web: in some cases, the material we have required has been located in “Technical Notes” which have not been mounted, and not necessarily made available to the client.

Overall, significant effort is required in order to locate all the information relating to modelling and appraisal. In view of the potential importance of this to what has been billed as a new category of transport policy investigation, we recommend that this is addressed before it is too late.

One of the reasons for more guidance on reporting is that the general requirements have been significantly extended in comparison with existing practice for highway schemes, particularly in relation to demand modelling. Even if the current wave of studies branded as “multi-modal” is considered largely complete, we have no doubt that comparable strategic studies will need to be commissioned in the future. We recommend that clear guidance on reporting requirements be provided, drawing on existing reporting practice for urban area models such as LTS.

CONCLUSIONS

A question we have been asked by the Department is whether we think in the light of experience, that adding the MMS as a further layer in the decision making process is a good idea and has added value. Our answer is yes. The trend of policy is such that studies of this kind which seek to address the balance between investment, demand management and public transport measures in a regional planning context are very likely to be required in future. Such studies will be needed in the following circumstances:-

- where there is significant interaction between transport and land-use or significant land-use proposals exist whose transport implications need to be assessed;
- where there are high-level choices to be made between demand management by physical or pricing means and the provision of new capacity;
- where there is significant interaction between demand for public and private transport.

In our view, appraising individual schemes or other elements without an overall strategic context is dangerous in such circumstances.

The implications of this are that:

- there will be a range of initiatives, such as by-passes or other free-standing investments, where the strategic context is not critical to the case, and can be presented within a scheme-oriented study;
- however, on the core inter-urban network and in the conurbations, a strategic approach within which individual schemes and interventions are developed will continue to be required;
- it may not be appropriate to call these multi-modal studies, because although there is an inter-modal element, this draws attention away from other aspects
such as journey length effects, timing and routeing effects, propensity to travel effects, and land-use effects of transport policies, which need to be given due prominence.

10.56 On the appraisal side, though there is work to be done on particular topics such as reliability regeneration and social inclusion, we conclude that there is a sensible appraisal framework in place which the Department and its consultants are gaining experience of using. On the modelling side, our view is that there are significant lessons to be learned from the experience of the MMSs, and there is work to be done both on the technical and policy sides of modelling through Variable Demand Modelling Advice (VaDMA) and other DfT initiatives. This work is important because we are confident that the Department and its agencies will need to commission studies of this kind in the future.
11 Deliverability of results

11.1 VIEWS FROM STAKEHOLDERS

11.1 Stakeholders have voiced strong feelings over the deliverability of the results of the studies. There is broad agreement that the recommendations of the studies are feasible technically but that many are not deliverable over the short term (by 2010) because of financial constraints. This is particularly true for rail and local transport measures. There is significant disagreement over whether the recommendations of a given study represent an integrated strategy that must be implemented in its entirety to have a worthwhile impact or whether it is possible to prioritise and select measures out of the package. Some see the study recommendations as indivisible packages while others believe that they are financially unrealistic shopping lists.

11.2 Consultants and GO project managers involved in a number of the early studies were clear that they were specifically told not to consider resource constraints when developing options. Some stakeholders have pointed out that the MMS typically considered a 30 year time horizon so it is to be expected that some recommendations would be phased and not be deliverable in the short to medium term. However it is clear that the study specifications didn’t contain targets and timetables for the level of improvement sought or indicative budgets and phasing of the funds available to implement recommendations. Some stakeholders have pointed out that problems over deliverability should not therefore have been unexpected.

11.3 DfT has noted that GOMMMS provides guidance on affordability and financial sustainability, and on practicality and public acceptability. Neither GOs nor consultants mentioned this guidance during our interviews. This suggests that the guidance in GOMMMS may have been overlooked, perhaps because it was not given sufficient prominence. Although DfT is well versed in the contents of GOMMMS, this knowledge may not have been fully communicated down the line to GOs, consultants and steering groups.

11.4 In the early stages of the studies, SRA and HA were treated no differently from other steering group members, which sometimes meant that studies continued to consider schemes that SRA or HA considered undeliverable. This problem was recognised in the autumn of 2001, leading to Ministers identifying to Parliament in December 2001 that transport planners should be working in parallel with MMS consultants to validate the engineering content of the consultants’ recommendations.

11.5 Since that time, the Highways Agency has worked alongside the study teams and has already progressed many of the recommended road improvements. The Agency has confidence that, in general, it is able to develop and implement many of the roads recommendations, though it is finding that as it refines and develops some of the recommended road improvements the predicted capital costs have increased sharply from those envisaged by the consultants. The HA has some concerns that there has been a presumption in many places that the roads recommendations from the studies would go directly into the TPI (targeted programme of improvements), however in practice the options coming out of the studies have not been worked up in sufficient detail and the Agency will need to do a lot more work before many schemes go forward.

11.6 On the other hand the SRA and Local Authorities have strong concerns over the affordability of Rail and local transport improvements. SRA feel that they are in a different position from that of the Highways Agency. The MMS were largely based on
remitted road schemes which left a gap in the Highways Agency “order book”, meaning that the HA have the resources to implement the road recommendations. On the other hand SRA has a strategic plan that commits significant investment up to 2010. The MMS recommendations are largely additional to this plan and therefore cannot be implemented if further budget is not made available. This point was made to the various study steering groups but with varying degrees of effect. The later studies had a clearer picture of the funding constraints on rail and have therefore made recommendations that do not assume significant amounts of rail expenditure in the shorter term.

11.7 The SRA also feels that there are flaws in the recommendations resulting from the way the studies were defined e.g. external rail costs and benefits has been a consistent problem. This may be because some of the consultant teams were relatively inexperienced in planning rail schemes as they came from a highways background. Alleviating Birmingham New Street station as a bottleneck would create benefits on rail flows through many MMS areas. However, no single MMS could produce a Business Case for New Street capacity improvement built solely on the gains to their own rail flows. Conversely studies failed to account for investments that would need to be made outside of the study area to enable some of the rail improvements to be implemented because the study teams did not always recognise the pinch points in the rail network. A further difficulty for rail schemes was the challenge of deriving robust rail costs at strategic level due to considerations of signalling, disruptions etc.

11.8 Various Local Authorities have also voiced concerns over some of the local transport recommendations. While there are conflicts between the spending priorities of some Local Authorities and study recommendations the greatest problem for local transport schemes relates to revenue measures e.g. bus subsidies. Some Local Authorities have stated that they could only support the revenue requirements of MMS recommendations at the expense of existing services. There is also concern over how local transport schemes that cross Authority boundaries can be taken forward. The lack of a single delivery agency responsible is seen as a barrier to the implementation of soft measures in particular.

11.9 Road user charging is seen by many stakeholders to be a vital element of the recommended strategy for some of the studies. These stakeholders feel strongly that if road improvement recommendations are adopted in the absence of charging that there will be an adverse impact on congestion and the environment.

11.10 Many stakeholders have concerns that the studies have raised public expectations and that there is a significant danger of disillusionment if recommendations are not progressed rapidly. There is particular concern that the cooperation of the many stakeholders who were brought together by the studies and the degree of consensus which has been built by the studies will be lost if only roads based measures are progressed.

11.2 OPINION OF THE RESEARCH TEAM

11.11 One of the aims of the studies was to help build consensus amongst stakeholders who had a diverse range of views on the best approach to reducing congestion and improving transport in the UK. The studies have helped to facilitate a dialogue and started to at least develop some common recognition of the problems. There remains however a wide gulf between those who see a large expansion in road building as vital to the economic regeneration of large parts of the country and those who fear the environmental consequences of further roads construction. It is therefore unsurprising that there is a wide range of views over the deliverability study recommendations.
11.12 The debate over deliverability focuses on four areas:

- The integration of measures in packages and in particular the significance of road user charging in some packages.
- The affordability of rail and local transport measures, especially in the short to medium term.
- The lack of a delivery agency to oversee the implementation of soft measures.
- The level of detail to which study recommendations were developed.

11.2.1 Integration of measures

11.13 There is a polarisation in views over the integrated nature of the packages and the extent to which all parts of the strategy have to be implemented for it to work. It is most likely that the effectiveness of some of the measures will depend greatly on integration within a package while other measures could be implemented effectively in their own right. Most of the studies did not conduct risk and sensitivity analyses to assess the implications of some measures being deferred or not undertaken at all, which was a serious omission. Such analyses often weren’t done because the requirement was not written into the project specification and the studies had run out of time and money by the time they had produced their recommendations.

11.14 It has been put to us that it would simply not be possible for Ministers to make decisions on the complete packages recommended by some studies: not all schemes are fully appraised; some are for the longer term, beyond the Public Expenditure (and 10 year plan) planning horizon; and some would involved significant policy changes (road user charging, providing specific revenue support to LAs). It is inevitable therefore that Ministers will make decisions on recommendations which can be taken forward in the shorter term while reserving judgement on things where an early decision isn’t possible. While we accept this as a political reality, in our view it strengthens the need for appraisal of key elements within the packages and for gaining an acceptance by the steering groups that some decisions will precede others.

11.2.2 Affordability of rail and local transport measures

11.15 This is a significant problem for two reasons. As noted above some of the study recommendations will be interdependent and failure to deliver some key components will impact on the effectiveness of the package. Further some stakeholders are already disillusioned because they believe that the integrated multi-modal aspect of the studies has been lost. This in turn could erode the trust and cooperation between stakeholders that developed during the studies.

11.16 The affordability issue stems back to the specification of the early studies. We believe that it would have been better to indicate the improvement in performance that the study recommendations were seeking to deliver, an idea of the resources which could be available to deliver the recommendations and a broad brush timetable. The need for indicative budgets for study recommendations was also raised earlier in Section 10.4.4, in relation to modelling and appraisal.

11.2.3 Delivery Agency to oversee the implementation of soft measures

11.17 This is an institutional issue rather than a failure of the studies. However it is important that the trust and cooperation built between stakeholders on the steering groups continues to develop further in the implementation teams which are being set up to oversee delivery.
11.2.4 Depth and detail of recommendations

11.18 Road scheme study recommendations developed by the MMS are generally not detailed enough to be implemented without much more work required from the Highways Agency. The SRA has commented to the contrary that some studies were too specific in recommending particular rail infrastructure improvements rather than just identifying the underlying need for service improvements, which could be met in other, more cost-effective ways. This problem again tracks back to what one stakeholder referred to as the “schizophrenic” nature of the studies balancing long-term strategies with detailed project plans.

11.19 We have been specifically asked to look at “the extent to which the technical feasibility and cost of recommendations has been assessed by the studies”. There is good evidence that in general the technical feasibility of recommendations has been addressed effectively. However it is clear that less consideration has been given to the cost and affordability of the recommendations. Both the HA and the SRA have found flaws in the costing of recommendations, in some cases subsequent delivery agency costings have been more than twice the value estimated originally by the project consultants.

11.3 RECOMMENDATIONS ON DELIVERABILITY

11.20 For the completing programme of MMS we recommend:

- Consider the interdependence of measures when decisions are made on individual schemes recommended by the MMS. Particularly careful attention needs to be given to the role of road user charging and the impact it has on other recommendations in some of the study packages.

11.21 For future strategic studies we recommend:

- Ensure that the key delivery agencies are working closely with the project from the outset.

- Ensure sufficient time and budget is allocated to risk and sensitivity analyses to assess the implications of some measures in a package being deferred or not undertaken at all.

- Clearly communicate how the results of the study will be used and the depth of detail required. Specify the improvement in performance that the study recommendations are seeking to deliver, an indication of the resources available to deliver the recommendations and a broad brush timetable.
12 Value for money

12.1 VIEWS OF STAKEHOLDERS

12.1 Stakeholder views on the value for money of the multi-modal studies are sharply divided. Many of the stakeholders interviewed, particularly those closest to the studies, believe that they have provided good value for money. These stakeholders point out that the studies have broken new ground in seeking multi-modal solutions and that the potential savings arising from avoiding unnecessary road building or the financial benefits of economic regeneration enabled by better transport solutions will dwarf the costs of the studies. Many of these stakeholders recognise that there could have been efficiency gains which would have improved the cost effectiveness of the studies. These gains often involve reducing the time and cost spent on stakeholder consultation and modelling, or relate to improved co-ordination between studies.

12.2 Other stakeholders including some steering group members felt that the studies did not provide value for money. Many of these stakeholders felt that in general the consultants worked hard and earned their fees, though this wasn’t true for every study. However these stakeholders felt that the basic philosophy of the studies was flawed and that the most realistic recommendations were already known or could have been developed relatively quickly, “you could have locked a small team of people in a room for three weeks and they would have come up with the same results”. Some felt that the studies have fallen down the gap between being a visionary strategy for the future and a realistic action plan for today and have therefore delivered neither.

12.3 Many of the stakeholders have commented that it will only be possible to assess the value of the studies when the recommendations are implemented.

12.2 CONSULTANTS VIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

12.4 Because the results of the studies have not yet been taken forward it is not possible to do a quantitative cost/benefit analysis. However in assessing the value for money of the studies it is worth looking at a number of issues.

Did the studies meet their terms of reference in a cost effective manner?

12.5 The performance of the consultant varied between studies but for most studies stakeholders felt that the consultants worked hard and delivered what was expected of them. While most of the studies have overrun on both time and cost, this commonly traces back to gaps in the project scope, third party factors (e.g. local elections) or unforeseen gaps in data. There is a widely held recognition that efficiency gains could have been achieved on most studies, which would have resulted in cost savings. Key areas include:

- More targeted stakeholder consultation;
- Better tracking of costs and management of variations;
- Improved co-ordination between adjacent studies and sharing of experience between studies.

12.6 It is clear that most of the studies could have been completed more cost effectively but with the benefit of hindsight it is usually easy to see where any study could have been better managed. It is our assessment that, considering so many studies
were let in a short timescale and with some exceptions, the studies delivered good value in this respect.

12.7 We were not asked to undertake a full audit of the modelling and appraisal work carried out for the MMS and so cannot give an assessment of fitness for purpose. We would suggest commissioning some work with some of the more detailed models, such as the one used by the South and West Yorkshire MMS, to investigate the sensitivity of the results to progressive coarsening and simplification of the model. This could help to indicate the level of robustness of the simpler modelling approaches and hence the value for money of increased model complexity.

What benefits have the studies delivered?

12.8 Stakeholders have mixed views over the benefits of the studies, but most feel that the studies have at least started to build some consensus at the working level, with opposing groups now talking and working together. These working relations are continuing into the implementation phase for some of the studies.

12.9 The studies have delivered recommendations involving investment levels orders of magnitude more than the costs of the studies. It is therefore likely that even if the studies produce only a marginal improvement in the investment decisions taken the improvements will more than pay for the costs of the studies.

Was all of the work necessary and could the studies have been carried out more cheaply?

12.10 There is a widely held belief that the studies could have delivered similar results with far less consultation and perhaps less modelling. Our view is that this criticism is valid but ignores the importance that has been put upon public involvement and transparency. There is also some evidence from the studies we have looked at in detail that many of the consultants modified their recommendations in response to inputs from stakeholders. The issues are therefore:

- Have the studies generated greater buy in as a result of the processes used?
- Are the recommended solutions significantly better as result of consultation?
- How much is it worth paying for greater transparency?
- What will happen to the consensus that has been developed if only selected recommendations are taken forward?

12.11 Our view is that, in principle, the processes used by the studies were valuable and have had a useful educative role as well as generating some consensus. In the light of experience from these studies we feel there is scope to specify the consultation work required more tightly and reduce costs, while some of the lessons from the modelling component of these studies should also help make future studies easier. The value put on transparency is a policy question but assuming that our recommendation that stakeholder consultation is in general limited to 10% of the study budget is implemented we feel that the exercise is worthwhile.

12.12 It is difficult to reach a definitive view on the value for money of the MMS process. The studies have genuinely attempted to take a multi-modal approach and some studies have developed solutions that may not have been identified by previous approaches. However, the studies have introduced an extra layer in the appraisal process that has taken around 2 years to complete and cost over £30 million.

12.13 From the above we feel that while there is scope for efficiency improvements, the costs incurred by the studies reflected the novelty, complexity and scale of the task. Most importantly, we agree with the many stakeholders who have told us that the value and hence value for money of the studies will depend upon how the recommendations are taken forward.
13 Review of outputs from other reviews

13.1 During the course of this evaluation, we have read a number of other reports dealing with the multi-modal study process and attended conferences and workshops on the subject. In Annex 2 to this report we briefly review three key documents – a report from the House of Commons’ Select Committee on Transport, a report for the Commission for Integrated Transport (CfIT) and a paper for the Transport Planning Society. The full details of these studies are as follows.


13.2 In undertaking these reviews we have focused on identifying areas where these other studies confirm or conflict with our findings, and trying to understand the reasons for any differences.

13.3 We are reassured by this review of other relevant studies. Our findings and conclusions are broadly in line with each of these studies and there appear to be no major process-related issues that we have failed to address. It is also evident that other studies have not fully addressed the manner in which the multi-modal studies were conducted and managed, which is the main purpose of this evaluation. Therefore we believe we have provided a different perspective on the studies that may help to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of future transport projects.
14 Recommendations

14.1 This section summarises the main recommendations contained in the body of this report. We have focussed on recommendations that could be implemented for future strategic studies with a multi-modal emphasis. Other more detailed recommendations are provided at the end of chapters 6 to 11 of this report.

14.1 SPECIFICATION AND CONTRACTUAL FRAMEWORK

14.2 It is vital that future studies have a clearer specification - setting out the problem, the improvement in performance desired, an indication of the budget which could be available to implement recommended measures and a timetable for delivery. The specification also needs to be clear on the depth of detail required. In effect a success plan that both the consultant and the client can use to assess when the job is complete. A scoping study may be useful to help specify the project but recent multi-modal studies have had some success through building an inception scoping phase into the main contract.

14.3 The fixed and variable cost framework used for the multi-modal studies provides a suitable framework for similar studies, but the client project manager should be given the flexibility to reallocate budget across the variable cost tasks as the work progresses. The work package cost breakdown sheets used for the current studies provide a useful framework, though consultants should have the opportunity to submit variant bids if they feel there is a better way to structure the job. Contractual issues should be reviewed at a project inception meeting between the client and consultant, with a contracts specialist attending if required.

14.2 PROJECT MANAGEMENT

14.4 The client project manager should be selected for strong project management and communication skills. Relevant technical skills are desirable but can be provided by supporting specialists. Training should be available if required.

14.5 Better project management practices and procedures should be followed. For example, tighter reporting linking costs to progress should be expected and project progress reports should cross reference to itemised invoices to allow the client project manager to assess performance.

14.3 STEERING GROUP

14.6 The studies should be steered by a smaller project management group comprising the client organisation, DfT and key delivery agencies, with a larger advisory group of wider stakeholder interests providing local knowledge and a sounding board for ideas.

14.7 Each group should have clear terms of reference, which should be reinforced by the chairman as the study progresses. Good chairing is vital and the chairman needs to have the skills to balance the involvement of all group members with reaching clear unambiguous decisions.
14.4 CONsULTATION

14.8 We feel that unless there are exceptional reasons the stakeholder consultation task should not cost more than 10% of the study budget. There is no evidence that studies which spent a greater proportion achieved greater consensus.

14.9 It is vital that the objectives of the consultation exercise for each stakeholder group are clear from the start of the study. In particular the role of the statutory bodies needs to be clarified. The statutory bodies would also benefit from training on MMS appraisal methods and the wider study process.

14.10 Further guidance is required on how to select and implement appropriate consultation techniques for different types of study. Guidance produced recently for the Highways Agency should be reviewed in the context of multi-modal studies and, if appropriate, linked to GOMMMS.

14.5 MODELLING AND APPRAISAL

14.11 Further guidance is required on
- Forecasting of the reference case
- Calibration and validation of the demand model
- Integration of land use and transport interaction models
- Modelling road user charging

14.12 GOMMMS would benefit from further strengthening on economic regeneration and social inclusion.

14.13 There should be a further extension of cost benefit analysis to cover environmental impacts.

14.14 The modelling and appraisal work carried out during the MMS exercise represents a valuable resource that should be located and collated before it is lost. We understand that this issue is being addressed and that DfT has put in place arrangements for model handover and asked GOs to collate copies of all consultant reports on CD.

14.6 DELIVERABILITY

14.15 To ensure that the consensus and good working relationships which have been developed by the studies are maintained, visible consideration must be given to the interdependence of measures as decisions are made on individual recommended schemes.

14.16 For future strategic studies we recommend that delivery agencies work more closely with the project from the outset.
Annex 1
List of stakeholders consulted
## List of stakeholders consulted

### National Stakeholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Campaign for the Protection of Rural England</td>
<td>Paul Hamblin</td>
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<td>Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs</td>
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<td>Department for Transport, ITEA Division</td>
<td>Chris Smith</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department for Transport, Roads Policy Division</td>
<td>David Knight</td>
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<td>Ex Department for Transport MMS Unit</td>
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### Workshop for Government Office Representatives

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<tr>
<td>Government Office for the East of England (LOIS &amp; N2P)</td>
<td>Mike Salter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Government Office for the East of England (LSM)</td>
<td>Mike Evans</td>
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<tr>
<td>Government Office for the East Midlands (EMMS &amp; A453)</td>
<td>Will Wiseman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Government Office for the East Midlands (A52 &amp; W2eMMS)</td>
<td>Alison Adams</td>
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<tr>
<td>Government Office for the North East (A1MMS &amp; TAMMS)</td>
<td>Neil Raper</td>
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<td>Government Office for the North West (M60 JETTS)</td>
<td>Howard Woolley</td>
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<td>Government Office for the West Midlands (WMAMMS)</td>
<td>Ian Smith</td>
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<td>Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber (HUMMS &amp; SWYMMS)</td>
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### A453 study

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### London to Ipswich (LOIS) Multi-Modal Study

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### London to South West and South Wales Multi-Modal Study (SWARMMMS)

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South and West Yorkshire Motorway Box Multi-Modal Study (SWYMMS)

Confederation of British Industry
The Denvil Coombe Practice
English Heritage
Environment Agency
Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber
Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber
Highways Agency (John Bagley)
MVA Ltd
South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive
Strategic Rail Authority
Transport Activists Round Table
Yorkshire Forward

Andrew Palmer
Denvil Coombe
Ian Smith
Alex Codd
Peter Rawsthorn
David Owen
John Bagley
Andy Skinner
Graham Read
Matthew Lodge
Anthony Rae
Jonathan Brown

Tyneside Area Multi-Modal Study (TAMMS)

Arup Group Ltd
Arup Group Ltd
Arup Group Ltd
Government Office for the North East
English Nature
Highways Agency
Katalysis
Newcastle City Council
NEXUS (Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Executive
North East Combined Transport Activists – NECTAR
One NorthEast
Social Research Associates
Strategic Rail Authority
WSP

David Thompson
John Daley
Gordon Henderson
Neil Raper
Richard Hall
Neil Taylor
Hugh Neffendorf
Robert Hibbert
Ken Kemp
Martin Murphy
Steve Gawthorpe
Kristine Beuret
Matthew Lodge
Clare Lindsay

Thames Valley Multi-Modal Study (TVMMS)

Government Office for the South East
WS Atkins
WS Atkins
WS Atkins
Association of Councils of the Thames Valley Region – ACTVaR
Bracknell Forest District Council
Environment Agency
Freight Transport Association
Highways Agency
South East of England Regional Assembly
Strategic Rail Authority
Transport 2000
Windsor and Maidenhead District Council
Windsor and Maidenhead District Council

Iain Reeve
Peter Rohr
Peter George
Tamsin Macmillan
Barry Dellar
Jon Freer
Hugh Howes
Sarah Watkins
Paul Harwood
Martin Tugwell
Matthew Lodge
Nigel Rose
Susan Ensor
Stuart Hylton
Annex 2
Review of other studies
Review of other studies

House of Commons Transport Select Committee Report

Contents of the report

The Transport Select Committee inquiry on multi-modal studies was carried out between November 2002 and January 2003. The Committee received over 55 memoranda and took oral evidence at four meetings from 12 organisations. The resulting report describes the policy background for the studies, describes their content and purpose, summarises study findings and assesses the likely impact of the studies. The Government has recently issued a response to the Select Committee’s report, which is available from the same web site as the original report.

The Select Committee’s report addresses all of the delivery issues that are discussed in our report, and goes into greater detail on many of them. It provides rather less information on the management of the multi-modal studies and the role of stakeholder consultation.

Conclusions and recommendations

The Select Committee report includes 42 conclusions and recommendations, each of which has been commented upon in the Government’s response. In this section we repeat a selection of these conclusions and recommendations, highlighting areas that are particularly pertinent to the findings and conclusions of our report. These conclusions and recommendations are identified by the paragraph number used in the Government’s response, for ease of reference.

(b) We welcome the Secretary of State’s acceptance of the needs for a critical evaluation of the manner in which the studies were conducted and managed.

(r) Land-use and transport policies must be complementary. This requires the Department for Transport and Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to work closely together to resolve the current tensions. The Government should make it clear the mechanism by which these difficult issues are resolved.

(s) The Guidance from the Department and Ministers on inter-urban road charging has been inadequate and inconsistent...

(y) The Department for Transport and the Strategic Rail Authority acknowledge that there is not enough money to fund the capital projects put forward by the studies. This is particularly true for rail and local public transport improvements.

(z) The Department cannot afford the revenue support requirements for the Multi-Modal Studies. This is particularly true of the revenue support required for rail services. Fewer public transport improvements will be possible as a result. This will have a negative impact on the overall effectiveness of the plans.

(aa) The lack of budgetary guidance from the Department to the Studies has undoubtedly led to the studies avoiding difficult decisions on prioritising their solutions to the main transport problems....
(bb) It is clear from the Secretary of State’s statement that a number of schemes put forward cannot be afforded within the 10 Year Plan budget, despite this being the intention of the Plan. This raises questions over whether the integrated transport strategies proposed will remain integrated when the financial axe is wielded...

(hh) We conclude that the integrated planning is process is now facing a ‘disintegrated’ implementation process whereby road solutions will dominate because they have committed funding and an effective champion and implementation agency...

(kk) The multi-modal studies are to be welcomed as one of the largest transport data collection and modelling exercises undertaken in the UK...

**Commission for Integrated Transport Report**

**Contents of the report**

The CfIT report includes: a summary of the status of MMS in July 2002; a list of study recommendations and their associated expenditure profiles; an analysis of the balance between road, rail and local transport recommendations; an analysis of studies’ approach to road user charging, and; comments on how soft measures such as travel plans have been modelled.

Comparing the CfIT report with this report we can see that CfIT has focused more on the content of studies and their recommendations, rather than the processes involved. However it does address certain aspects of modelling, appraisal and deliverability that we have also considered.

**Conclusions and recommendations**

The main conclusions and recommendations from the CfIT report are summarised below.

- Many of the studies have yet to report and so the MMS process it has yet to be tested whether extensive consultation and local ownership of proposals can actually deliver transport projects.

- Proposed public transport investment is about twice that of highways but there remains a question over the deliverability of public transport recommendations.

- Cross-boundary issues may arise where infrastructure improvement proposals impinge on more than one area. Greater co-ordination is needed between studies to ensure no problems arise.

- There is inconsistency in the way that road user charging has been addressed and an urgent need to develop a coherent national strategy.

- There is concern over the realism of some of the schemes proposed and the willingness of delivery agencies to take them on.

- Revenue costs associated with public transport recommendations have not been made clear, and should be stated as real costs.

- There is a proven method and a single agency responsible for implementing motorway and truck road improvements but no such agency exists for public transport projects. Clear ownership of public transport elements of the MMS outcomes is urgently needed to ensure integrated implementation of integrated strategies.
Transport Planning Society Paper

Contents of the report

This report from Greg Marsden includes analyses of: the status of MMS in August 2002; the study process and study objectives; outcomes from completed studies; the treatment of charging measures; the treatment of behavioural change measures (soft factors); expenditure profiles of study recommendations, and; cost benefit analysis of recommendations. It also discusses how the MMS fit with the 10-year plan for transport and how they might be improved to ensure a better balance between modes of transport and meet both regional and local aspirations.

In many ways the content of this report is similar to the CfIT report, but it provides further detail on the technical and delivery challenges faced by the studies and the ways in which they have sought to overcome these challenges.

Conclusions and recommendations

The conclusions and recommendations from this paper are shown below.

- The studies were not told how they were to contribute to the achievement of the 10 Year Plan objectives. It is not therefore clear whether the solutions proposed contribute enough or perhaps too much towards meeting the Department’s targets.

- The duration of the strategies and scale of solutions varies considerably between similar studies, raising concerns about the affordability and equity of the solutions proposed.

- Area wide road user charging will be necessary if the benefits of expanded infrastructure are not to be eroded over time. However, the extent to which such charging is required and its timing has not been studied in a consistent manner. There is a risk that some of the schemes would not be necessary under some charging assumptions.

- No agreement has been reached on the extent to which behavioural change initiatives can influence transport patterns. In some studies it represents the most important element of the strategy, in others it is only considered to be of secondary importance. The long-term impacts of these strategies are, as yet, unknown. The success or failure of some of the strategies would appear to be strongly linked to this.

- The studies have proposed significant public transport enhancements and scaled down road building solutions. However, whilst there is a clear delivery mechanism for the roads solutions through the Highways Agency, and a committed process for speeding this up, there is no such parallel for public transport solutions. The Strategic Rail Authority has cast doubt on the rigour of some of the analysis coming out of the Studies and on the affordability and priority of some of the rail solutions. Other bus and LRT solutions will require further development through the Local Transport Plan process. There is a risk that many of the public transport schemes will fail to be completed and we will have only a scaled down roads programme – a highly unsatisfactory outcome.
There is a conflict between regional aspirations and central budget control. The studies have been strongly influenced by Regional Steering Groups and a number of bold solutions have been put forward. However, the studies were not strongly budget constrained so one would expect this. In implementation however, Central Government (or its delivery agencies) are making decisions about national priorities. A different pattern of investment and a different decision making process would almost certainly have resulted from devolved regional decision making bodies with responsibility for finance as well as strategy.