

PRESS RELEASE

SCDI Response To Strategic Transport Projects Review

10 December 2008

The Scottish Council for Development and Industry (SCDI) has welcomed the announcement today by the Scottish Government of the Strategic Transport Projects Review.

Iain Duff, SCDI's Chief Economist, said:

The release of this long awaited and immensely important Review is extremely welcome. The 29 major transport investments that are included are all crucial in enhancing the quality of the transport network across Scotland for passenger and freight transport. Many of the key missing links, pinch points and inadequacies throughout the network that SCDI members have been looking to Government to address are listed. The task now is to deliver on the contents of the STPR as swiftly as possible and a delivery plan to accompany the Review would be useful.

The focus on the Forth Replacement Crossing is correct as this is a vital link. Funding this directly from public spending will hopefully ensure that it is constructed in a way that provides best value and high quality. It is also welcome that the forecast cost of this has been reduced.

Other schemes that SCDI is pleased to see included are the dualling of the A9 between Perth and Inverness, improvements to the A96 including dualling between Inverness and Nairn, development of freight links with many of Scotland's main ports and the many improvements to the rail network. However, not every project that SCDI would have wished to see in the Review is included, for example, Glasgow Crossrail. The reasoning behind inclusion of the projects listed and their prioritisation needs to be transparent.

ENDS

For further comment, analysis or interviews please call Niall Stuart, Press and Government Affairs Manager on 07814 167477