

Item:
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Report to Partnership Meeting – 5th February 2010

EUROPEAN FUNDING

START Project Year 1 Progress Update

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update HITRANS Board Members and Advisors on the progress made in delivering activities funded through the ERDF INTERREG IVB START Project in 2009 and the anticipated expenditure to the end of March 2010.

BACKGROUND

START is a transnational project relevant to cities and regions throughout the Atlantic Area and the whole of Europe. It deals with the broad issue of the improvement of accessibility and internal links (Priority 1) by promoting interoperability and continuity of existing transport networks, and sea/road/rail/air intermodality. This is critical to the success of regional and national sustainable development policies and is one of the key supporting pillars underpinning the European Spatial Development Perspective.

Furthermore, the convenience of travelling around the Atlantic Area using sustainable modes of transport is made difficult by differences in how the services are run by operators (e.g. ticket types), lack of knowledge of the local area (e.g. knowing when to get off the service), and language barriers (e.g. not being able to communicate with the driver).

HITRANS has secured funding for projects totalling Euro688,101 in value through our participation in START. The START Project commenced on 1st January 2009 and will cover a three year period to 31st December 2011.

ACTIVITY AREAS

The START Project focuses on a number of Activities that relate to project management, communications and delivering the project's aim of breaking down the barriers to seamless travel to, from and within the partner Regions. The Activity areas as defined by the project are:

- Activity 2 – Project Management and Coordination
- Activity 3 – Evaluation
- Activity 4 – Communicating with the Customer
- Activity 5 – Regional Journey Planners
- Activity 8 – Advanced Traveller Information Systems
- Activity 9 – Advanced Ticketing Systems
- Activity 10 – Improving Transport Services and Infrastructure
- Activity 11 – Dissemination

PROJECT UPDATE

Table 1.1 below lists the START Actions scheduled for delivery in 2009/10 and includes a column detailing the expenditure incurred by 31 December 2009. The first grant claim is being processed and is likely to relate to the spend incurred at 31 March 2010 as the claims process has only very recently been defined at UK national level, and HITRANS only received information on how claims could be made when the Partnership Manager and Treasurer attended a meeting organised by the Atlantic Area Secretariat on 19th January.

Table 1.1

Activity	Action	Project Description	Expenditure at 31 Dec 09	Spend Profiled for 31 March 10
Activity 2		HITRANS Staff Costs (Travel and Time)		£5,000.00
Activity 2, 3 & 4		Shared Service Contract Cost Pro Rata Share	£10,064.81	£29,215.00
Activity 7	Action 7.1	Cearcaill na Gaidhlig	£25,000.00	£25,000.00
Activity 8	Action 8.2	Moray JET real time visual display	£3,997.34	£3,997.34
Activity 8	Action 8.2	Moray JET on bus audio next stop announcements	£2,750.64	£2,750.64
Activity 8	Action 8.3	Inverness JET RTI on bus audio visual information	£6,701.28	£6,701.28
Activity 10	Action 10.1	Moray JET Service Extension	£35,000.00	£50,000.00
Activity 10	Action 10.5	Inverness City JET Service		£134,838.75
			£83,514.07	£257,503.01

STEERING GROUP MEETING

The next meeting of the START Steering Committee is scheduled to take place in the Inverness area from 26th to 28th March 2010. This will provide HITRANS with an opportunity to showcase the activities being delivered in the Highlands and Islands with support from the START project and it will in addition allow us to show our partners from other parts of the UK, France, Spain and Portugal the type of transport challenges we in the Highlands and Islands face.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Members are asked to note the report.

Report by: Ranald Robertson
Designation: Partnership Manager
Date: 27TH January 2010