

Report to Partnership Meeting 15 April 2016

EUROPEAN PROJECTS

SPARA 2020

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update Members on the progress made in developing the SPARA 2020 INTERREG IVB Northern Periphery Programme project that has secured funding from the Northern Periphery and Arctic Area INTERREG Programme with HITRANS as Lead Partner.

BACKGROUND



Smart Peripheral and Remote Airports 2020 (SPARA 2020) is a Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme area project aimed at addressing some of the special needs of the smaller civilian airports in the region. This three year €2.4 million project brings together a range of public authorities, academic institutions, airports, SMEs, and specialists to focus on the particular challenges of airports serving remote and peripheral areas.

The Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme 2014-2020, is funded by the ERDF, and more generally aims to help peripheral and remote communities on the northern margins of Europe to develop their economic, social and environmental potential.



**Northern Periphery and
Arctic Programme**
2014-2020



EUROPEAN UNION

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SPARA2020 has been designed both to address the region's needs, but also to explore issues that have resonance beyond Northern Europe, and to develop outputs that will deliver enduring benefits after the project concludes in May 2018.

HITRANS is the lead partner. Other Scottish partners include the University of the Highlands and Islands and Robert Gordon University whilst Sweden is well represented with Trafikverket (The Swedish Transport Administration), Sundsvall *Timrå* Airport and Storuman Municipality. The North West Regional Assembly (NWRA) of Ireland will represent airports such as Donegal and Ireland West (Knock) in the project. Molde University in Norway and the University of Sydney in Australia are the other project partners.

BUDGET AND WORKSTREAMS

The project budget allocation is listed in the table below:

Partner	Budget
The Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership (HITRANS)	€494,253.21
University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI)	€350,216.16
Robert Gordon University (RGU)	€180,797.00
Trafikverket (Sweden)	€250,008.58
Sundsvall <i>Timrå</i> Airport (Sweden)	€357,143.00
Storuman Municipality (Sweden)	€379,871.00
North and West Regional Assembly (Ireland)	€234,306.80
Molde University (Norway)	€115,500.48
University of Sydney (Australia)	€60,000.00

The Highlands and Islands area will benefit significantly as all the Scottish activity in the project will have a focus in the region.

The project will include work on Innovative Technologies to improve airport performance and control cost. These involve a close examination of Remote Air Traffic and Remote Security technologies as well as distributed training, benefitting in essence from broadband and communication technology advances. With the support of Eurocontrol the project will also examine the business case for Airport Collaborative Decision Making (lite), as suited to the smaller airport (and budget) context

Mindful of aviation's carbon footprint two work strands have been developed to foster more sustainable energy use in the sector. Low carbon fuel airport surface access demonstrator trials are being developed by HITRANS in partnership with their member Councils, Energy Savings Trust and Highlands and Islands Airports at airports in the Highlands and Islands. These are designed to be low carbon exemplar projects on how to decarbonise links from the airport to its local population centre and it is hoped this will include support for electronic bus operation on airport service, EV car hire and EV / Hybrid Taxi roll out to serve airports. The business case for offering biofuels to incoming aircraft at the region's airports will be examined in some detail learning from some pioneering work at Karlstad Airport in Sweden. HITRANS Officers have held a number of useful meetings as part of the scoping work on the individual pilot projects that we will deliver in our area. These meetings have been with Orkney Islands Council, HIAL, Energy Savings Trust and Transport Scotland.

Based upon the recognition that the performance of many peripheral airports' scheduled traffic is structurally constrained by their small catchment size, significant budget has been assigned to examining non aeronautical sources of income and diversification of roles for these facilities. A whole gamut of possibilities will be examined and best practice will be publicised and disseminated, and some more in depth pilot projects will be undertaken. Optimising an airport's role as an employment cluster will be explored extensively. The location selected for these activities are Ireland West (Knock), Donegal, Inverness and Oban. HITRANS have been working with North West Regional Assembly (who are leading this work package) on the development of a consultancy commission related to this work package. We have also held discussions with HIAL and Argyll and Bute Council on where this could focus at each airport.

The project also intends to examine in some detail the distinct socio-cultural role that airports play in the Northern Periphery and Arctic area and also to refine and improve economic impact assessment methodologies of SPARA airports with a view to better guide future public investment. This will include studies led by RGU at airports in Ireland, Scotland and possibly Sweden.

PROJECT PROGRESS

The SPARA2020 work packages are progressing well, with HITRANS maintaining regular communication between project partners to ensure overall progress and that each work package meets its project deliverables. Project reporting is currently ongoing, using the electronic monitoring system (eMS) to submit 6-monthly partner reports and expenditure claims. First Level Controllers are currently gaining access to these reports to conduct their audits, after which HITRANS will collate all partner reports to create an overall project progress report.

HITRANS has been working closely with NWRA on progressing the Non-Aeronautical Services work package activities. After completion of the tender assessment process, ALG were awarded the contract to perform audits of 2 airports in Scotland (Inverness and Oban) and 2 airports in Ireland (Donegal and Ireland West Knock). The aim of this activity is to examine how public service airports are managing their current non-aeronautical activities and identify opportunities based on the individual characteristics of each peripheral airport. After a successful inception meeting held between HITRANS, NWRA and ALG in February 2016, ALG are progressing with their work by arranging site visits for each airport to conduct their audits. ALG will be visiting Donegal and Ireland West Knock Airports w/c 4th April, and Inverness and Oban Airports w/c 11th April. ALG aim to complete their audits by May 2016 ready to present findings to project partners at the next conference in Sundsvall, Sweden.

HITRANS is progressing with their Low Carbon Solutions work package by working with Energy Saving Trust and Orkney Islands Council to secure an extended demo of a LEAF electric car for taxi usage in Kirkwall. HITRANS is also exploring the possibility of implementing electric bikes at Barra Airport.

HITRANS has been working with partner UHI to develop SPAN, an enduring innovation network designed to increase innovation within public service provisions in remote sparsely populated areas. HITRANS and UHI are currently developing a corporate governance report by exploring the best possible routes for SPAN to ensure it achieves its objectives and becomes self-sustainable. The report is currently in development with the next step to liaise with other partners to create an overall strategy and present at the next partner conference in Sweden.

The next partner conference will be held in Sundsvall, Sweden, 17-18th May 2016. The following dates have been suggested for future meetings:

- Nov 15th / 16th 2016 – Molde, Norway – Partner Meeting
- May 16th / 17th 2017 – Ireland – Partner Meeting / Conference
- Nov 14th / 15th 2017 – Trafikverket – Partner Meeting
- May 15th / 16th 2018 – UHI Inverness (Final Partner Meeting / Conference)

Recommendation

Members are asked to:-

1. Note the report.

Risk	Impact	Comment
RTS delivery	√	This work supports RTS objectives.
Policy	√	This work is designed to support delivery of our Aviation policy.

Financial	√	HITRANS share of SPARA 2020 project costs in 2015/16 and 2016/17 is included within the Business Plan. This project will attract ERDF funds at an attractive intervention rate.
Equality	-	No impact on Equalities issues.

Report by: Jayne Westbrook
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Date: 5th April 2016