DfT’s research on SDIs and SE: developing and using the evidence base

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Social impacts and social equity issues in transport workshop
15th September 2010
Overview of presentation

• Overview of SRE and DfT research on SDI/SE

• Key research areas/priorities
  – Understanding social impacts
  – Implementing consideration of SDIs/SE within Dept
  – Influencing consideration of SDIs/SE across Government

• Overarching and outstanding issues
SRE SDI/SE research

• SRE is a small division (<10 specialists)
• Focus on high priority, cross cutting, strategic issues
• Resources focused on SDIs/SE minimal
• Key objectives to:
  – Improve DfT understanding of SDIs/SE
  – Identify robust methods for analysing SDIs/SE
  – Encourage consideration of SDIs/SE by policy and analytical colleagues
  – Influence cross Government thinking on robust consideration/measurement of SDIs/SE
• Other policy specific work taken forward within policy areas
Understanding social impacts/equity

• Reviewed mobility choices and barriers for different social groups

• Qualitative research programme
  – Younger people
  – Older people
  – Disabled people
  – Low income households

• Evaluation of Accessibility Planning

• Available at: http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/scienceresearch/social/
Enabling consideration of SIs/SE

• From understanding to measurement
  – In scheme appraisal
  – In policy development

• Key issues
  – what are the primary impacts in transport context?
  – Who are the key groups?
  – How can impacts be measured?
  – How can they be incorporated?
Enabling consideration of SIs/SE: In transport scheme appraisal

• Primary thrust of SRE activity over last 5 yrs
• Stage 1: Evidence review
  – Explored social impacts in transport context
  – Identified quick wins
  – Investigated key ‘potentially vulnerable’ groups
• Stage 2: Industry engagement
  – Explored views of scheme promoters
• Stage 3: SDI methodology proposals
  – Developed initial proposals for capturing SDIs
• Stage 4: SDI methodology development
  – Piloted and tested robust methodology
  – Developed WebTAG guidance units
Enabling consideration of SIs/SE: In transport scheme appraisal (2)

8 social impact indicators identified:

- **Distribution of Noise** - analysis of who benefits/disbenefits from the changes in noise levels introduced by transport schemes
- **Distribution of Air Quality** - analysis of who benefits/disbenefits from the changes in air quality introduced by transport schemes
- **Accessibility** - analysis of changes in accessibility for different groups and areas
- **Severance** - analysis of issues which could be resolved during the design stage of scheme development
- **Affordability or Financial impacts** - analysis of changes in affordability for different groups and areas (transport users)
- **Distributions of User Benefits** - analysis of the distribution of users to reflect equity issues in the value for money assessment
- **Personal Security** - analysis of issues which could be resolved during the design stage of scheme development
- **Safety** - analysis of social groups that are vulnerable
Enabling consideration of SIs/SE: In transport scheme appraisal (3)

6 step methodology developed:

- **Step 0**: Initial screening of SDI risk given nature of scheme/area
- **Step 1**: Identification of area impacted by intervention
- **Step 2**: Identification of social groups in area of impact
- **Step 3**: Full screening against 8 indicators
- **Step 4**: Further analysis against ‘at risk’ SDI indicators
- **Step 5**: Reporting SDI analysis
Enabling consideration of SIs/SE: In transport policy

• Option generation
  – Climate Change policy options
  – Spending Review

• Policy development
  – National Networks NPS
  – TIF schemes
  – HS2
Enabling consideration of SIs/SE: In transport policy (2)

- Policy appraisal
  - Equality duty
  - EqIA

- Policy evaluation
  - more to be done
Influencing cross-government consideration of SI/SE

- DfT emerging as leader in area
  - moving beyond definition
  - Inputting to working groups
    - e.g. DWP ageing strategy, Child Poverty Unit

- Though work exists within OGDs
  - contexts differ

- Cross government task force established
  - increased recognition of social impacts
  - consensus in definition and measurement
    - Across Depts
    - Amongst analytical communities
9 key issues

1. SIs vary between contexts
2. Green Book coverage limited
3. Intended vs UNintended SIs
4. Positive vs negative SIs
5. Whole population vs PVGs
6. Quantification vs monetisation vs role of qualitative assessment
7. Social Impacts vs Social Equity
8. Need to be aware of priority of SIs to non social colleagues
9. Approaches need to be proportionate – esp in appraisal
Looking ahead…

- Implementing SDI guidance
- Fostering consistent consideration within policy development/EqIA
- Identify and prioritise remaining gaps in evidence base
- Work towards consistent understanding and consideration of SI across government
- Look to move beyond ‘quick wins’
- Consider SIs in evaluation context
- In context of limited resources, increased potential for UKTRC?
Questions…

• What are key evidence gaps/absent ‘priorities’?
• What impact will Big Society and localism agenda have for consideration of social impacts/equity?
  – Improved
    • due to local knowledge?
    • due to increased motivation/prioritisation?
  – Reduced
    • due to lack of targets/ring-fenced budgets/prioritisation?
    • due to lack of consistency/specialist knowledge at local level?
• What is role for central government vs academia vs LAs in new context?