INDEPENDENT TRANSPORT COMMISSION

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HOW PEOPLE MAKE LONGER TRIPS IN BRITAIN

- **Four out of five journeys of over 50 miles are by car. Cars are the dominant means of domestic long distance travel.**

- **Seven out of ten longer trips are made for social or leisure reasons. Most are by car and many help to link families spread across the country for reasons such as work, college and retirement. Others are for football games or holidays.**

- **Domestic air travel has grown fast and accounts for four per cent of all longer journeys. But half of such trips are for business – more than for any other mode. Domestic air travel is important to Britain's competitiveness.**

- These are amongst the findings of two pioneering studies (Note 1) published today by the ITC (Note 2). They provide context for questions about who might travel on high speed railways and why. Surprisingly, the interaction of long distance domestic travel by car, coach, rail and air has hitherto been little studied. Yet such journeys account for a third of all mileage, their costs affect one another, and they make an as yet unmeasured contribution to road congestion and carbon emissions. (Note 3)

LOOKING AHEAD – SCENARIOS for 2030 (Note 4)

- **If highly efficient, low-emission cars become common – as envisaged by the European Commission – drivers could drive annually an extra 6 bn miles and rail could see its growth greatly reduced. Total travel could grow by an extra 3%. (Note 5)**

- **If rising fuel costs or road charging cause real motoring costs to rise by 1% per year to 2030, total travel would grow by less than in any other scenario. The biggest shift would be to rail but coach and air would also gain.**

- If Britain emerges strongly from the recession demand for long distance travel could grow vigorously. On the roads, which carry the bulk of longer trips, congestion could worsen in the absence of investment or demand management. On the railways investment or fares increases could be needed to avoid overcrowding and less reliable services.

- If Britain emerges more slowly from the recession and growth is sluggish for a decade, demand for travel would grow slowly and pressure on roads and railways would be less. But there would also be less finance available to invest in infrastructure.

LONG DISTANCE TRAVEL IN BRITAIN - Notes

1. This new research covers journeys by residents of Great Britain of over 50 miles by car, coach, train and plane. Travel by non-residents, foreign tourists etc. is not covered. The research is described and assessed in two reports:

a) One, on data analysis and modelling by Professor Joyce Dargay, University of Leeds, is called: ***'The Prospects for Longer Distance Domestic Coach, Rail, Air and Car Travel in Britain';***

b) The second, led by the ITC's David Quarmby, considers the policy implications of the basic research. It is called ***'Long Distance Travel in Britain: Prospects in a Time of Uncertainty'.***

Both will be on the ITC website on 22 March 2010. The cost of the research was £124,000 (6)

2. The ITC, founded in 1999, has 12 unpaid Members, a paid Secretariat and links to the University of Southampton. Simon Linnett, executive vice-chairman, N.M.Rothschild & Sons, is the ITC's acting chairman.

3. The ITC is seeking funds to assess the carbon implications of the findings of this research.

4. In order to explore the effect of scenarios of interventionist policies, it was necessary to establish a base case. This contains official projections for factors such as population change, gross domestic product, oil prices, motoring costs and rail fares. Any assumptions were cautious. The base case shows long distance travel mileage increasing by 34 per cent between 2005 and 2030.

5. Professor Dargay's other scenarios show the effects of a) constant real rail fares, b) a simple regime of national road user charges, c) increases in air passenger duty, d) a 25% reduction in air fares, e) no change in the fuel efficiency of cars, f) and g) a one per cent annual increase in motoring costs.

6. Finance for the study came from Stagecoach, Arriva, Go-Ahead, the Department for Transport, Network Rail and the Rees Jeffries Road Fund.

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