



The Department for Transport's consultation on the UK Ports Policy Review addresses several key areas (outlined below). Having read the consultation and supporting annexes, I am uncertain whether BMRA would be able to provide meaningful comment on the consultation areas. If however, you have any comments that should be developed into a formal BMRA response, please telephone or email me by 23 August.

The likely demand for port capacity

The consultation predicts long-term forecasts of demand for each main freight market sector to help inform assessments of future capacity requirements. It predicts: sustained growth at national level in container and roll-on roll-off traffic as structural changes in the UK economy and importance of trade with Europe and Asia increases, significant growth in motor vehicle imports, high growth in certain bulk commodities (such as natural gas) and generally moderate growth or decline in other bulk sectors.

What are members' views, if any, on demand for each prediction?

Impact of Ports and Port Development

Ports are of vital importance to international trade and economic development given that 95% of trade by weight entering and leaving the UK is by sea. The consultation refers to Government's commitment to improve regional economic performance across England and asks to what extent the Review can contribute to meeting this commitment. In particular it seeks comments on the impact ports have on local (and wider) employment and regeneration and whether there should be national policy which dictates the development of sea ports in a region, or leave regional bodies to make port development decisions.

What are members' views, if any, on the impact ports have on local and regional employments and regeneration?

Port development and infrastructure funding

Government recognises that transport infrastructure improvements will be needed to benefit increased port development. The consultation raises issues relating to road, rail and inland waterway connections to ports including whether port developers should fund inland transport networks to accommodate the increased traffic expected to be brought about by the development. The consultation also asks whether Government is doing enough to reduce road congestion and whether greater use of rail/inland waterways/coastal shipping be encouraged to reduce HGV mileage.

What are members' views, if any, on how inland connections to ports should be funded, and looking to the future, would road pricing and rail pathing encourage members to use alternative transport routes to/from ports?

Ports and the environment

The consultation recognises that ports and international shipping impacts on the environment, and asks whether noise, local air/water emissions and waste (such as ship-generated waste and cargo residues) are adequately dealt with under current legislation.

What are members' views, if any, on the existing legislative controls on environmental impacts?

Port Policy and Regulatory Framework

The final sections of the consultation consider the effectiveness of current port policy and regulations and asks what further measures could be introduced to help realise the potential of smaller ports as well as making the planning system work more effectively for new ports and port developments.

What are members' views, if any, on current port regulations such as the Harbours Act 1964, Habitats Directive and the Marine Bill?