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Costs of unreliable transport rival those of congestion

New study by International Transport Forum calls for more emphasis on concept of reliability

Transport reliability needs more policy prominence, according to a new report released by the International Transport Forum at the OECD for its annual global mobility summit on “Transport and Innovation” to be held in Leipzig, Germany, from May 26-28. Findings by the Paris-based think tank suggest that costs incurred as a result of unreliable transport may rival those generated by congestion.

“The increased importance of scheduling in personal and freight mobility has underlined the need for a more reliable transport system”, says **Stephen Perkins**, Head of the ITF/OECD Joint Transport Research Centre. “Significant variations in travel time reduce the efficiency of transport systems. Leaving earlier to ensure on-time arrival consumes time available for other activities.”

The new report “*Improving Reliability on Surface Transport Networks*” -, argues that reliability should be better incorporated into transport policy making. A review of policies in ITF/OECD countries shows that so far few countries explicitly incorporate reliability into transport policy making.

According to the report, project assessment needs to be improved to incorporate reliability. The study provides tools to do this by suggesting ways to measure and value reliability. Such methods have been used on a pilot basis in a small number of countries, such as the Netherlands, Sweden and Britain.

Recommendations are made for possible improvements in transport planning and operations that explicitly incorporate values of reliability. Case studies of commercial operations and a range of policy initiatives across OECD and ITF countries provide examples of policies that can be used to deliver more reliable networks in a cost-effective manner.

The report was developed by a group of international experts under the auspices of the ITF/OECD Joint Transport Research Centre. For further information and a copy of the report, please contact **Michael Kloth**, Head of Communications, International Transport Forum, at +33 1 45 24 95 96 or Michael.KLOTH@oecd.org.

The International Transport Forum is a strategic think tank for the transport sector. Each year, it brings together Ministers from over 50 countries, along with leading decision-makers and actors from the private sector, civil society and research, to address transport issues of strategic importance. An intergovernmental organisation linked to the OECD, the Forum's goal is to help shape the transport policy agenda, and ensure that it contributes to economic growth, environmental protection, social inclusion and the preservation of human life and wellbeing. The 2010 International Transport Forum, to be held on 26-28 May in Leipzig, Germany, will focus on Transport and Innovation: Unleashing the Potential.