



**Monitoring of the development
of official transport models in
Sweden 2014**

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Report 2015:1**

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Transport Analysis

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Summary

According to its instructions, Transport Analysis (Trafikanalys) is tasked with continuously monitoring the Swedish Transport Administration's development of models for cost-benefit analysis (CBA). In carrying out its task, Transport Analysis focuses on the Transport Administration's organization, its administration, its model development in 2014 and its model development projected for 2015. The results are based primarily on a questionnaire survey. The survey and the monitoring comprise work in seven different development areas: a national freight model (SAMGODS), a passenger model system (SAMPERS/SAMKALK), a calculus tool for road investments (EVA), a calculus tool for rail investments (Bansek), a collection of less frequently used tools (Other tools), the work on identifying and assessing cause-and-effect relationships (Effektsamband), work on principles for and parameters to be used in CBA (ASEK).

A starting point of this tracking process involves mapping the status of completed and announced initiatives relative to the objectives set out in the Transport Administration's current development plan, previous assessments by the Swedish National Audit Office, and questionnaire responses from previous years. The results of this work are intended primarily to support the political management of the Transport Administration, although they may also benefit the Transport Administration itself.

General considerations

The present report describes Transport Analysis's third more comprehensive follow-up of the Transport Administration's work with tools and methods for CBA. Our criticisms are reiterated in many sections, and a number of problems remain unsolved.

One serious deficiency is that it is not clearly stated what projects are underway and what projects have been completed or are under procurement in the various administrative areas in a given year. As in previous years, it is difficult to gain an overview of how the modelling work is proceeding. The Transport Administration needs to improve its analytical and reporting processes with respect to the *purpose*, *prioritisation*, and *results* of various work initiatives. These deficiencies are especially notable regarding the reporting in the Sampers/Samkalk, EVA, and Other Tools areas.

Transport Analysis still finds it difficult to understand how the, by the Transport Administration, published development plan governs work being done. A large portion of ongoing projects cannot be related to the plan. According to Transport Analysis, it is important that the development work have a clear strategic focus and not be subordinated to needs-based analysis or influences from organizations with special interests. As of now the Transport Administration's development plan is more of the nature of an internal work programme. There is a need for a development plan, and it should be an instrument for achieving openness and embedding strategic development needs.

It is important that the Transport Administration be highly successful in terms of what are deemed the benefits of an agency-monitored model development process, i.e., openness, objectivity, information dissemination, and a clear focus on the public good. It is Transport Analysis's assessment that the Administration is not currently living up to these expectations.

One potential advantage of collective, agency-monitored responsibility for the models that the Transport Administration is considered to be handling well is that of coordinating its work between the development of principles and parameters for CBA and the development of cost-benefit calculation tools.

The established development process concerning the Swedish national transport plan calls for yearly updates of prerequisites for CBA and yearly updates of models if needed. The background being that the Administration, ones a year, must present a number of infrastructure projects that they deem is ready to start. This has led the Transport Administration to develop, in exemplary fashion, routines for making annual decisions as to what tool versions, basic forecasts, calculation values, methods, and cause-and-effect relationships are to be applied in socio-economic analyses in coming years.

The Transport Administration reports a dramatic increase in resource consumption for administrative work and model development in 2014. a total of roughly SEK 15.7 million more was spent than in 2013, an increase of some 40%. Increases occurred in all areas except Other Tools. The greatest increases were seen in Sampers/Samkalk and ASEK, where the spending was SEK 5.4 million and SEK 5.7 million higher, respectively, in 2014 than in 2013. This corresponds to increases in resource consumption of roughly 66% and 150%, respectively. The administrative and developmental work cost a total of SEK 53.9 million in 2014, compared with SEK 38.2 million in 2013. These differences are attributable mainly to the unit failing to deliver according to plan in 2013, while the 2014 results are more in line with planning. Total resource consumption for the unit in charge of model development, including commissioned analytical work, support to model users etc., was just over SEK 57.8 million; the corresponding figure for 2013 was SEK 51.8 million.

One recurring observation is that it appears to be difficult for the unit in charge of model development to plan its resource requirements and resource availability. The Unit often reports large discrepancies between its budgets and its results. The explanations have been that it is difficult for the Unit to determine the extent to which its personnel will need to participate in commissioned analytical work and support tasks; according to Transport Analysis, this indicates that the leadership and organisation of the unit need to be improved.

For several years, Transport Analysis has been calling for regulatory documents that clarify the guidelines to be applied to procurements, including the documentation requirements to be set and how situations entailing dependence on individual consultants or researchers are to be avoided. The National Audit Office shared this view in its 2010 review. The question remains unresolved.

There are still some lacunae regarding the areas that the National Audit Office recommended the Transport Administration to address in 2010. These pertain to the following:

- Reliable and long-term sustainable administration of models and methods for CBA.
- That application of methods/models in both the long-term planning and the physical planning as well as other types of analysis should be uniform; Transport Analysis views the lack of explicit descriptions of what different tools or models are being developed for as a major deficiency.
- Guidelines should be considered delineating which administrative tasks should be carried out by consultants and which should be carried out by the agency itself.

Transport Analysis also perceives deficiencies insofar as:

- Several tools, particularly Sampers/Samkalk, is lacking forums in which users, developers, commissioners and researcher can exchange experiences in regard to development issues.
- Training opportunities for some of the models are far too limited.

Specific observations

The Transport Administration has developed routines for receiving and processing development proposals and reported deficiencies, but the reporting feedback to users needs to be improved. Another observation is that the unit in charge of model development is not fulfilling its obligation to coordinate development work in the Cause and Effect area, even if it is stated in the unit's job description. The work in this area is instead focused on decision making, administration, and information provision regarding applicable cause/effect relationships. The development of Sampers/Samkalk is being driven largely by various research projects. Transport Analysis questions whether this is reasonable. In addition, an official version of Samgods, the national freight model system, were supposed to be published in 2014. The Transport Administration now reports that version 1.0 of the Samgods model will be published on 1 April 2015.

On the other hand, work in the ASEK area is described relatively well, and it is clear that the scope of relevant research initiatives expanded dramatically in 2014 compared with previous years. However, Transport Analysis finds that a number of these initiatives might have come too late to yield any new results in the most neglected areas to be available for implementation in ASEK 6. In the present report, Transport Analysis identifies certain areas in particular need of development.

Transport Analysis approves the fact that the Transport Administration improved its basic documentation of certain tools in 2014. On the other hand, the information on the Transport Administration website still needs to be improved.



Transport Analysis is a Swedish agency for transport policy analysis. We analyse and evaluate proposed and implemented measures within the sphere of transport policy. We are also responsible for official statistics in the transport and communication sectors. Transport Analysis was established in April 2010 with its head office in Stockholm and a branch office in Östersund.