



campaigning
by the
**Railway Development
Society Limited**

Policy Committee

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5th September 2012

Dear Mr. Eyles,

RESPONSE TO ORR CONSULTATION ON FORMALISING THE RAIL DELIVERY GROUP

INTRODUCTION

Railfuture is pleased to submit this response to the ORR Formalising the Rail Delivery Group consultation that has been prepared by its Policy Committee.

Railfuture is a national voluntary organisation structured in England as twelve regional branches and two national branches for Scotland and Wales.

We are Britain's leading independent rail lobby organisation with a large number of affiliated Rail User Groups. Being funded entirely from membership subscriptions and donations, Railfuture enjoys a strictly non-partisan status and has no connections with political parties, trade unions or commercial interests.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Railfuture welcomes the creation of the Rail Delivery Group (RDG) and in principal supports the objectives contained in the consultation document. Railfuture also has high hopes that the RDG could be expanded to become the focal point for the rail industry, broadening its sphere of activities and providing the essential forward looking and innovative leadership that has been lacking since privatisation and ultimately, taking over responsibility for most of the functions currently carried out by DfT (Rail).

The work of the RDG could perhaps include timetabling and planning for ongoing electrification schemes and production of a rolling stock procurement plan that would provide manufacturers with the stability needed to keep production lines active and thereby minimise train production costs. Railfuture also believes that re-unification of the industry made possible by the RDG could significantly help to improve efficiency and reduce costs. Ultimately, the RDG could adopt the title of, and indeed, fulfil the role of a 'Railways Agency'.

As well as fragmentation, the compensation culture introduced at privatisation has significantly increased industry costs and is a major contributor to the cost of enhancements. Closer working relationships through alliances now being introduced by Network Rail could be made easier to introduce with the aid of the RDG and opportunities to eliminate the need for compensation payments, particularly when Network Rail needs to take possessions for renewals or enhancements, should be taken up.

The rail industry is frequently criticised for not having a voice and often seems incapable of defending itself when such criticism is unfair or ill informed. The RDG should immediately correct this situation and appoint a media spokesperson to represent the industry as a whole. Closer working relationships could also benefit passengers in other ways. For example, maintaining connections could become seen as a higher priority than keeping an eye on the PPM. Missed connections should count against the PPM score.

www.railfuture.org.uk www.railfuturescotland.org.uk www.railfuturewales.org.uk
www.railwatch.org.uk

QUESTION 1: *Do you consider that the purpose of RDG set out in paragraphs 2.16 to 2.5 will drive the changes and improvements envisaged by the McNulty study?*

In principal yes, but care needs to be taken that the RDG does not simply become a talking shop.

QUESTION 2: *Are you content with the proposed structure of the RDG board, particularly in terms of scope of representation and the criteria for membership?*

The £250m turnover threshold for Leadership members seems to be rather high. Railfuture would express concern that Open Access operators seem to have been excluded. At least one director should be appointed to look after Open Access operators interests. Railfuture would also suggest that a director should be appointed with responsibility to liaise with and represent stakeholders such as London TravelWatch, Passenger Focus, Railfuture and Campaign for Better Transport.

QUESTION 3: *Please comment on how you consider RDG could best engage with licensed and associate members.*

Through regular panel meetings and representation on the board.

QUESTION 5: *Will the proposed voting and quorum arrangements provide you with assurance that decisions taken by RDG will have sufficient cross-industry support to justify implementation?*

Railfuture would agree that the proposed voting and quorum arrangements would provide sufficient cross industry support but suggest that provision needs to be made for the views of all stakeholders to be effectively considered.

We have no comments to make in response to questions 6 & 7.

Yours sincerely,



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