

NEWS RELEASE



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Railway Industry Association

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HANSFORD REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS: "EXCITING & FORWARD-THINKING" - RAILWAY INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Following the publication today of Professor Peter Hansford's independent review into contestability, third party investment and infrastructure delivery on the national railway, Darren Caplan, Chief Executive of the Railway Industry Association (RIA), said:

"The Railway Industry Association strongly supports the view that greater contestability in the UK rail market would provide the opportunity and encouragement for third parties to invest in rail infrastructure improvements to help meet the growing needs of the network. So we welcome Professor Hansford's recommendations today.

"We are pleased that areas where the current system could be improved - as highlighted in our submission - have been addressed by Prof. Hansford, including various barriers to entry like standards and scope control and complex business cases and funding agreements.

"These radical reforms will allow innovative third party stakeholders to confidently compete for and deliver railway projects. This has the potential to unlock the capacity of the network to improve passenger experience, to increase UK productivity and to allow economic growth. It's an exciting and forward-thinking set of recommendations and we are pleased to see that Network Rail is already taking steps to implement them.

"We encourage the Government to continue in this direction, by considering even more ambitious opportunities to work with the private sector to bring their expertise and innovation directly into the financing and delivering of railway projects. We ask the Government to address issues such as output focussed specifications, increased collaboration, alignment of objectives and risk sharing by, for example, tackling the lack of reliable information on the condition of Network Rail's asset base. This will enable the sector to realise customer benefits, help address DfT affordability issues and provide suppliers with a more predictable and consistent programme of opportunities.

"The UK's railway supply industry is ready and willing to rise to the challenge of introducing third party financing into UK railway infrastructure. We look forward to working with stakeholders to deliver this and to continue working with Network Rail to review and deliver the recommendations in this very welcome report."

Ends

Notes to Editors:

1. The Railway Industry Association is the long-established trade association for the UK railway supply industry. Its member companies include manufacturers, maintainers, contractors, consultants and suppliers of specialist services. For further information, see our website at www.riagb.org.uk/ or us on 020 7201 0777.

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