

Rail Delivery Group

Summary of Proceedings 14 January 2014

Present

Martin Griffiths (Chairman) (Stagecoach)
David Higgins (Vice-Chairman) (Network Rail)
Michael Roberts (Director-General, RDG)
Dominic Booth (Abellio)
David Brown (Go-Ahead)
Dean Finch (National Express)
Alistair Gordon (Keolis)
Bob Holland (Arriva)
Nigel Jones (DBSchenker)
Chris Kimberley (Serco)
Peter Maybury (Freightliner)
Tim O'Toole (First Group)
Paul Plummer (Network Rail)
Doug Sutherland (Directly Operated Railways)
Jeremy Long (MTR)
Nick Ellins (RDG)
Edward Welsh (RDG)
Billy Denyer (RDG)

In attendance:

Simone Bailey (Stations)
Malcolm Brown and Richard Brown (Rolling stock strategy)
Robin Gisby (National Operating Strategy)

Martin Griffiths was welcomed to his first meeting as RDG Chairman.

Approval of the record / progress on action points from the meeting on 18 December 2013

It was agreed that one amendment should be made to the action points from the meeting on 18 December 2013. The summary of the Performance item regarding the scale of PPM improvements reflected the views of NR, not necessarily of all operators. The action points will be revised to clarify this.

There was brief discussion on two outstanding actions:

Rolling stock – Amalgamating the two work streams remains work in progress.

Project Quicksilver – There will be a summit at the Chief Information Officers forum on 13th February to flesh out the technical issues.

Stephen Hammond had written to TOC MDs on this subject and RDG had responded on behalf of the industry.

RDG work streams

The proposed RDG work streams cover a range of upstream and downstream activities and incorporate new work streams for Franchising, People and Stations. RDG must be sharper in communicating the benefits of the work streams, and must strengthen engagement with the rest of the industry.

Following discussion, RDG endorsed the work streams as proposed, though RDG members asked for more detail on the potential elements of the franchising work stream. It was proposed that greater prominence should be given to Performance as a work stream in its own right. In future the planning and regulation elements of the industry structure and strategy work stream would be treated as work streams in their own right.

Communications plan

The communications plan is a big project that requires long-term commitment to succeed. It will be important to promote RDG's vision and demonstrate that RDG is making a difference. Hard facts and robust economic analysis will be needed to back up the narrative.

Indicative timescales for the three elements of the communications plan were set out in the work streams table. The communications plan will now be fleshed out. There must be a consistent narrative (with consistent killer facts) across the industry that not only engages with passengers and other stakeholders but which also addresses the wider audience.

Stations

Many stations are in poor condition, and that this is exacerbated by the inefficient and confusing accountabilities which frequently result in conflicts and delays. Small stations are often the focal point of the local community but this gateway is not being exploited.

With the benefit of 99 year leases and less bureaucracy over station redevelopment, Greater Anglia recently went out to tender on 40 station retailing units. They evaluated the proposals based on the commercial proposition and potential passenger benefit. The stations have been vastly improved, offering more Value for Money to passengers as a result.

DfT would welcome industry leadership in this area. RDG should take the lead, and focus on four key areas:

- Passenger satisfaction
- Station improvement and investment
- A clear policy on stations
- Station conditions

RDG agreed that there is a significant opportunity to unlock the value of stations and thus enhance the rail offering, but to do this successfully the bureaucratic silos must be removed. A remit for the RDG Stations work stream will now be drawn up.

Freight – Long Term Sustainability Strategy

The long term sustainability strategy for freight was presented. KPMG wrote the strategy, entitled “Keeping the lights on and the traffic moving”, which uses hard data to demonstrate the opportunities for growth in the rail freight sector. Discussions are ongoing with Government regarding the strategy for rail freight. RDG supported the approach and agreed to further work on the strategy.

Rolling stock strategy

Richard Brown and Malcolm Brown detailed the 30-year forward look for rolling stock which had received positive feedback from investors and suppliers and had restored investor confidence in the UK rolling stock market. It had been used to convince rolling stock manufacturers in Japan and Germany of the importance of the UK market. Members welcomed the report as a good piece of work.

National Operating Strategy

Robin Gisby detailed the plans for the National Operating Strategy (NOS). Improvements have been made in recent years through reducing the number of control locations and the introduction of IAP and traffic management systems. The NOS will further tidy up this area by aligning the relevant industry groups and moving them in the right direction.

This project requires a great deal of collaboration, and the industry will need to form a joint view on issues such as traffic management and signalling control systems if NOS is to be successful. RDG agreed that this is a very important subject and supported the programme of work.

Budget

MR provided forward notice of the need to discuss the 2014/15 RDG budget at the next RDG meeting. The Chairman will review the draft proposals ahead of the next RDG meeting, and emphasised the need for the budget to be transparent.

Working group updates

The Working group updates were noted and the following were briefly discussed:

Transparency – Research had been initiated to establish what in general rail customers want in terms of transparency. RDG will write to DfT and ORR to set out the aims of the Transparency group.

Information & Ticketing – Representatives for the working group are sought from each of the three main passenger rail sectors.

Technology & Operations – DfT attended the recent Technology & Operations workstream and proposed that RDG should manage a new Innovation Fund being created by the DfT.

Any other business

- The RDG Executive will formulate a draft agenda for the DfT-RDG Awayday which is currently scheduled for 12th May.
- RDG thanked DH for his valuable contribution as RDG Vice-Chairman.