

Rail Delivery Group

Summary of Proceedings 22 September 2011

Present

Tim O'Toole (Chairman)
Sir David Higgins (vice-Chairman)
David Brown
Andrew Chivers
Tony Collins
Lindsay Durham
Martin Griffiths
Bob Holland
Elaine Holt
Nigel Jones
Paul Plummer
Anton Valk
Graham Smith (Secretary)
Michael Roberts
Sir Roy McNulty

Rail Systems Agency (RSA)

The Working Group had reviewed the recommendations from the Rail Value for Money Study and agreed that there were gaps in areas such as identifying new operating practices and technologies, undertaking planning and appraisal around system-wide technology initiatives and promoting innovation. The Working Group did not agree with the Study's recommendations to combine existing organisations into one, to create a National Safety Task Force or to empower the RSA to impose solutions.

The Working Group recommended that a Rail Systems Agency should be created with the following characteristics:

- A small organisation with staff skilled in technical, appraisal, legal and commercial matters;
- Able to present detailed business cases on cross-industry projects to funders and regulators;
- Able to identify winners and losers and to provide a dispute resolution and compensation assessment service;
- Governed by the industry, regulated by the ORR and working closer with DfT; and
- An independent body to encourage industry participation.

RDG agreed that further work was required to tackle both the RSA and RSSB issues that had been highlighted in discussion. The work should identify:

- The activities of the RSA;
- Ways of better industry engagement with the RSSB;

- The skill sets needed by the RSA;
- The metrics and objectives to which the RSA would work;
- The effect on donor organisations;
- Whether the RSSB could be reformed to take on the RSA role; and
- Whether the entire structure could be simplified by the RDG taking on the RSA / RSSB role by becoming the Board of the existing RSSB and reforming its mission and make-up.

Asset, Programme and Supply-Chain Management Working Group

The Working Group was reviewing the plans to achieve the low-end savings identified by the RVfM Study and identifying the barriers to achieving the high-end savings. It was also examining case studies to identify opportunities to reduce asset, supply-chain and project management costs.

Transforming Commercial Relationships Through Improved Flexibility

The Group agreed that there was a need for a reformulation of the industry's contractual relationships, which required the engagement of Government with industry to give effect to change. The benefits to the passenger from a change in the industry's commercial agreements had to be made clear.

Train Utilisation Working Group

The Working Group would focus on utilisation in London and the South East as the most likely source of the biggest efficiencies.

Initial ideas emerging from the Working Group included:

- Vehicle availability;
- Introduction of additional turn-backs;
- Splitting and joining of trains; and
- Options to encourage use of non-peak services.

Technology and Innovation Working Group

The working group reported that it was looking at the technologies associated with train operations and retailing.

Rolling Stock

RDG noted various initiatives on Rolling Stock and agreed that any issues that required RDG involvement would, in the first instance, be picked up by the Asset, Supply-Chain and Programme Management Working Group.

Initial Industry Plan

The Initial Industry Plan would be published on 29 September and would emphasise the successes of the rail industry and its contribution to the economy. It would focus on the expectation of cost reduction and increased revenue and the choices that would give Government.

Industry Forum

RDG decided to hold an industry forum that would provide an opportunity for RDG to listen to the wider industry community and to update the industry on the Group's priorities.

Passenger Information

At the meeting with the ORR the view was expressed that passenger information was primarily a matter for ATOC and Network Rail rather than RDG. It was noted that further briefing on the industry's plans to improve passenger information would take place during October.