

Rail Delivery Group

Summary of Proceedings 3 March 2014

Present

Martin Griffiths (Chair) (Stagecoach)
Michael Roberts (Director-General) (RDG)
Vernon Barker (First Group)
Dominic Booth (Abellio)
David Brown (Go-Ahead)
Mark Carne (Network Rail)
Dean Finch (National Express)
Alistair Gordon (Keolis)
Bob Holland (Arriva)
Nigel Jones (DBSchenker)
Chris Kimberley (Serco)
Peter Maybury (Freightliner)
Paul Plummer (Network Rail)
Doug Sutherland (Directly Operated Railways)
Jeremy Long (MTR)
George Lynn (RDG)
Edward Welsh (RDG)
Billy Denyer (Minutes) (RDG)

In attendance:

Chris Burchell and Robin Gisby (Performance)
Graham Smith and Abi Smith (Railway Benefit Fund)

MG welcomed MC to his first RDG meeting. MC has replaced David Higgins and will take up the role of RDG Deputy Chairman.

Approval of the record / progress on action points from the meeting on 30 January 2014

The minutes of the RDG meeting on 30th January 2014 were agreed to be a true record.

There was brief discussion on actions arising from previous RDG meetings:

Industry scorecard – An initial draft has been worked up and a proposition will be taken to RDG.

Communications plan – The Communications group is developing a programme of activity.

Stations – A small sub-group will discuss the remit for the Stations work stream and RDG members were asked to volunteer people (at a senior strategic/policy level) to sit on the main working group.

Director-general's report

MR highlighted the following developments:

Rail Supply Group

A further meeting had been held with Terence Watson regarding RDG's engagement with the Rail Supply Group (RSG). TW is currently formulating the structure and scope of RSG, but sees it as complementary to RDG. Tim Shoveller will be the Owinging Group representative on RSG, to provide a client side interface and links with RDG.

Smart ticketing

There is industry concern about a fragmented approach within DfT. MR, DBr, Julian Drury and David Mapp are meeting with Stephen Hammond shortly to express these concerns.

Two other topical issues were highlighted by members:

ATOC was congratulated on the successful launch of the Two Together Railcard and positive media reaction;

The announcement of DfT's new Rail Executive was consistent with the steer provided by Clare Moriarty.

RDG Budget 2014/15

RDG unanimously endorsed the proposed budget for 2014/15. Budgeted costs and milestones should be assessed against actual spend over the next 12 to 18 months to ensure they are closely aligned.

HS2 position

Planning Oversight Group (POG) is the vehicle for shaping and steering RDG's position on HS2, as this will ensure collective buy-in from all members.

The HS2 communications strategy and key messages will be formulated and agreed through correspondence before 17th March. By commenting publicly before David Higgins' report is published, RDG would be demonstrating industry leadership on this issue.

Network Rail has a remit to plan HS2, governed by a tripartite Board which comprises HS2 Ltd, DfT and Network Rail. Pan-industry leadership is required, hence the need for POG to be closely involved in proceedings, and that there must be close working relationships between the HS2 operational and planning bodies.

Future role of POG

Recent POG discussions have been encouraging and cohesive, and have demonstrated why POG is RDG's vehicle for driving forward industry planning activities. There is some concern that

some POG members do not have the appropriate seniority or experience to drive the work forwards, and PP will privately share these concerns with the appropriate RDG members.

Review of charges

There had been excellent discussions on the review of charges. RDG needs to take a leadership role, rather than ORR, on how the industry moves forward in this area. RDG agreed that the Review of charges work should be progressed as proposed.

Extreme weather and asset resilience

RDG were updated on the impact of the recent bad weather and flooding on rail infrastructure and commented on the resilience of the railway to such extreme weather episodes. The key points were:

- Groundwater levels require more attention in resilience planning;
- Neither Dawlish nor Maidenhead were included in Network Rail's existing resilience plans as these plans focused on flooding (not coastal erosion and rising groundwater levels respectively);
- Earthwork failures have been a major problem and will continue to be a problem as land dries out (which will be problematic as customers will expect the service to improve). Network Rail are currently examining earthworks across the network to identify locations of concern;

Network Rail are planning to produce a short-term study on Dawlish, and in the medium term need to consider whether new flooding and climate change strategies are needed for all routes. There is a mechanism to obtain additional funding for these activities if there is insufficient funding in CP5.

It was agreed that RDG should input into existing arrangements to consider weather resilience rather than create a new group.

Performance and NTF Report

Chris Burchell, Chair of NTF and Managing Director of Southern, presented on performance challenges in CP5, stressing that the challenges are considerable and can only be overcome through joint working across the industry. Although infrastructure has improved, it has not kept pace with the increased demands placed upon it. In addition, passenger and traffic growth have resulted in more 'knock-on' delays.

NTF has identified three ways of improving performance:

- Better asset performance (e.g. addressing both asset and timetable delays at the same time to reduce primary and reactionary delays);
- Better matching of train plans to reality (e.g. more granular geographical and temporal train measurement without getting bogged down with too much data);

- Better operational resilience (e.g. more use of technology in decision-making through the National Operating Strategy and Traffic Management Strategy).

It was agreed that NTF will own the industry's single performance narrative and will continue to closely monitor performance.

Members agreed that performance is a key priority for RDG. Chris Burchell will be invited to attend RDG meetings quarterly to give an update on performance issues.

Work stream updates

Asset, Programme and Supply Chain Management (APSCM)

On Rolling Stock VfM, ORR have separately commissioned SDG to investigate rolling stock costs although this does impact RDG's Phase 2 plans as the ORR work does not seek to recommend ways of finding cost efficiencies. ORR's study plan will be circulated to RDG for information. The Rolling Stock VfM sub-group should engage with ORR on how the data is finally presented.

Technology and operations

The recent Project Quicksilver summit ensured that all stakeholders understood the issues and work programme. A request for proposals was about to be circulated to Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) and responses – which should price up three different options – are due back on 14th April.

Freight

- Andrew McNaughton (HS2) gave a useful presentation to the last Freight group meeting;
- PM is ensuring that ORR are aware of the work that the Freight group is doing.

Communications

Recent activity encompassed day-to-day media handling, establishing the case for private rail operators, and working closely with other RDG work streams. In addition, the RDG website will be refreshed in March.

Transparency

It was agreed that RDG should make a significant contribution to ORR's transparency agenda in due course and a proposal on this would be brought to the next RDG.

Information and ticketing

A workshop to narrow down the brief has been arranged. All of the key players are invited to the workshop, including the various parts of DfT that have an interest. Baroness Kramer and Stephen Hammond have been briefed on the objectives for this workstream.

Railway Benefit Fund

Graham Smith gave a presentation on the work of the Railway Benefit Fund (RBF). The RBF is seeking endorsement from RDG and access to industry players for funding, such as large consultancies.

RDG agreed to support RBF's efforts to secure more funding. Abi Smith also requested that Members let RBF know when their charity nominations will occur.

Any other business

There were no items of other business.