

Meeting the Challenge

The Fleet Reliability Focus Forum (ReFocus) was introduced by the Engineering Council in November 2010 and tasked with identifying best practice and sharing knowledge amongst rail industry partners such as TOCs, OEMs, RoSCos, Network Rail and others. This forum has made a very valuable contribution to fleet delivery over this time and continues to provide an evolutionary good practice guide to support the industry.

ReFocus captures knowledge through peer groups who are experts and this knowledge is then incorporated in the Fleet Management Good Practice Guide.

ReFocus has developed new sections of the Guide and revised existing sections. Sharing knowledge and best practice ultimately allows TOCs and their partners to deliver a reliable and punctual service.

However, the railway still faces many challenges. With the increase in demand and society's expectations constantly evolving, it is attracting more and more customers and businesses. This creates significant challenges, with historic methods of delivering continuous improvement only able to provide marginal benefits. A more holistic view, covering not only the technical aspects but also the people and the culture, will need to be explored and set out in the Guide. This includes integrating new technology, data, people and processes to allow for more trains to run on an increasingly busy network.

ReFocus has made real progress in tackling some of these problems by working with industry partners and not just on a fleet-centric basis. This allows us to comprehensively examine generic railway issues by working with operational colleagues and Network Rail, as well as other industry partners such as the OEMs and the RoSCos. This collaborative approach has enabled us to update the Fleet Management Good Practice Guide to reflect today's thinking.

ReFocus also takes a holistic view of society and cultural challenges in order to drive change. It looks at technology and innovations that allow new processes and practices to be developed and addresses the gaps where clear value can be added. This knowledge is used to inform other industry strategy groups, such as Fleet Challenge and RDG's Supply Chain Forum, of gaps and shortfalls which may need addressing now or in the near future.

Other industries face similar challenges to the railway with ever-increasing demand from users and the constant need to move forward and deliver a reliable and safe service. Benchmarking with other industries gives members opportunities to transfer knowledge and incorporate it within their own business.

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