Policy paper - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/railways-bill/railways-bill-introducing-and-designing-great-british-railways

Railways Bill factsheet: introducing and designing Great British Railways

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The Railways Bill will deliver fundamental reform to Britain's railways. The government's proposals will refocus the sector in the service of passengers, freight customers and taxpayers, and enable the creation of Great British Railways (GBR) to sit at the heart of this reformed sector. GBR will be a new public company responsible for providing the single point of leadership our railways sorely need, squarely accountable to its passengers for the service it delivers, with clear targets to meet on service performance and quality, and real consequences where it does not.

It will be a new, publicly owned company headquartered in Derby. GBR will run passenger train services (that the government currently procures from private companies such as Avanti and CrossCountry) and manage the infrastructure (tracks, stations, and depots) as Network Rail does today. This is 'bringing track and train together'. Alongside this, GBR will make decisions about which other operators can run services on its infrastructure, as well as selling tickets for its services.

GBR, operating with a business mindset, will be responsible for day-to-day railway decisions and operations. For the first time since privatisation, accountable railway leaders will be able to take integrated commercial and operational decisions across track and train to improve customer satisfaction, deliver better performance, drive passenger and revenue growth and reduce net subsidy to the railway.

Alongside this, GBR will make decisions about which other operators can run services on its infrastructure, as well as selling tickets for its services. GBR will also continue to uphold the high standards of safety in our railways, which make them rank amongst the safest globally.

GBR's design will ensure it is responsive to both national and local ambitions and take these into account when making decisions for the communities it serves. It will have the ability and tools to take a long-term view of what's best for customers and taxpayers across the planning of both infrastructure and passenger services. It will make these decisions transparently within a democratic framework to meet the objectives of ministers and maximise the social, economic and environmental benefits to the country.

What will the new rail industry look like?

The Secretary of State for Transport will be the sole shareholder and primary funder of GBR and will be democratically accountable to parliament for its performance.

The funding available for GBR will be determined primarily by the Transport Secretary as part of the overall funding arrangements for transport that are agreed by His Majesty's Treasury. For more information on the funding arrangements, see the funding fact sheet published alongside this one.

The Transport Secretary will also publish a Long-Term Rail Strategy (LTRS) to set the strategic goals for the railway sector for the next 30 years. The strategy will aim to tackle the long-term issues facing the railway and the country – such as the implications of an ageing population, environmental changes and technological advances. It will help GBR make choices that will have a fundamental impact on British society for future generations. For more information on the Long-Term Rail Strategy, see the LTRS fact sheet published alongside this one.

GBR will base its business plan (what activities it will undertake and what outcomes it will seek to achieve) on the funding it receives and on the Long-Term Rail Strategy. This business plan will set out what activities GBR will undertake and what it intends to deliver with the funding given to it.

Scottish ministers will set a rail strategy for Scotland and fund GBR to provide infrastructure in Scotland. GBR will develop a Scottish business plan to set out its intended activities in Scotland.

The government is committed to supporting further integration between track and train operations in Scotland, either through a deeper alliance between ScotRail and GBR or through a corporate entity that would bring track and train management together in Scotland, such as a distinct GBR subsidiary or company jointly owned by GBR and Scottish ministers.

There will be a dedicated business unit within GBR for the Wales and Borders area, empowered to partner with Transport for Wales to ensure close collaboration between track and train operations and to create a coherent offer for passengers.

The Railways Bill requires the Transport Secretary to prepare and publish memoranda of understanding with both Scottish and Welsh ministers setting out how they intend to cooperate.

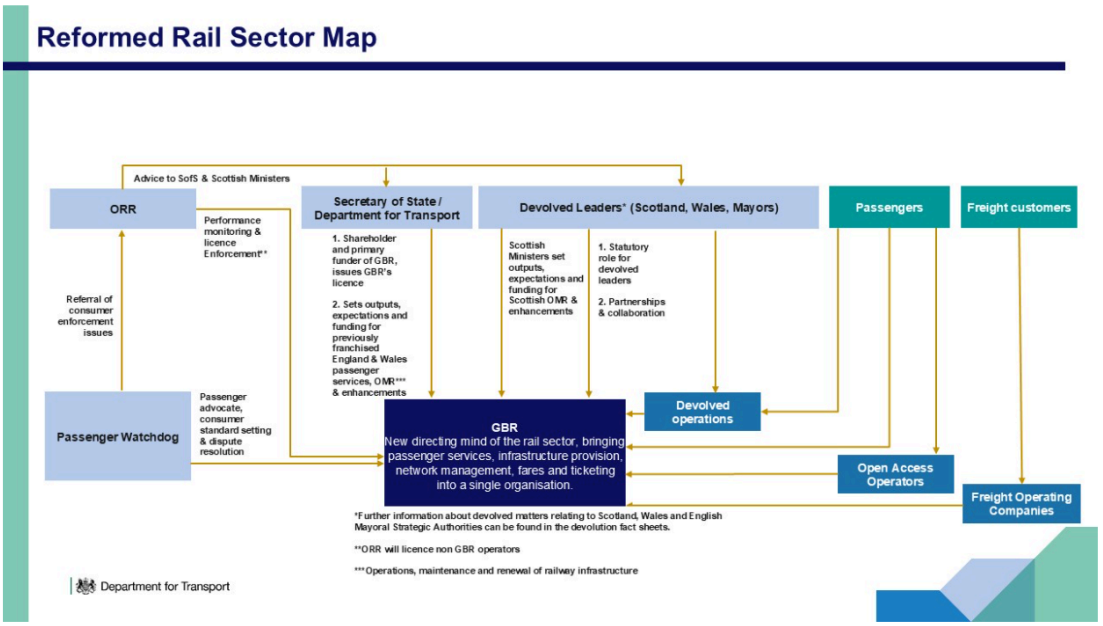
GBR will also publish information about its performance in running passenger services, maintaining infrastructure and carrying out new infrastructure projects. This performance will be monitored by the Office of Rail and Road (ORR), which will advise the Transport Secretary and Scottish ministers on GBR's operational delivery.

Where it relates to passengers, GBR's performance will be overseen by the new passenger watchdog, which will monitor passenger experience, be empowered to advocate for passengers and hold both GBR and non-GBR operators (such as devolved rail operators) to account publicly.

Under the Railways Bill, GBR will become responsible for taking access and charging decisions – which means deciding who else can run trains on the tracks, and what charges they should pay for doing so. GBR will be tasked with 'making best use of the network' in accordance with its statutory duties in the Railways Bill. For more information on access and charging, see the access and charging fact sheet published alongside this one.

The Office of Rail and Road will have a robust and independent appeals role set out in legislation to ensure GBR's access and charging decisions are fair, transparent and consistent with GBR's duties and policies. If GBR makes an unfair decision, the ORR can either send the decision back to GBR for reconsideration or substitute GBR's decision with its own.

For a visual representation of the new rail industry, see the reformed rail sector map.



Reformed rail sector map

How will GBR be designed to deliver a railway fit for everyone?

The Railways Bill does not set out the corporate structure or design of GBR, this enables the maximum flexibility to set GBR up for success and allows it to develop in the future to remain responsive to the needs of those it serves.

GBR's single, accountable leadership across track and train will:

- make the railway more responsive to the objectives of democratic leaders and the communities it serves
- drive efficiency by reducing the existing friction between multiple organisations within the industry
- ensure the levers to drive satisfaction, performance and value for money sit in an integrated organisation that is focused on the customers it serves

From day one, GBR will be able to start to deliver solutions to long-standing railway issues. It will do this by:

- improving customer satisfaction and value for money by improving operational performance, better managing disruption, and simpler, better and easier to use fares and ticketing
- growing passenger and freight use of the network, improving financial sustainability by encouraging more people to use the railway
- delivering better integration, alignment of incentives and removal of inter-organisational barriers which have impeded the industry – this will make it easier to get things done with the railway becoming more user-friendly for stakeholders and a better place to work for its employees with more career opportunities

GBR will be structured to focus on delivering for its customers locally. Its structure will be based on geographic business units, each bringing together infrastructure management and passenger operations into a single local team, providing a locally focused 'face of the railway'.

To fulfil the government's vision of GBR being a 'directing mind', some functions will need to sit centrally in the organisation, providing a whole system approach that ensures the government's outcomes are delivered and maximising value from the system. This central part of GBR will set the strategic, planning and financial frameworks that the business units will operate within, aligned to the LTRS set by the Transport Secretary.

More information on GBR's design and corporate structure will be made available in due course.