

RAIL INDUSTRY FORUM 2024

1 MAY 2024 | LONDON

Ahead of [Rail Industry Forum, taking place 1st May in London](#), we asked **Maggie Simpson OBE**, **Director General at the Rail Freight Group**, to share thoughts on the challenges facing the rail sector and to consider the next steps needed for rail reform.



MAGGIE SIMPSON OBE
DIRECTOR GENERAL
RAIL FREIGHT GROUP

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS FOR THE RAIL SECTOR WITH RAIL REFORM? WHAT ARE THE OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES?

Now the Draft Rail Reform Bill has been published it should give the opportunity for the industry to understand more details on the proposed changes, future structure and how the new body will work.

This needs to be shared with the industry so that people can understand how to engage and prepare for change. Although there remains significant uncertainty with the upcoming general election there is still much that can be progressed now, alongside working to deliver day in day out for customers.

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES THE SECTOR CURRENTLY FACES? HOW DOES THE INDUSTRY NEED TO RESPOND TO THESE?

The opportunity to grow rail freight remains significant and we need to help customers work together to deliver new routes and services. This also requires high performing infrastructure, and operational resilience to ensure that customers have a service they can rely on, something that is failing far too often. We also need to make progress on implementing new technology and data driven systems to improve productivity and efficiency.

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