



Press Release

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EDDINGTON STUDY DISAPPOINTING ON LONG-TERM TRANSPORT NEEDS

The Railway Forum welcomes Sir Rod Eddington's Transport Study published today as confirmation of the importance of rail in Britain's future transport mix. However the Forum is concerned at the lack of long-term vision, particularly regarding the role that high speed rail could play in supporting a successful modern economy.

Paul Martin, Director General of The Railway Forum said today: 'The Eddington Study report, whilst welcome, is in danger of being a missed opportunity for Britain. If we are serious about improving Britain's economic prospects, relieving congestion and minimising the impact of transport on our environment we need to be thinking more positively about high speed rail.'

With rail congestion increasing the Forum welcomes the Study recommendations on short to medium-term measures such as platform and train lengthening. However these are already under development and will not solve capacity problems beyond 2015. Looking to the long term, high speed rail would deliver a double whammy. It would create significant new capacity on intercity routes and at the same time release capacity on the existing rail network to expand freight and commuter services in congested urban areas.

Development of high speed rail would also contribute to meeting the environmental sustainability challenges facing us – as emphasised in the recent Stern Review – by providing a much less environmentally damaging alternative to rising short haul air travel.

Paul Martin continues: ‘When our roads became congested in the 1960s the Government developed a strategic plan for 2,000 miles of new motorways. We are now looking for the same bold thinking for our railways. A new high speed line could be built in stages. Britain will open the new *High Speed 1* rail link next year from the Channel Tunnel to London St Pancras and planning surely needs to start now on extending this as *High Speed 2* to the Midlands, the North and ultimately to Scotland.’

-Ends-

Notes to Editors:

1. The Railway Forum is an industry-wide body sponsored by the majority of the train operating companies including Eurostar, Network Rail, all three major rolling stock leasing companies, the Passenger Transport Executives, Transport for London and many manufacturing and other businesses serving the UK rail industry. In all we have some fifty members. Our key role is to act as a think tank, information exchange and point of contact for those committed to and interested in the rail industry.
2. Sir Rod Eddington’s Transport Study Report is available at: http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/independent_reviews/eddington_transport_study/eddington_index.cfm
3. Sir Nicholas Stern’s Review on the Economics of Climate Change is available at: http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/independent_reviews/stern_review_economics_climate_change/sternreview_index.cfm
4. The new *High Speed 1* rail link will be launched on 14 November 2007. For more details on this see www.lcrhq.co.uk and the associated Eurostar press release at: http://www.eurostar.com/UK/uk/leisure/about_eurostar/press_release/14_11_2006_november_14_07.jsp
5. Visit www.highspeedbritain.com to sign the petition in support of high speed rail in Britain.

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