



Press Release

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'IMPROVING PUBLIC TRANSPORT IS A KEY PART OF THE ROAD PRICING DEBATE' SAYS FORUM

The Railway Forum welcomes the weekend's announcement by Alistair Darling MP, Secretary of State for Transport on the need to develop a consensus on the application of road pricing in the UK. The Forum has consistently supported the introduction of road pricing and, equally importantly, emphasised the need to plan for improvements in public transport to provide a desirable alternative to the car.

The railways and wider public transport have a key role to play in the road pricing debate since the implications of road pricing for both demand and investment are significant. Demand for rail is already rising faster than in any other European country and a system of road pricing would place further strain on already limited capacity. A coordinated long-term plan to enhance and expand public transport alternatives is required if the introduction of road pricing is to be successful.

'It is heartening to see the road pricing debate gaining momentum,' says Adrian Lyons, Director General The Railway Forum. 'The railways and other forms of public transport have a key role to play in this debate. We need to begin planning now to improve our public transport networks in order to deliver a desirable alternative to the car.'

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Notes to Editors:

1. The Railway Forum is an industry-wide body sponsored by the majority of the train operating companies as well as Network Rail, all three major rolling stock leasing companies, the Passenger Transport Executives, London Underground, most of the infrastructure maintenance companies and many manufacturing and other businesses serving the UK rail industry. In all we have some 50 members. Our key role is to act as a think tank, information exchange and point of contact for those committed to and interested in our industry.
2. Since 2001 The Railway Forum has published an annual strategic review of the railways entitled *Building the railway for the future*. This has included a series of reports by the respected transport economist Dr. Rana Roy assessing the case for optimal transport pricing (including road pricing) and the likely implications for other forms of public transport, particularly rail. The most recent report in the series: *Not by spending alone: the case for a comprehensive tax review* was published in 2004. *Building the railway for the future* and related publications by Dr. Roy can be downloaded from our website at www.railwayforum.com.

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