



The Railway Forum

Press Release

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For immediate use

‘RAIL PLAYS A KEY PART IN MEETING ENVIRONMENTAL TARGETS’ SAYS FORUM

Although DEFRA’s Climate Change Programme, published today, shows that we are failing to meet emissions targets overall, nationally rail is making an increasingly positive environmental contribution and is one of the big success stories.

Over the last ten years CO₂ emissions from rail have almost halved, due largely to modern and refurbished rolling stock. In addition passenger and freight numbers have increased by some 40% and 55% respectively with only a 20% increase in services.

Domestic air traffic has shown a similarly large increase – passenger numbers have increased by around 71% since 1995 – but CO₂ emissions have risen by 50%. The intercity rail market (representing about a third of total rail passenger mileage) is over three times as large as domestic air, yet domestic air transport emits twice as much CO₂ as rail, both passenger and freight.

‘We are one of the most successful economies in the world and our success depends crucially on high levels of mobility,’ says Adrian Lyons, Director General, The Railway Forum. ‘The rapidly improving railways record shows we can have an economically dynamic future and meet demanding environmental targets providing we make the right transport choices today and for the future.’

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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, 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 over 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 the rail industry.
2. DEFRA's Climate Change Programme can be found at: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/climatechange/uk/ukccp/pdf/ukccp06-all.pdf>
3. Statistics on rail, domestic air travel and the environmental impact of transport can be found on the Department for Transport website at: http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_transstats/documents/sectionhomepage/dft_transstats_page.hcsp
4. The Railway Forum welcomed the Secretary of State for Transport's recent comments on the importance of rail in meeting sustainable development objectives (including a reduction in CO₂ emissions) and the need for a long-term rail strategy in its press² release dated 15 March (see: <http://www.railwayforum.com/pressreleases.php>).

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