

£1.5m funding awarded to move freight from road to rail in Scotland

March 4, 2020



The Scottish Government has allocated £1.49 million to Tarmac in a Freight Facilities Grant.

Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity Michael Matheson announced the funding at the Rail Freight Group's Annual Scottish Conference 2020 in Bellshill.

The fund, which is open to companies looking to move freight by the more sustainable modes of rail or water instead of road, will be used towards expanding rail operations at Tarmac's Dunbar cement plant.

Mr Matheson said: "I am delighted to award £1.49 million of funding from our Freight Facilities Grant to Tarmac towards expanding its Dunbar facility. Tarmac is a key user of rail and strong advocate for the industry.

"This award is the first Freight Facilities Grant for rail for a number of years and will help ensure that rail remains the key mode of transport for much of Tarmac's operations.

"The recently published National Transport Strategy sets out the Scottish Government's vision for a

sustainable, inclusive, safe and accessible transport system where our businesses make sustainable choices to support the reliable delivery of goods and services.

“That is why we are leading the way in support for rail freight with clear policy support, innovative regulatory targets to encourage growth and backing this with general investment and specific funding. Our dedicated £25 million Rail Freight Fund and our Mode Shift Grant support schemes, which include the Freight Facilities Grant, will help to unlock opportunities for rail freight across the country.”

Chris Swan, Head of Rail, Tarmac said: “We’re delighted to receive this funding from Transport Scotland which supports our commitment to developing our rail offering, reducing carbon emissions and improving air quality.

“The enhanced rail distribution capabilities at our Dunbar cement plant will support our commitment to transporting as much product as possible on the rail network and not the roads, providing essential construction materials to infrastructure projects both within Scotland and beyond.”

The Freight Fund Grant is a capital grant scheme which can provide assistance towards the capital costs of infrastructure and equipment necessary to move freight by rail instead of by road. This can include sidings, signalling, hardstanding, loading and unloading equipment, storage and security.

The funding will assist Tarmac with the cost of upgrading the existing rail track in a yard adjacent to their plant at Dunbar, installing a storage silo and a pneumatic pipe to feed the cement across the railway line. This will allow Tarmac to increase its current use of rail and lead to the removal of over 7,000 lorry journeys per year from Scotland’s roads.

Photo credit: Transport Scotland