

# DB Cargo UK launches major new campaign to encourage modal shift from road to rail

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'Freight belongs on rail!' is the message DB Cargo UK plans to take to the heart of Government as part of a major new campaign launched.

The UK's largest rail freight company is teaming up with some of Britain's biggest businesses to lobby the UK Government to set a legally-binding target for future modal shift—the switching of transportation from road to rail—and encourage other businesses to follow their lead.

The campaign was launched to rail industry stakeholders at the official opening of DB Cargo UK's new £7m rail freight terminal in Cricklewood, North London, which is supporting some of the country's biggest infrastructure projects like HS2 and the ongoing regeneration of Brent Cross.

Every year the new terminal will handle the import and export of 1.5 million tonnes of aggregates and construction spoil that would otherwise be transported by road.

With the average train carrying the equivalent of 76 HGVs and generating around 75% less harmful carbon emissions, the company claims it is a shining example of why the Government should redouble its efforts

to encourage greater use of rail freight.

DB Cargo UK CEO Andrea Rossi said: "Freight belongs on rail. The more goods and materials we can get off the road and onto rail will reduce congestion, significantly cut carbon emissions and improve air quality – some of the UK's Government's key objectives in its drive to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

"With the recent publication of the Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail and the well-documented challenges currently being faced by road hauliers, there has never been a better time for Government to promote rail freight as the way forward.

"Setting down in legislation a legally-binding target for UK modal shift, like has already been done in Scotland, will provide the confidence and certainty needed to unlock sustained investment in rail freight going forward.

"It will also drive greater ownership and accountability, as well as encouraging greater collaboration and innovation -behaviours we have already seen from rail freight operators and their customers following the UK Government's publication of its target for decarbonisation/"

As part of DB Cargo UK's 'Freight belongs on rail' campaign, the company is asking its existing customers, including some of Britain's biggest businesses, to lobby Prime Minister Boris Johnson urging him to act.

"Some of Britain's best known construction companies, supermarkets, steel manufacturers and car makers are already enjoying the economic and environmental benefits of using rail freight and we will be working closely with them in the months to come to carry the message to other businesses who would benefit from changing their existing transport strategies," said Mr Rossi.

"It will, however, take a collaborative effort by all stakeholders involved –Government, regulators, the rail companies, industry bodies and customers –to deliver the policies and reforms necessary to unlock rail freight's true potential."

Andy Bagnall, Director General at the Rail Delivery Group, said: "Moving more freight by rail helps businesses deliver, frees up space on congested roads and prevents unnecessary carbon emissions, supporting a clean, green economic recovery from the pandemic.

"Now is the time for government to build on these benefits –an ambitious rail freight growth target will unleash further private sector investment to improve connectivity and deliver economic and environmentally-friendly benefits."

*Photo credit: DB Cargo*