

Jac Starr speaking at the Institute of Travel Management (ITM) conference

April 27, 2023



Jacqueline Starr, chief executive of the Rail Delivery Group will today (27 April) outline how the rail industry is focused on delivering real improvements for its customers at the Institute of Travel Management (ITM) conference.

She will highlight new research into business travel and sustainability as the organisation continues to work towards the *Green Travel Pledge* which is a rail industry initiative that aims to develop and provide granular industry data to help inform journey choice, influence travel decisions and enable robust reporting.

After speaking to both businesses and consumers during the research, she will say businesses are aware of the greenest option for travel, but are still not prioritising it. But the research shows they do want to be able to make green choices and want an easy way to compare carbon emissions of the various modes of transport.

Our research with the business travel community shows:

- 2 in 5 (40%) businesses factor in sustainability when planning business travel
- Just over 2 in 5 (42%) know what the green choice is
- Because they are not helping people make the right choice, travelling by car for business is still the most popular choice at 44% . this compares with less than 3 in 10 businesses (28%) saying that train is the most popular
- But people do want help – over 4 in 5 (82%) of people said having an accurate way to compare carbon emissions between different modes of travel would be beneficial to them. Perhaps with this, businesses would find it easier to make greener choices.

She will also say consumers planning a trip do consider the environmental impact of their journey. Over half (54%) of people surveyed said if they were planning a trip for leisure, the environmental impact of their travel would be important to them when making their decision.

The research from consumers show:

- Nearly half (47%) of respondents said the primary reason they travel via rail is for leisure or business purposes
- Just over 3 in 5 (61%) of those surveyed are likely to choose one option over another based on their efforts to make their business travel more environmentally sustainable
- Over a quarter (27%) of those surveyed said travelling via car (petrol/diesel) makes them feel guilty in relation to their carbon footprint, followed by over 3 in 10 (32%) who said travelling via plane makes them feel guilty.
- 3 in 10 (30%) surveyed said travelling via train makes them feel proud in relation to their carbon footprint

Previous research carried out by the RDG also noted the need to change the mindset of business passengers who have previously favoured air travel due to the supposed quickness, although the research said many air travellers do not enjoy the airport experience.

While rail journey times may be longer, the overall length of the trip is likely to be quicker than driving or flying , which allows the traveller to be more productive. The research looked at the perception and mindset of the business travel sector, and companies noted travellers took pride in choosing rail for its green credentials.