

Light rail safety gets a government funding boost

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The organisation responsible for light rail safety in the UK is all set to press ahead with its vital work thanks to continued government funding.

The Department for Transport has confirmed a £3.3 million package of support for the Light Rail Safety and Standards Board that will help it to drive a wide range of projects over the next three years.

Welcoming the new financial agreement, Carl Williams, LRSSB Chief Executive, commented: “This continued funding will enable us to accelerate our ambitious delivery programme in a number of key areas.

“These include the further development of sector-wide approaches to risk management and accident reporting, enhancing stakeholder engagement, updating safety guidance and leading on research into new technologies.”

Confirmation of the funding package, which will see the LRSSB receive approximately £1.1 million annually over the three years, marks another important milestone for the organisation.

Earlier in 2022, a report by the Office of Rail and Road found that the LRSSB was adding value to light rail, supporting continued improvements in managing safety while providing the guidance and tools required to improve the sector's understanding of risk.

The new funding is part of a wider £4.5 million package for light rail from the DfT that also includes support for UKTram – the sector's representative body.

Following the confirmation of the funding, Transport Minister Baroness Vere commented: "Light rail is a fantastic way to keep our country moving quickly, efficiently and sustainably.

"Our £4.5 million investment towards improving tram safety is a key step forward for the development of light rail in the UK and will help pave the way for an urban mobility revolution up and down the country."

UK Tram Managing Director, James Hammett, added: "Tramways and similar urban transit systems have a vital role to play in improving connectivity, reducing harmful carbon emissions and boosting regional economies," he explained.

"With continued funding we will be able to start work on the implementation of a bold strategy for the future of light rail."