

Rail industry calls for hydrogen train fleet commitment in upcoming strategy

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Ahead of the forthcoming Government Hydrogen Strategy, the Railway Industry Association (RIA) – the voice of the UK rail supply community – has published [a briefing highlighting the role hydrogen can play on the rail network](#), and is calling for the government to commit to train fleet orders.

It sets out how a hydrogen train fleet order could:

- Kickstart the decarbonisation of the rail network, which is an already low carbon form of transport;
- Support jobs, investment and economic growth at a critical time for the UK economy; and
- Back a burgeoning industry, with a fleet order catalysing further investment and providing an industry capability from which the UK could export abroad.

The briefing – which was launched today at a Rail Delivery Group event to celebrate International Women in Engineering Day – forms part of [RIA's Rail Decarbonisation 21 campaign](#). The campaign is calling for a specific commitment to decarbonise the rail network from Government, through further electrification work and fleet orders of low carbon, self-powered rolling stock, ahead of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) taking place in Glasgow in November 2021.

RIA also highlights three examples of UK-developed hydrogen trains, including: Porterbrook and the University of Birmingham's HydroFLEX; Alstom and Eversholt Rail's Breeze; and the consortium delivering Scotland's Zero Emission Train project, comprising Transport Scotland, Angel Trains, the University of St Andrews and Arcola Energy.

In May this year, the Government acknowledged the UK will need hydrogen trains and said they will support the deployment on certain lines, as part of its response to [the Transport Committee's Trains Fit for the Future report](#).

Kate Jennings, Policy Director at the Railway Industry Association, said: "The UK rail industry has the capability to be world-leaders in developing hydrogen trains. As we approach COP26, the Government has the opportunity to kickstart the decarbonisation of the railways and showcase our expertise in this area.

"Already a low carbon mode of transport, taking diesel trains off the network through electric, battery and hydrogen trains would help generate jobs and investment, reduce emissions and support a pivotal industry.

"So, today we are calling on the Government to commit to a train fleet order of hydrogen trains as part of its upcoming Hydrogen Strategy. The supply chain stands ready to deliver, and further investment could give the industry a real boost – supporting the 'build back better' agenda, skilled jobs, investment and growth – and providing the UK with a competitive advantage from which to export abroad."

[The briefing can be found here.](#)

Photo credit: Railway Industry Association