

Rail sector sets '10 reasons to continue to invest in rail' ahead of Spending Review

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The Railway Industry Association (RIA), the trade body for the UK rail supply community, has called for the Government to consider the long-term importance of the rail network, publishing 10 reasons why rail investment should continue, ahead of the Spending Review and in light of the debate over Coronavirus's impact on the future of transport.

The ten reasons are as follows:

- Rail is a long-term game – Investments in infrastructure or rolling stock are usually delivered, and create continuing value for passengers and the wider economy, over years.
- The reduction in passenger numbers is likely to be temporary – Based on previous economic slumps in the 1980s, 1990s and post-2008, as well as past health crises, passenger numbers have always recovered to continue their pattern of growth.
- Rail is not just for passengers – It is also vital for freight, with over 4 billion tonnes being delivered annually before Coronavirus.
- Rail travel is clean and safe – A study undertaken by RSSB in August 2020 estimates that the risk of infection per passenger journey is 1-in-11,000 journeys, with similar results found in other countries.
- Investment can support the whole of the UK – The rail network touches almost every part of the country and has the potential to unlock a new generation of talent.
- Rail can lead the green recovery – It is not possible to meet zero carbon goals for transport without rail. Rail is a green mode of mass transit, contributing just 2.5% of greenhouse gas emissions from transport and only 0.6% of total UK emissions.
- Rail cannot easily be mothballed – Once rail infrastructure is decommissioned, it is not easily reopened.
- Rail investment has a knock-on economic impact – For every £1 spent on the rail network, £2.20 value is delivered in the wider economy.
- Investment cannot wait – Much of the rail spending planned cannot be postponed, in order to meet our decarbonisation and digitalisation targets.
- There is a clear window to get work done – The pandemic has provided an opportunity to get work done without impact on services, which should be capitalised on before passenger and freight numbers return.

Darren Caplan, Chief Executive of the Railway Industry Association (RIA), said: “With the Spending Review being announced today, and in light of the debate over Coronavirus’s impact on the future of transport generally, RIA is publishing ‘10 reasons to continue to invest in rail’, setting out the case for how our railways can play a pivotal role in the UK’s economic recovery.

“The Government has been supportive of rail in 2020, which has enabled essential workers and goods to be kept moving across the country. Yet rail can play just as crucial a role for the UK’s economic bounceback in future – so it is vital we continue to invest in the network. Our ‘10 reasons’ document shows why we should be confident that passengers and rail freight traffic will return over time, as they have done following previous recessions and health crises. And it also shows that rail can provide a green mode of mass transit, supporting thousands of jobs and investment for communities across the UK, helping the drive for the UK to build back better as we reboot the economy in the months and years ahead.”

[The ‘10 reasons to continue to invest in rail’ document can be found here](#)

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