

railbusinessdaily.com exclusive: Everywoman Transport and Logistics' 'Woman of the Year' seals Sector Deal with Government

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railbusinessdaily.com is extremely grateful to have been given an exclusive interview with Anna Delvecchio, the co-lead of the new Rail Sector Deal between the industry and the Government. We also spoke to Gordon Wakeford – Chair of the Rail Supply Group (RSG) and CEO of Siemens Mobility Ltd, and Philip Hoare – co-lead of the Rail Sector Deal and CEO of Atkins in the UK and Europe.

Details of the Rail Sector Deal were released yesterday and reported by railbusinessdaily.com in an earlier press release. The deal promises to increase efficiency and improve passenger experience by:

- reducing the cost of infrastructure, allowing the Government to build and maintain the railway even more efficiently;
- encouraging greater innovation and use of digital technologies to improve passenger experience; and
- doubling UK rail industry exports by 2025.

Anna Delvecchio is Commercial Account Director for Amey plc. She was named Transport Woman of the Year – the top honour at the 2018 FTA everywoman in Transport & Logistics Awards – and is a passionate advocate of transport and the rail industry and of carving out a greater role for women and inspiring the next generation for both the rail and transport sectors. Alongside Philip Hoare, she is credited by Gordon Wakeford as being the driving force behind the new Rail Sector Deal.

“I am proud to be the Chair of the RSG and have been privileged to witness the tremendous work of both Anna and Philip in securing this deal with the Government, which will see improvements for the UK rail industry and its customers in a number of ways,” said Mr Wakeford.

The Rail Sector Deal will open lines of communication between the Government and the rail industry and will see the exchange of ideas across sectors, enabling the prediction of problems on the network and the understanding of future demands. Ultimately, it will reduce the costs of building the railway, which will help the economy in all sorts of ways. The customer is at the heart of the deal and passengers will see the development of new customer products, such as better journey planning apps.

The Rail Sector Deal began to be formulated as early as January 2017, when the Government issued a Green Paper entitled ‘Building our Industrial Strategy’. 70+ different sectors were invited to submit a proposal but so far the Rail Sector Deal is one of only eight to be realised. It is, therefore, the culmination of almost two years’ hard work, with Anna Delvecchio and Philip Hoare as the co leads.

Anna Delvecchio said: “The RSG and the RDG coordinated the development and brokering of the deal, a process which involved over 200 organisations including a wide range of suppliers, SMEs, new entrants, trade associations, client organisations and of course many Government departments.”

Gordon Wakeford added: “Philip and Anna were chosen as the respective leads from the rail industry. It was fantastic to have a woman co-leading the development of a deal which was reached through a huge amount of collaboration.

“We have not been the best industry at collaborating, but this is starting to improve – and Anna’s (and Philip’s) work in securing this deal has been all about collaboration. Her tenacity has helped to drive the deal through. From a diversity perspective, the Rail Sector Deal should be viewed as a triumph.”

Anna Delvecchio’s career journey began as an apprentice at just 16-years-old. By the age of 30 she had been Supply Chain Director of Invensys (now Siemens) and had become the Commercial Director for Amey, a supplier of consulting and infrastructure support for clients including Transport for London and Network Rail. In a male-dominated industry, her achievements are admirable and are helping to achieve a

degree of equality and diversity. Delvecchio is an advocate of apprenticeship programmes and the better use of role models to attract talent into rail and transport. "This will be one of my key focus areas next year as well as supporting Women in Transport, Women in Rail and Everywoman," she said.

"I would also like to say that we can and should work more closely with other transport modes to try and close of the skills gap. This means the rail sector working more collaboratively with aviation, highways, buses and logistics, which will all see the benefits of knowledge transfer, lessons learned and stronger partnerships. You will see the start of this journey in February next year, when Women in Transport brings the modes together for the first time to identify how we can work better together and disseminate best practice."