

RIA: Government has 10 Days to avoid a 'Summer of Uncertainty' for the railway industry

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With only ten days left before Parliament goes into recess, the Railway Industry Association – the voice of the UK rail supply community – is urging the Government to publish a number of rail investment strategies, in order to avoid a 'Summer of Uncertainty' for rail businesses.

With the House of Commons rising for the Summer recess on 22 July 2021, the Government has three key strategies that are vital to providing certainty for rail businesses:

- **The Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline**, a list of upcoming rail upgrades which has not been updated in more than a year;
- **The Integrated Rail Plan for the Midlands and North**, providing an update on Government's plans for projects like HS2, Northern Powerhouse Rail and Midlands Rail Hub; and
- **The Transport Decarbonisation Plan**, setting out how the Government plans to achieve a Net Zero transport sector by 2050.

Darren Caplan, Chief Executive of the Railway Industry Association (RIA), said: “The rail industry greatly appreciates the support the Government has given over the past 18 months, allowing our railways to move key workers and resources around the UK, and support the economy, during the pandemic.

“However, as we emerge from pandemic restrictions, rail businesses currently have little visibility of the Government’s investment plans, impacting their ability to plan and invest in skills and capability for the future. The Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline – a list of upcoming rail upgrades, which the Government promised to update annually – has not been published for more than 630 days. Similarly, we are yet to see the Integrated Rail Plan or the Transport Decarbonisation Plan, both of which are vital in setting out Government’s priorities for rail projects across the UK.

“With only 10 days until Parliament rises for Summer recess, RIA and our members urge the Government to avoid creating a ‘Summer of Uncertainty’ for rail businesses and to publish these long-awaited strategies. By doing so, the sector will be much better prepared to support the economic recovery from Coronavirus, and boost green jobs, investment and economic growth across the country.”

Photo credit: Railway Industry Association