

## RIA launches RailDecarb23

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The Railway Industry Association (RIA) has launched **RailDecarb23**, a campaign urging the Government to accelerate plans to decarbonise rail. The campaign is being launched during Decarbonising Transport Week, which highlights the solutions that will be used to deliver the biggest gains in the UK's transition to a low carbon transport network.

RIA is urging the Government to implement three key steps to enable the railway industry to better support it in its mission to reach Net Zero by 2050. These key 'asks' are:

- Immediately implement a rolling programme of cost-effective electrification on intensively-used lines;
- Ramp-up fleet orders of low carbon rolling stock using new traction methods on less intensively-used parts of the network, including hydrogen and battery; and
- Government, Network Rail and other rail clients to work with suppliers so they never lose out for offering lower carbon solutions, but are incentivised to reduce emissions.

**RailDecarb23** comes against a backdrop of insufficient progress on rail decarbonisation, with the targets of removing all diesel-only trains off the network by 2040 and achieving a fully Net Zero railway by 2050 currently set to be missed. Currently the UK is well behind other European countries: Mainland Europe has 57% of its network electrified – yet in the UK the figure is 38%.

RailDecarb23 follows the publication of a Transport Select Committee report, Fuelling the future: motive power and connectivity, which urges Ministers to speed up progress with electrifying the UK's railways lines. The report recommends that DfT publish a long-term strategy for decarbonising the rail network, with a vision for what proportion of the future network will use electrification, supplemented by hydrogen, battery-powered and bi-mode or tri-mode traction trains. The most recent figures from ORR data shows that between 2020 and 2022, the number of electrified route kilometres actually fell by 7km, from 6,049 to 6,042.

RIA Chief Executive, Darren Caplan said: "Rail already plays an important role when it comes to helping the Government deliver its Net Zero targets, constituting a small part of the problem but a big part of the solution. To take just one example, a single freight train removes up to 76 lorries from our roads, significantly cutting carbon emissions.

"Rail, however, has the potential to deliver even more with the right support from the Government. The Railway Industry Association's new campaign, RailDecarb23, aims to secure progress on three key asks, on electrification, new traction methods, including hydrogen and battery, and ensuring suppliers never lose out for offering lower carbon solutions. If the Government can work with the railway industry to deliver on these asks, it would put UK rail back on track to reach Net Zero by 2050 – a target which is currently set to be missed.

"By investing in a structured decarbonisation plan, the Government would not only enable rail to play a fuller role in securing Net Zero, but would also give the supply sector the certainty it needs to plan ahead and deliver efficiently whilst creating jobs, investment and economic growth. Everyone benefits from delivering on RailDecarb23!"

*Photo credit: RIA*