

UK Transport Secretary Mark Harper MP meets RIA and debates rail issues at the Scottish Conservatives' conference in Glasgow

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In a fringe event at the Scottish Conservatives' Conference in Glasgow – organised by RIA Scotland – the UK Secretary of State for Scotland spoke of the need to deliver on rail reform and smoother investment, and engage closely with the railway industry to enable a better experience for passengers and freight customers.

Other event panellists included Shadow Scottish Transport Minister Graham Simpson MSP and RIA Scotland Chair Meirion Thomas, and the event convenor was well-known Scotsman transport correspondent Alastair Dalton.

RIA chief executive Darren Caplan, said: “Clearly now is a significant time for the railways, with a number of industry-related items to deal with in the Secretary of State for Transport’s in-tray, including rail reform, making investment more certain and visible, decarbonising track and train, and providing funding for – and delivering – enhancements, major projects, and digitalisation.

“As such, we appreciate Transport Secretary Mark Harper meeting with RIA in Glasgow and then discussing the issues of the day at a conference event arranged by RIA Scotland. We hope to make positive progress with him on a number of fronts in the weeks and months ahead – this meeting and event were an encouraging start.”

Meirion Thomas, RIA Scotland Chair, said: “It was great to see both Transport Secretary Mark Harper and Shadow Scottish Transport Minister Graham Simpson debate rail policy at the Scottish Conservatives’ rail fringe event hosted by RIA Scotland.

“We discussed a number of areas on how to take Scotland’s Railway forward, from investment and decarbonisation through to how to get HS2 trains to Scotland. It was also positive that Mr Harper was supportive of the role rail suppliers can play in ensuring a vibrant railway industry.

“I would like to thank the UK Transport Secretary and Shadow Scottish Transport Minister Simpson for supporting the event.”

Photo credit: RIA