



ASLEF Response to the ORR Consultation on the Formalisation of the Rail Delivery Group

1. The Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (ASLEF) is the UK's largest train driver's union representing approximately 18,000 members in train operating companies and freight companies as well as London Underground and light rail systems.
2. ASLEF oppose the formal formation of the Rail Delivery Group and fear that it will become yet another undemocratic body imposing decisions on the railway in the interest of making profit rather than the passenger and taxpayer.
3. ASLEF agrees with many of the causes of inefficiencies that are identified by McNulty. McNulty explains that fragmentation has led to a lack of leadership in the industry. The report also suggests that fragmentation is the first barrier to efficiency. The union agrees that it is important to have more leadership within the industry and a greater sense of direction and co-operation. The UK needs a fully integrated rail network.
4. ASLEF believes the best way to achieve this would be to depart from the current franchise system that has led to the fragmentation in the first place. However within this system, the Union feels there are far better ways to achieve cross industry leadership than the proposed Rail Delivery Group.
5. The make-up of the Rail Delivery Group makes it no more than a trade association made up of ATOC, the Freight Operating Companies and

Network Rail. ASLEF does not see the RDG as an industry wide forum of stakeholders.

6. The reality will be that despite Network Rail being a not-for-dividend company, the RDG will be made up of organisations who have profits as their sole priority rather than then long term improvement the of railway.
7. Of even greater concern is the indication from the UK Government that “as RDG’s capacity and confidence grows, and where the long term interests of passengers, freight customers and other railway users would be enhanced, it should be in a position to transfer other key roles and responsibilities to the industry. RDG will then have an important role in taking these forward.” ASLEF fears that this will lead to long term strategic decisions going from the Department for Transport to the RDG. This will mean decisions being taken by short term profiteers rather than a department led by a Secretary of State who is accountable to parliament and ultimately the electorate.
8. The will mean even less scrutiny and regulation for the rail industry. Strategic decisions will no longer be made by those who are responsible solely to taxpayers and passengers but will be given to those who prioritise shareholders.
9. ASLEF is highly concerned by the complete disregard of the workforce as a stakeholder in the industry. It is those who work on the rail network every day of the year who have the knowledge of how to improve value for money and efficiency in a way that will not ruin the service, not those sat in the boardroom.
10. The plans stipulate that trade unions will become associate members. As such they “would not have any specific rights in respect of representation at meetings or voting.” They will simply be allowed on invitation to attend

sub groups or give information on request. ASLEF believes this is regressive and prevents the RDG truly being a cross industry group.

11. ASLEF believes that there should be a Rail Industry Forum similar to the forum held within the bus industry. This would enable all staff from every grade within the railway to have a voice about how to move the industry forward. It should be a forum where open debate and discussion by all stakeholders takes place, not just employers discussing how to cream the most profits from the industry.

12. ASLEF therefore rejects the formalisation of the Rail Delivery Group and believes that the organisation will bring no solutions to the lack of leadership in the industry, instead exacerbating the problems. The industry must work closer together. But this should include all stakeholders, including the workforce. Not just those seeking to maximise profits.

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