



Department  
for Transport

Andrew Haines CEO  
Great British Railways Transition Team

From the Secretary of State  
**The Rt. Hon. Grant Shapps**

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Dear Andrew,

### **Commission to deliver a simpler and more integrated railway**

As we undertake the biggest reforms to our railways in a generation, I believe there are considerable opportunities for the current system to be simplified and improved through changes to the contractual and regulatory arrangements which are a key part of managing the use of the railway and railway capacity. This will be a key part of fulfilling our commitments to a simpler, better and a more integrated railway which better works for its customers and taxpayers.

Reflecting the leadership role that Great British Railways will play into the future, I am commissioning the Great British Railways Transition Team to lead work in developing reforms to the framework that governs access and key joint processes across the multi-user railway and to identify simplifications and efficiencies to industry processes, codes and supporting architecture.

This commission should seek to ensure that cross-sector processes, agreements, incentives, and systems:

- Put the interests of passengers and freight customers first;
- Are transparent and simpler, reducing administrative costs and complexity across the industry for all parties;
- Contain the appropriate tools for Great British Railways to more effectively plan and manage the network;
- Provides confidence for passenger and freight operators, of transparent and non-discriminatory treatment, with appropriate certainty to support business planning and investment; and
- Considers the potential impact on other infrastructure managers, including HS2 Ltd and ensures there is a coherent regulatory framework on access between GBR and other infrastructure managers.

I would like the commission to look at changes to support the new industry structure and consider ways in which the current system can be simplified and improved. For example, areas for reform include:

- Enabling more integrated planning and delivery by Great British Railways in matters of network development and use, service design functions and timetabling by reforming processes related to network development and use, including service design and timetabling;
- Simpler, more effective management of performance and operations across Great British Railways' Passenger Service Operators and the wider sector where they are affected by access requirements and processes; and
- Changes to support the simpler management of stations, where we envisage some train operator responsibilities will transfer to Great British Railways, as set out in the Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail.

This work will need to draw on and fully engage with the wider expertise of the sector, including the devolved governments, passenger and rail freight operators and other infrastructure managers in order to ensure proposals are deliverable and effective. The involvement of the Office of Rail and Road (ORR), as the independent regulator for the railways will be vital not only to the success of this work supporting development and delivery of the Commission, but also in ensuring users of the railway such as open access and rail freight operators have the confidence that any reforms do not reduce their existing rights to access the network. I have therefore also written to John Larkinson, Chief Executive at ORR, asking for his organisations' full support in facilitating this work, as an engaged participant and enabler of appropriate change.

I know you are already focussed on transforming the way timetabling production works through your work on Better Timetables for Passengers and Freight Users. This project remains important and I hope it can be progressed quickly, providing a foundation for the wider industry reform discussed above.

This will be a vital piece of work as we implement the reforms set out in the Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Grant Shapps', written in a cursive style.

**Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP**

**SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT**