

Reforming our Railways: Putting the Customer First

FAQ's

What is the Rail Reform Command Paper?

- It's a document setting out the Government's strategy for the railway in England and Wales, focusing on the period up to 2019, but also looking beyond that.

So what are the main aims of rail reform?

There are four main aims:

- securing value for the passenger, addressing concerns about rail fares and the impact they have on hard pressed families.
- dealing with the fiscal deficit, putting public finances on a healthier and more sustainable footing for the long term.
- supporting economic growth – through continued taxpayer investment for passengers and freight, to enhance capacity, connectivity and service quality, where it is affordable and value for money.
- delivering our environmental goals – by reducing carbon emissions from trains and stations and by encouraging passengers to use the train rather than their car.

What about the level of fares, buying tickets, and smart tickets?

- We have committed, once savings are found and the improvement in the wider economic situation permits, to reducing and then abolishing above-inflation rises in average regulated fares.
- Our fares and ticketing review, now open for consultation until 28 June 2012, will take a closer look at the structure of fares – what one group of passengers is asked to pay compared with another – and ticketing.

What is the Government saying in this document that's new?

The headline points are:

- £3.5 billion savings to be found by the rail industry (around 30%) by 2019. Achieved through smarter working, not by cutting services or raising fares.

- An ambition, once savings are found, to end the recent years of above-inflation rises in average regulated fares. And substantially reducing the burden on the taxpayer.
- Closer partnership working between train operators and Network Rail to lower costs for fare payers and taxpayers and improve train services.

Is there any new investment promised in speeding up journeys or providing extra or new trains etc?

- We are already investing £18 billion in the railway in this spending review period alone.
- We announced £1 billion investment in rail in November 2011 as part of HM Treasury's Growth Review.
- The main improvements that we will make for the railways in the period 2014-2019 will be announced by July this year.

So what's in this for the passenger?

- As above, our ambition to end above-inflation rises in fare increases, once savings are found.
- A commitment to continued investment, to reduce crowding, cut journey times, and improve the passenger experience by funding thousands of new carriages across the country, electrifying swathes of the rail network, and redeveloping many of our great railway stations.
- Better information about rail performance, including real time data on train running and timetables.
- A more powerful role for the independent regulator (the Office of Rail Regulation), making sure that train operators fulfil obligations towards passengers.
- A more flexible and user-friendly fares and ticketing system.
- A more resilient, reliable rail network, with more services on time.

How can I have my say on the Government's proposals?

- We are holding two consultations – one on fares and ticketing and one on decentralisation. These can be found at:

1. [Rail decentralisation: devolving decision-making on passenger rail services in England](http://www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/rail-decentralisation) (www.dft.gov.uk/consultations)
2. [Rail fares and ticketing review](http://www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/rail-fares) (www.dft.gov.uk/consultations)