

27 February 2014

GB Railfreight calls for more strategic rail freight interchanges in response to DfT consultation

GB Railfreight has today made a submission to the Department for Transport's (DfT) consultation on the draft National Networks National Policy Statement (NN NPS). Its primary focus is the creation of a policy agenda that incentivises private investment in Strategic Rail Freight Interchanges (SRFIs) and freight warehouse facilities across the network. These infrastructural developments will play an important role in supporting various rail freight markets, in particular intermodal and aggregates.

In addition, the rail freight operator is also asking for an NN NPS that:

1. Looks beyond just roads and rail and considers infrastructure at the UK's ports.
2. Evaluates rolling stock policy alongside that of network infrastructure, in order to maximise sustainability and carbon efficiency.
3. Aligns itself with other aspects of the Government's transport strategy, including nationally significant projects, such as HS2, and local transport infrastructure projects.

The NN NPS sets out the policy agenda against which decisions on applications for nationally significant infrastructure projects on the national road and rail networks are made. It is, therefore, considered vital by rail freight companies and organisations in the formation of a framework that supports the growth of the industry.

GB Railfreight has further submitted a response to a Transport Select Committee inquiry, similarly looking into the effectiveness of the DfT in justifying the need for the NN NPS and its ability to address this need.

John Smith, Managing Director of GB Railfreight, said:

"The national policy statement for our road and rail networks is an important step in the move towards a policy agenda that supports the sustainable growth of our UK rail freight industry.

"This statement can help address many of the challenges facing both freight operators and investors, in particular the need to create an environment that incentivises private investment in rolling stock and network infrastructure.

"GB Railfreight looks forward to continuing our relationship with the Department for Transport and developing a wider strategy that keeps our economy moving."