

Capacity

ATOC's view

- The 2007 Government White Paper " Delivering a Sustainable Railway" rightly identified lack of capacity as a major issue on key parts of the network.
- Delivering the right capacity for the rail network needs a perspective which looks beyond the current recession.
- ATOC supports the Government's commitment to a rolling stock plan of approximately 1300 vehicles and Network Rail's programme of works, which between them will deliver welcome increases in capacity by 2014.
- But we are concerned that 1300 vehicles may be insufficient and are taking too long to deliver (see position paper on rolling stock). The plans for CP4 indicate an enhancement spend of £12 billion on a series of infrastructure & rolling stock projects. (There have been recent moves towards prioritising new orders).
- We believe it is essential for the industry to identify within the next two years the schemes which need to start being implemented after 2014 to provide the further capacity needed to cater for continued growth over the next 20-30 years.
- We are working with Network Rail and others on identifying further long term priorities and we welcome current initiatives to examine the case for new lines (including potentially high speed lines).

Background and key issues

- In the last decade Britain has been Europe's fastest growing railway with passenger numbers up by 43% and freight by almost 60%, creating one of the busiest mixed traffic railways in the world.
- More than 1.2 billion passenger journeys were made in 2008, with over 20,000 passenger services operated each weekday. In Europe, only Germany carries more passengers - on a network over twice the size of the UK's.
- Since 1996 over £30 billion has been invested in Britain's track, signalling and stations infrastructure, with more than £5 billion invested in new rolling stock.
- Much of this investment has been in renewal or replacement schemes, rather than capacity enhancement. Therefore, the success of train operators in attracting more passengers has produced some overcrowding and congestion on busier routes as demands exceed the capacity of rolling stock and/or the non-availability of train paths.
- More capacity is needed, through measures to optimise route capacity (eg better timetabling, improved signaling and allowing more and/or longer trains to run) and to increase track capacity (eg removing pinch points and electrifying and enhancing existing routes, as well as possibly building new lines).
- £35 billion is to be spent on Britain's railway infrastructure during the 2009-14 Control Period (CP4). Almost £12bn will be invested on projects designed to relieve overcrowding eg. lengthening platforms and increasing capacity to enable more trains to run. £11.5bn will be invested in replacing old

infrastructure (rail, signalling, and bridges) and a further £11.4bn on day-to-day maintenance and safety.

- Key expansion schemes include:
 - Line improvements (Midland and East Coast Main Lines, Thameslink which includes new rolling stock, and start of works on CrossRail)
 - Station redevelopment and remodelling (Reading, Birmingham, King's Cross)
 - Regional packages in Scotland, Cardiff, Leeds, Manchester and the South East
 - The electrification of the Great Western & Liverpool – Manchester via Chat Moss route
- The extra capacity in CP4 represents a major programme of work and a step change compared with CP3 – but it will cater for only about 60% of the rise in demand currently being experienced.
- Additional rolling stock is also being ordered, as well as c £300 million investment in depots, stabling facilities and vehicle security. The Government has also proposed a plan to spend c £1 billion on up to 1300 new and cascaded vehicles, although these numbers are subject to review.
- The 1300 vehicles is the absolute minimum number of additional vehicles needed in CP4 to contain overcrowding and will only increase capacity by around 2.2% per annum.
- We think a number of further schemes not currently due to be funded in CP4 should be added, especially where renewal work is being done in any case. These include:
 - Schemes to tackle capacity-constrained parts of the network that are growing strongly eg Swindon-Kemble redoubling, Redhill, Leeds, Manchester and West Croydon
 - Schemes in Manchester and Leeds designed to accompany rolling stock plans
 - Additional infill electrification schemes worth c £100-150 million in total. Several additional schemes in the North West which could be particularly attractive include Manchester-Liverpool (via the Hunts Cross route) and Liverpool-Wigan. These would better regional links and relieve pressure on diesel rolling stock
- ATOC has set out an additional 25 priorities (see *Exploring the Potential*) worth a combined £3.25 billion which could be taken forward after 2014. The schemes are based on three principles:
 - Running longer trains, with associated platform , enhanced power supply and depot capacity extensions
 - Running more trains where capacity exists or can be created
 - Segregating stopping and non-stopping trains to optimise use of track capacity

Further schemes – including new lines - will be needed for the longer term to meet anticipated growth in passenger and freight demand. If these are to be implemented in CP5 (2015-19), it is essential in the next two years to agree which ones should be priorities and to progress them from the drawing board. Network Rail has set aside £50 million in CP4 for this development work.

Relevant ATOC activity

- Train operators are working with industry partners and Network Rail to identify how extra capacity can be delivered through 19 Route Utilisation Strategies (RUS) and four workstreams on the Network RUS and other planning tools. London and metropolitan areas like Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds are a particular concern.
- ATOC has recently begun working with Network Rail on longer-term (ie post 2014) planning for the rail network, and discussions have also begun with DfT. The starting point is to identify a number of future scenarios about the economy and policy to frame the discussion about the future role of rail and the specific projects which should underpin that.
- Support for Greengauge 21 – a not-for-profit organisation, which is driving forward the debate on High Speed Rail. <http://www.greengauge21.net/>

Key documents/links

- 2007 Rail White Paper – Delivering a Sustainable Railway
<http://www.dft.gov.uk/about/strategy/whitepapers/whitepapercm7176/>
- Office of Rail Regulation Periodic Review 2008: Determination of Network Rail's outputs and funding for 2009-14
<http://www.rail-reg.gov.uk/server/show/ConWebDoc.7596>
- ATOC press notice welcoming periodic review
<http://www.atoc-comms.org/dynamic/dynamic/atoc-press-story/997855/ORR-Periodic-Review-is-an-important-milestone-says-ATOC>
- The Billion Passenger Railway
<http://www.atoc-comms.org/dynamic/publications/26/Billion-Passenger-Railway>
- Exploring the Potential <http://www.atoc-comms.org/dynamic/publications/16/Exploring-the-Potential>
- Connecting Communities
http://www.atoc.org/general/ConnectingCommunitiesReport_S10.pdf

Kai Hills

kai.hills@atoc.org
September 2009