Freight and National Passenger Operators

Freight and National Passenger Operators route (FNPO) manages nationally focused customers whose interests extend across our geographical routes’ boundaries. As well as freight operating companies (FOCs), customers include CrossCountry, Caledonian Sleeper, charter operators and aspirant open access passenger operators.

FNPO is different to the other routes: we do not directly manage assets or control train operations, but deliver by working closely with and through the geographic routes, System Operator and other parts of Network Rail. We are accountable for the delivery of performance and other outputs for our customers and provide them with a principal point of contact.

Key statistics

Together, our customers operate around 1,000 trains a day including 600 freight trains

Rail freight removes 7.6m lorry journeys from the roads annually

The FNPO team has 68 members of staff, 38% of whom are female

The rail freight sector produces £1.7bn economic benefits for Britain

The Caledonian Sleeper trains cover 3,500 miles every night between Scotland and London

CrossCountry covers around 1,500 route miles and calls at over 100 stations

Key scorecard targets

Our route scorecard for 2017/2018 includes 28 individual measures. Our full-year scorecard achievement is 61.5%, which was above target.

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Safety

We finished the year on target for all our scorecard safety measures except for Signals Passed at Danger (SPADs), which ended the year at 59 against a target of 44.

A key focus over the past 12 months has been working with colleagues across the industry to reduce the number of freight operator staff injured on Network Rail infrastructure. This is also a key work stream for the cross-industry National
Freight and National Passenger Operators continued

Freight Safety Group and delivery is supported through our programme of joint safety tours with our customers.

We continue to exceed targets on close calls raised with over 276 calls raised and closed within 90 days. Our teams’ attendance at a weekly safety hour is above target and we have covered a wide variety of topics during the year.

Finance
Freight track access income performed well and was broadly in line with growth targets for the year, with container and construction traffic continuing to show encouraging growth, and an unexpected small increase in coal traffic late in the summer.

We finished the year in an adverse position against our business plan, for the overall financial performance measure (FPM), mainly as a result of high levels of compensation being paid under schedule 4 and 8, as well as reduced traffic levels, as a result of the adverse weather in February. This was despite returning a surplus up to and including period 11.

Train performance
For the majority of the year our results were on target. In line with other routes, ‘The Beast from the East’ in March had a significant impact on the delivery of our targets. This means that we finished the year at 93.5% Freight Delivery Metric (FDM) moving annual average (MMA) against a 94% scorecard target.

Cross Country performance was down from the last financial year at 87.7% against a target of 90.1% PPM (MMA). We have developed and put in place a joint performance strategy to achieve future targets.

We have worked very closely with Caledonian Sleeper to exceed the target of 75% MMA at 75.1%. FNPO supports Caledonian Sleeper through added scrutiny and monitoring of the Caledonian Sleeper service by Freight Service Delivery Managers.

Customer focused
We also have seven individual customer scorecards, measures which are jointly agreed with our customers.

Activities in the year
• We have worked with the industry to produce our CP6 Strategic Business Plan. This is the first time FNPO has submitted a stand-alone plan and we are proud to have produced it collaboratively with our numerous stakeholders.
• FNPO has grown to support the needs of our customers. During the past year we made some specific increases to our team including adding a number of route freight managers. We have also strengthened our links to the central functions such as System Operator.
• We have been working with the Freight Operating Companies and port and terminals such as the Port of Immingham, Drax power station and Port of Felixstowe to build on work to improve right time departures.
• We have taken on the role of client for the fitment of digital signalling technology (ECTS) onto freight trains.
• We have seen schemes at Chelmsford, Small Heath, Hope Street Manchester, Bristol East and Southall be delivered to provide support for construction sector supply chains.
• We continue to work with the industry to provide stable and sustainable track access charges for CP6.
• We held two charter conferences, developed a charter strategy and we are working with the charter sector on a plan to eliminate effluent released onto the track.
• We worked with Caledonian Sleeper and routes on the gauging clearance works necessary for the introduction of new rolling stock.

In the year ahead
• Continuing our focus on freight service recovery following delays and incidents on the network.
• We will see key Strategic Freight Network schemes such as the Felixstowe Branch Line Capacity Enhancement and Southampton to the Midlands train lengthening being delivered to provide extra capacity for our customers.
• Our Business Development team will be continuing to develop new opportunities to bring in revenue streams to the railway and to help more users access the railway through new railheads and connections.
• We are working to define a measure that can be implemented to improve speed on selected services in-line with operator aspirations.
• Work with industry to support the High Level Output Specification (HLOS) metrics for freight in Scotland.
• We are developing a freight end-user scorecard to sit alongside our customer scorecards.
• Continue to work with DfT on the Cross Country refinance.

Efficiency case study:
The Port of Felixstowe is the UK’s largest container port and it sees up to 66 train movements per day (in and out). The route freight teams in Anglia and the South East have been working closely with the port and freight operators to improve right time departures from the port. A significant amount of work has gone into creating joint working and establishing a weekly visualisation session at the port, attended by all parties.

Rail freight plays an essential role in distributing goods around the United Kingdom and because of the nature of the freight network, the benefits are wide ranging. Improved, efficient right time departures mean that the positive impact has been felt across multiple routes and operators. The FNPO team is looking to replicate this approach at other end-user terminals to drive continuous improvement across the network.

Paul McMahon,
Route managing director,
Freight and National Passenger Operators
27 June 2018