



All-Island Strategic Rail Review Public Consultation

Written response by the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation – Northern Ireland Region

The Northern Ireland Region of the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the All-Island Strategic Rail Review Consultation Paper which has been jointly sponsored by the Department for Infrastructure and the Department of Transport (ROI).

The Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (CIHT) is the UK's leading transportation professional institution. Our 14,000 members plan, design, build, operate and maintain the transportation systems and infrastructure which are essential to the development of a strong, competitive and regionally balanced economy – an identified priority for the Northern Ireland Executive. Within Northern Ireland, CIHT is focused on bringing together industry and government in developing shared goals and objectives to develop and deliver an ambitious transportation vision for the region.

CIHT NI Region would like to express its support for the All-Island Strategic Rail Review and the Goals and Objectives that have been set. However, considering the consultation document very specifically highlighting limitations on access (P18 Accessibility and Figs 17-20), we would suggest including an objective to make the network fully accessible to all. We would also encourage the Review Team to define the measures by which it will assess the attainment of the Objectives early in the process to ensure clarity when comparing the relative merits of proposals.

The island rail networks are relatively simple with mostly double and single-track lines. With ambitions to improve inter-city, regional and rural access, as well as the potential movement of freight, the Review Team would benefit from some clear priorities being set by the sponsors. High (higher) speed, regional, commuter and freight services cannot run on the same lines with any level of frequency or reliability that would make them attractive. The current Enterprise Service is an example of this problem where it interfaces with the Dublin Dart services and NIR services Lisburn to Belfast. If high speed and local passenger services are seen as having equal importance, then four tracking (fast and slow lines) into city centres will need to be seriously considered.

We note the consultation paper identifies the need for “integrating transport and land use planning”. CIHT fully support this initiative and, if it has not already been considered, we would also refer you to the Institution's publication “Better Planning, Better Transport, Better Places” which contains relevant guidance and advice.

Railways are complex, safety critical systems that require high initial investment and ongoing revenue support to operate and maintain effectively. The Strategy Rail Review will need to identify each governments' appetite for ongoing funding before taking any decisions on large capital investments. Core networks (track, signalling, structures) still all need to be maintained and renewed.

It may be that strategic rail policies need to be considered with wider workplace parking levies and road user charging in urban areas to encourage modal shift and provide alternative financial support.



Thank you once again for the opportunity to input into this All-Island Strategic Rail Review. We hope you find our comments constructive, and we would be glad to meet with you to clarify any areas should this be helpful.

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