

RAIL FREIGHT IN SCOTLAND

A MANIFESTO AND POLICY ASKS

Successive Scottish governments have led the UK in implementing policies and investing in rail freight to drive its growth. From a rolling programme of electrification to being the first in the UK to set a Rail Freight Growth Target, Scotland has led the way for rail freight.

In the next Scottish Parliament, Rail Freight Group (RFG) is calling on all political parties to pledge to:

Invest in rail freight growth

- Reinststate Scottish Government **funding for the Mode Shift Revenue Support (MSRS) scheme**, contributing to offset the cost of moving freight by rail or water instead of road, as is the case elsewhere in the UK.
- Set a **new 5-year Rail Freight Growth Target for 2029-2034**, with Scotland again leading the way with the most ambitious target.
- Deliver a clear plan to continue Scotland's UK-leading **rail electrification programme**.
- Set up a specific **Rail Freight Infrastructure Fund** for both public and private funding of rail freight growth improvements.

Put rail freight at the heart of green growth

- Incorporate rail freight into the strategic planning for **new energy infrastructure development** and to support ongoing operations.
- Ensure a capable freight railway **connects to green energy production zones and Green Freeports**.
- Promote policies which **provide a level playing field with road freight**.
- Use devolved powers from UK rail reform to **deliver a model for fair access, price competitiveness with road and incentives to encourage further decarbonisation** of Scotland's railway.

About the Rail Freight Group

Rail Freight Group (RFG) is the representative body for rail freight in the UK. Our members include rail freight operators, logistics companies, ports, equipment suppliers, property developers and support services, as well as retailers, construction companies and other customers. Our aim is to increase the volume of goods moved by rail.

WHY RAIL FREIGHT?

- One freight train can remove up to 76 lorries from the roads, improving road safety, protecting fragile road infrastructure and cutting congestion.
- Rail freight reduces CO2 by around 76% compared to road, and improves air quality with 10x less particulate matter and 15x less NOx produced.
- Scottish and international businesses are increasingly adopting Science Based Targets to cut supply chain emissions. Rail freight is a key enabler to deliver on these targets.
- Rail freight is a competitive and forward-looking sector that relies on a capable, reliable, and flexible rail network to deliver value for customers and wider benefits for Scotland.
- Since 2011, lorry fuel duty has been frozen while rail track access charges have risen faster than inflation, widening rail freight's cost disadvantage. Targeted support, such as MSRS, helps close this gap and delivers measurable modal shift.

SCOTLAND'S GREEN ENERGY HUBS

Linking Scotland's green energy hubs to rail freight will decarbonise their development and enable long-term sustainable distribution for the products produced.

