

Department for Transport

Rail Reform

The Secretary of State for Transport (Justine Greening): Our railways are currently the most expensive in Europe. That is something we can and must tackle. The recent review by Sir Roy McNulty found scope to cut rail costs by 30 per cent – up to £1bn a year. My department is committed to working with the rail industry to develop a strategy to deliver a better value railway for the benefit of passengers, taxpayers and the wider economy.

In furtherance of that strategy, my Department has undertaken to develop and publish detailed proposals on delivering a sustainable railway including reform of Network Rail. I am today announcing my intention to publish a Command Paper that sets out those proposals early next year.

It will allow time for greater consideration of other issues central to the question of rail reform. This will also allow the Command Paper to properly reflect the consequences of my decision following our consultation on a national high speed rail network.

As part of the development of a comprehensive strategy for rail, and alongside the Command Paper, I also plan to consult on the scope to devolve responsibility for some rail passenger services in parts of England to sub-national bodies, and on issues relating to the review of fares and ticketing announced in May.

In addition, the ORR expects to consult later this year on possible changes to its role, particularly in respect of future franchises