

Rail in Great Britain: it's time to engage

25 October 2021

The rail sector in Great Britain is about to experience the most significant structural change since privatisation.

The Government is abandoning the current franchise-based model, in favour of a new "Passenger Rail Contract" model, under which new private sector operators will be appointed to run rail services.

This new structure will involve Great British Railways (a new public sector body) taking a more holistic role: managing the track infrastructure as well as setting the timetable, fare and other aspects of the service. Great British Railways will run competitive procurement processes to appoint service operators to run the service to meet that specification under a concession model.

The UK Government's aim is that the new Passenger Rail Contract model will deliver a new way of working between the public and private sector, putting the passenger first and delivering high quality, punctual and reliable passenger services. Significant areas of bidding complexity and risk that had reduced the attractiveness of the previous franchising approach will no longer be included.

The Government is particularly hoping to encourage new private sector entrants to the rail market, including those from other transport sectors and from outside the UK to bring in fresh ideas, investment and innovation.

Potential bidders now have an opportunity to engage, learn more about the new working model, and have their say in its development and influence the final specification during the market engagement exercise the Department for Transport (DfT) are running which will commence with the market engagement day on 4 November (for which you can register [here](#)). Further information on the Government's plans and the market engagement exercise can be found [here](#).

How we can help

At Hogan Lovells we have a deep understanding of how the railway works and how these new contracts have been developed to support the delivery of real passenger benefit as well as supporting the Government's broader **Build Back Better** programme. Our top-ranked rail, procurement and public law & policy practices frequently support clients' engagement with developing Government policy, participation in bidding and on readying their business for the changes that it will bring.

Contacts



Charles Ford

Counsel



Rupert
Sydenham

Partner



Ciara
Kennedy-
Loest

Partner



Julia Marlow

Partner



Anne
Littlewood

Counsel

> [Read the full article online](#)