

All-Party Parliamentary Light Rail Group Inquiry into Light Rail



Light Rail and City Regions – a 21st Century Mode of Transport

Submission from UKTram Ltd

UKTram is in agreement with CPT's submission and align with all the views expressed.

UKTram further adds the following in support of the members of the UKTram body: **CPT/pteg/LRTF/TfL/LT:**

About UKTram:

UKTram was established for the purpose of enabling key public and private sector stakeholders in the UKTramway industry to present a single, unified front in dealing with government and statutory bodies in developing a coordinated and structured approach to regulation, procurement and standardisation within the industry.

It is intended that UKTram will in particular address many of the issues that were raised in National Audit Report "Improving Public Transport in England through Light Rail (the NAO report) and the Transport White Paper

The principal aims of UKTram are:

- Increase standardisation of technical solutions to tramway engineering;
- Promote common standards and best practices in the operation and maintenance of tramways;
- Provide a common pool of tramway expertise available to government, promoters and operators alike; and
- Reduce the duration and cost of tramway development for both public and private sectors thereby increasing the market base and capacity / capability to deliver tramways in the UK.

Background

Establishment of UKTram

During 2003, TfL London Trams, through discussions with tramway promoters and operators identified that the ad-hoc nature of tramway development in the UK was leading to an escalation in costs, realisation of risks for both public and private sectors and disengagement of the private sector developers, operators and financiers from future tramway developments. This later issue was felt to be of critical importance to the future development of tramways in the UK as the sector has to date been reliant on off-balance sheet PFI funding.

The NAO Report (April 2004) examined the performance of modern light rail schemes in the UK and highlighted the problems faced by the tramway industry that were contributing to the financial and transportation under performance on some schemes. The NAO report identified a number of key factors affecting the success of tramway and light rail schemes and made a number of recommendations which are summarised in **Annex 1**

UKTram was formed following a year long consultation within the tramway industry on the necessity for establishing a body to represent tramways and, in particular address many of the issues, raised in the NAO Report and the Transport White paper.

In addition UKTram is addressing proposed changes in safety legislation and European proposals for greater harmonisation within the industry.

Objectives of UKTram

UKTram is an umbrella body bringing together the public and private sector organisations with an interest in the future development of tramways in the UK.

The development of UKTram is overseen by a steering group made up of representatives of each of the member organisations.

UKTram is not intended to be a traditional trade body with a primarily lobbying function, but is proposed to be an organisation capable of working with government to deliver many of the recommendations in the NAO Report and present a single voice for the industry.

The main objectives of UKTram are to address the issues that have resulted in the underperformance of some tram schemes and escalation in the cost of new schemes.

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The activities of UKTram in meeting these objectives are being carried out through a series of working groups, comprising industry experts in the appropriate fields, to investigate specific problem areas and make recommendations for change.

These Activities involve tram scheme costing issues and procurement processes, as well as the valuation of the perceived benefits of proposed schemes.

- **Activity 1 - Protection and Diversion of Utilities (TBC 1209)**
- **Activity 2 - Tram Design Standards and DDA / RVAR issues**
- **Activity 3 – Signing of Tramways and Highway Interface (TBC 1209)**
- **Activity 3 A – Off Street Crossings**
- **Activity 4 - Noise and Vibration – (Completed and Published/DfT website)**
- **Activity 5 - Network Rail Interface**
- **Activity 6 - Trackform Design**
- **Activity 7 - Benefits included in the Appraisal Process (Published/copy attached)**
- **Activity 8 - Commercial Structure (Published/attached)**
- **Activity 9 - Operational Performance Measures –(Published/copy attached)**
- **Activity 10 - Tender Documentation**
- **Activity 11 - Wheel / Rail Interface Study (HMRI Study Phase 2)**
- **Activity 12 –Carbon Footprint /Environmental Study**
- **ROGS/SV – The Railways and Other Guided Transport Systems (Safety) Regulations 2006**
- **BTB/Study – Proposed “British Tramways Board”**
- **UITP/EU Liaison**

Annex 1

Summary of key issues from the National Audit Office Report “Improving Public Transport in England through Light Rail” (April 2004)

The National Audit Office made the following recommendations in respect of future tramway developments in the UK:

- i) DfT should, in conjunction with scheme promoters undertake detailed cost and benefit assessments of existing and future schemes in order to identify costs (at one year after opening) and benefits, including longer term economic and social impacts after 3 to 5 years.

DfT should require promoters to design in and implement:

- ii) Measures to integrate ‘light rail’ and other modes of transport including physical interchanges, through ticketing and passenger information systems.
- iii) Complementary measures such as park and ride schemes.
- iv) Measures to secure speedy and punctual light rail services.

Working with Industry and promoters DfT should:

- v) Evaluate different procurement models for light rail, including evaluation of the most cost effective procurement models and means of improving the financial viability of schemes.

The DfT should seek efficiency savings by requiring:

- vi) Greater standardisation in the design of systems, vehicles and methods of construction, seeking evidence of use of previous experience from other systems.

The DfT should:

- vii) With HMRI, consider the case for developing safety standards specific to light rail.
- viii) Require promoters to implement adequate proposals for the management of costs and risks associated with utilities diversions.
- ix) Re-assess the level of contribution made by light rail promoters to the cost of utility diversions under the New Roads and Street Works Act.

- x) Request the DTI consider inclusion of light rail schemes within the eligibility for grants for energy saving technologies and should also consider establishing its own grant scheme for the promotion and development of innovative light rail technology.
- xi) Require promoters to consult with the rail industry over alternative proposals for heavy rail conversion, substitution or track sharing.

