Uniting Track and Train – A Customer-Centric Future

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What is Shadow Great British Railways (SGBR)?

SGBR brings together three leaders from Network Rail, Department for Transport (DfT) an DfT Operator (DFTO), chaired by Laura Shoaf. It's a new way of working together within the industry and helps DfT, DfTO and Network Rail to make changes today, so we can start improving passengers' experiences even before GBR is formally established.

It is not a new organisation, an extra layer of governance or GBR itself, but a new way of working and bringing industry together.

SGBR priorities

SGBR has five focus areas to work towards, which were set out by the Secretary of State. **See below.**

Integration	• Early integration across track and train to reduce duplication, reduce operational costs, and deliver growth
Shared Standards	• Aligning measurement systems to improve safety, quality, and decision-making, while making performance data more accessible to passengers
Fares, Ticketing, Retail (FTR)	• Influence and implement FTR to improve the passenger experience and remove barriers to travel
Strategic Innovation	• Apply best practices and new technology to modernise rail, making it easier to work in and travel
Social and Environmental Value	• Maximising rail's role in connecting people and communities, reducing carbon emissions, and supporting economic growth.

SGBR leaders

Laura Shoaf, CBE: SGBR Chair

Alex Hynes: Director General - Rail Services, DfT

Robin Gisby: CEO, DfTO

Sir Andrew Haines: CEO, Network Rail

GBR design – what's happening?

GBR design work is being led jointly across the Department for Transport (DfT), DfT Operator (DFTO), and Network Rail to create one unified industry. A new Director General at DfT, Richard Goodman, will oversee rail reform and the design of GBR.

Top-down design (looking at the structure of GBR as an integrated organisation)	Leaders and teams across the industry are working together to develop the design work already started by Great British Railways transition team (GBRTT).
Bottom-up design (service led focus and the day-to-day ways of working of GBR)	We're already working as one industry through initiatives from the 'bottom-up' design. This includes alliance working, track and train trials and communities of Practice.

Creating alliances

Alliances are partnerships between Network Rail and train operating companies (TOCs), which bring track and train closer together so we can deliver better services for passengers today, ahead of GBR.

The Southeastern alliance was the first to be announced in April 2025, with Southwestern becoming an alliance in June 2025 when it comes into public ownership.

Track and train trials

This initiative is supporting alliances, DfTO, TOCs and Network Rail to work in collaboration to improve performance and passenger experience ahead of GBR.

For example, trials are successfully underway within Kent/Southeastern and GWR/Western with a focus finding better ways of working on areas at the heart of running the railway. This include looking at operational control, train performance, stations, timetable planning and incident response.

Trials are already helping to improve processes, remove barriers and drive performance improvements.

Communities of Practice

Forums with members from across DfT, DfTO, Network Rail, RDG looking at what must, should and could be done to prepare for GBR.

They are working across all functions to share best practice ways of working and integrate processes to create one unified GBR.

Western & GWR Control

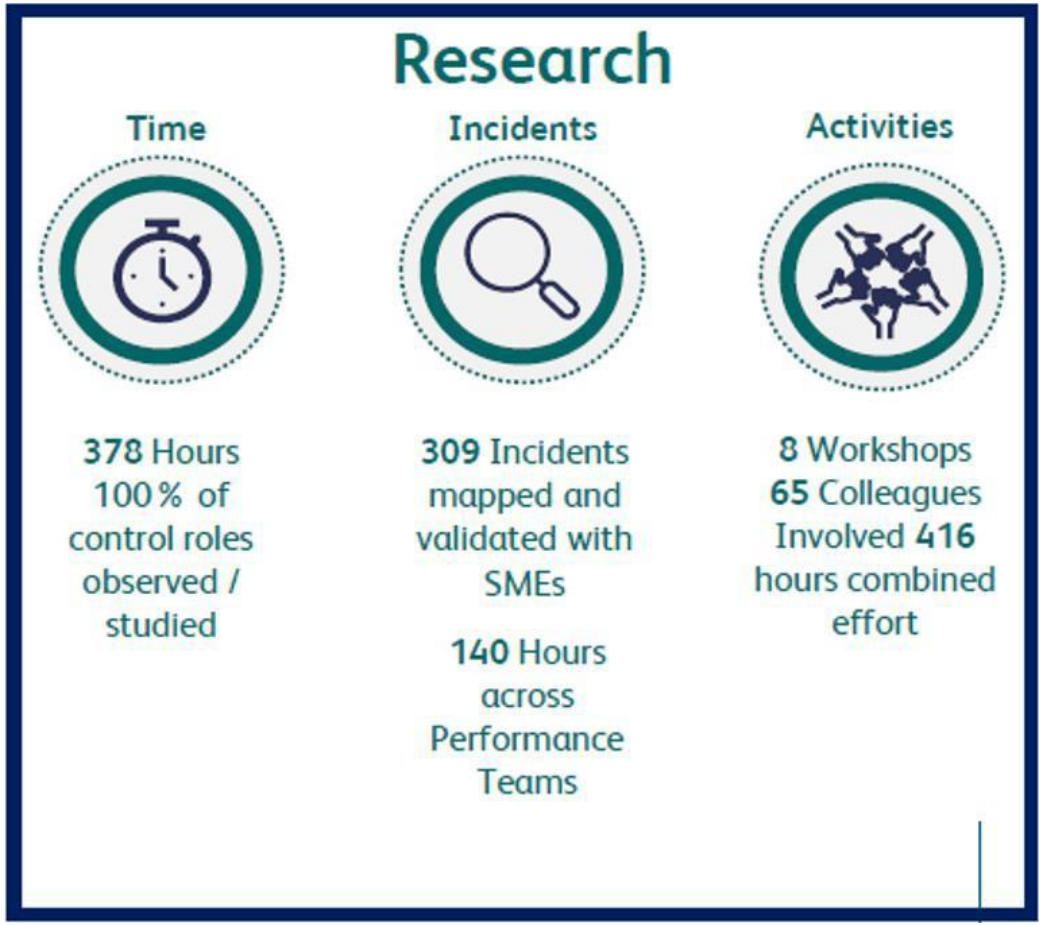
- Six month diagnostic underway
- Delivery of a 2 year programme to integrate the organisations, processes and communication

Additional Levers for Performance

>In 25% of incidents, response teams were delayed or unavailable, increasing delays by 33%

>Crew and stock complexity slowed recovery in 58% of incidents

>Disruption volumes are steady, showing potential to plan ahead proactively



Key findings

So far…

Fractured Decision-Making Frameworks

- Misalignment and inconsistent decisions due to the involvement of up to 10 roles making independent decisions with no standardised framework in place to support effective decision-making during disruption
- Incident Response is delayed to an unclear escalation and incident command process despite supporting mechanisms being in place.
- Plans are re-worked 30% of the time due to crew and stock constraints

Disjointed approach to Communication

- No single view of communication with duplication of activity across 6 roles, communicating similar information via 10 channels
- Multiple handoffs due to a lack of system integration and visibility of live updates
- Siloed communication activities impedes recovery due to the misalignment of messaging.

Performance & Continuous Improvement

- Lack of measures in place to support leadership understanding of current performance (inc. effectiveness of decision making) and driving of systematic improvement
- Lack of availability of digestible data and insight to plan service recovery and provide assurance of recovery plans, driving exec interventions
- Incident reviews are often conducted in silos, limiting shared learning, coordinated action, and long-term improvement

Redesign by Workstream

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Decision Making

Decision Making Frameworks

- Drive consistency in decision making, through standardising inputs and ensuring information is readily available
- Remove misalignment/conflict providing a benchmark to be measured against
- Redesign incident response end to end process flows
- Review and refine use of contingency plans '*across* industry'
- Define roles and responsibilities using RACI framework

Incident Command Structure

- Establish 'what good looks like' for leadership role performance and work design

Organisation Design

Frontline role design

- Map capabilities against new and optimised process requirements
- Develop optimal suite of integrated frontline roles and test, where possible, new integrated roles
- Identify which, if any, support teams should be integrated or standalone

Communications

Information Flow Process

- Realign work design and process flow to optimise response and reduce time to make and communicate decisions

Streamlined Communication

- Joint shared understanding of how Control and interfacing teams are set up for each day, including systematic and ad-hoc risks utilising the Whole System Model to manage immediate resilience and risk mitigation
- Streamlined joint communications to ensure Control is communicating with 'one voice' when messaging the passenger and colleagues across the c.12,500 employees in both organisations

Performance & Improvement

Insight and forecasting

- Create prototype control dashboard with quality inputs to provide leadership and frontline insight into factors relevant to service recovery and control performance
- Develop approach to forecasting incident impact, hot spot areas and incidents that require a bespoke response
- Develop and test a suit of leading & lagging indicators which can be used to benchmark the performance of the ICC (independently of but aligned with) route performance

Structured debrief process

- Align & Integrate the ILR/IMS process, ensuring right people are involved at the right time
- Implement continuous improvement loops to drive learning from decisions and impacts
- Use outputs of the process to drive aligned & operationally integrated performance improvement priorities and CPD cycle for controllers and supporting roles

SystemsThinking TEAM PARTNERSHIP

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Thank you

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