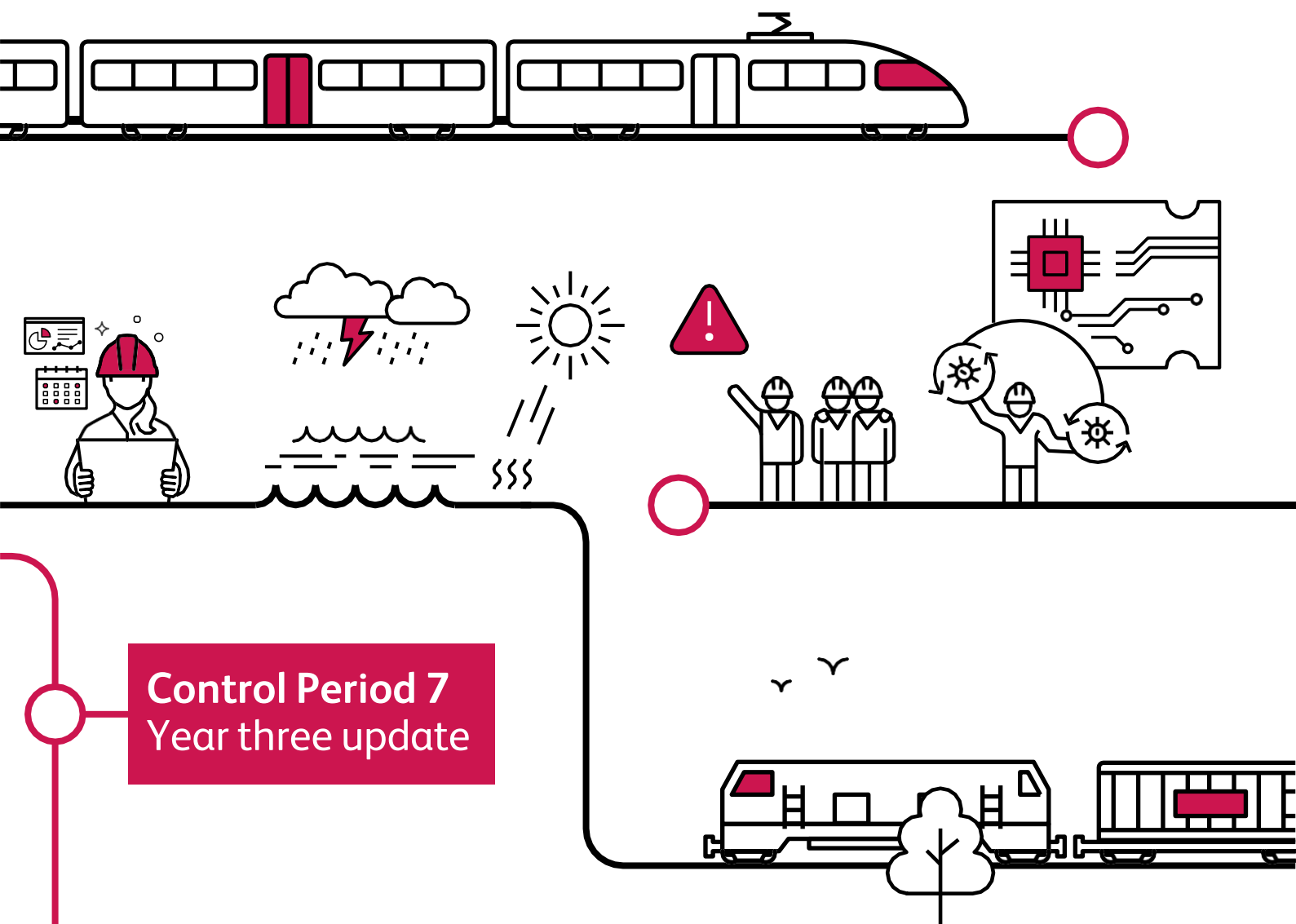


Our delivery plan for System Operator



Foreword

This year we made several high-profile achievements, most notably the successful delivery of the December 2025 timetable change. As part of this, System Operator (SO) played a key role in resolving a record number of access applications and delivering post-implementation assurance activities to ensure the railway continued to run efficiently and reliably for our customers.

The 200th anniversary of the modern railway marked another highlight for this year. This significant milestone was celebrated with some incredible events demonstrating how the railway has shaped and continues to shape lives across Britain. One event was the 'hidden careers carriage' in which typically 'forgotten' railway roles were showcased, including the freight manager role which was organised and showcased by our Rail Freight Team.

The Railways Bill was formally introduced in Parliament, and three integrated railways (Southeastern, South Western and Anglia) have been successfully launched, both signalling milestone moments on the journey to Great British Railways (GBR). The integration of the Policy and Reform team into System Operator has been pivotal to these developments, overseeing both the Access and Use Policy and the Decision Framework to shape access reform and decision making for GBR.

This year we made various organisational changes to facilitate the integration of The Great British Railways Transition Team (GBRTT) into System Operator. Similarly, we have also seen several leadership changes, marked by the appointment of individuals who bring extensive experience and a strong commitment to their new roles.

We introduced seven 'must-win' objectives to bring together the work we do at System Operator. These must-wins represent some of our shared priorities across our business functions, supporting the vision to allow the network to operate as one that is seamless and high performing for customers. While some activities within these priorities will continue beyond this year, each must-win is designed to deliver a step change, creating tangible improvements within System Operator and, in some cases, across the wider rail industry. These priorities focus on areas where we can make the most significant impact, whether that is driving performance recovery through a unified, whole-industry approach to performance target alignment, embedding safety and leadership, preparing for major timetable changes, or supporting industry reform.

By concentrating efforts on these critical themes, we ensure that our work adds measurable value for System Operator to lead effectively through transition and integration.

As with any year, we have celebrated major accomplishments but have also encountered challenges along the way. The industry is facing continuous pressure on our financial resources, caused by rising inflation, ageing infrastructure and the growing impact of extreme weather and climate change. This has added challenges to System Operator's efficiency and portfolio of programmes, requiring some important decision making going forward. It is also important for us to focus on enhancing communication and collaboration; providing clarity and certainty during the transition to GBR; and streamlining processes, as these were all highlighted as areas for improvement in the System Operator 2025 Stakeholder Advocacy survey.

As we look towards year three of CP7, we are beginning to develop additional must-wins for 2026. These will look at how we can further embed Service, Assurance and Leadership (SAL) into the ways we work within System Operator, and how we engage with the wider business. The SAL framework was recognised by those participating in the Stakeholder Advocacy survey as an incredibly positive evolution, to assist better understanding what System Operator does and how it can enable the success of the wider business and rail users. The breadth of what System Operator does is extensive, and our commitment to collaboration, customers, and continuous improvement will remain at the heart of all our work as we move into the next year.



Anit Chandarana
Group Director, System Operator

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anit Chandarana', positioned below the printed name and title.

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Our 2024 to 2029 plan on a page

System Operator works with routes, regions, and operators across the rail network in England, Wales, and Scotland. Our role is to get the network to operate reliably today and tomorrow for customers.

Our plan aligns with the Network Rail story, focused on making the railway simpler, better, and greener for our passenger and freight customers. We align our delivery to a Services, Assurance and Leadership model, providing our teams with a framework to support their delivery. In some areas, System Operator will be providing recommendations not decisions, in other areas they will provide a key assurance role to improve the outputs and performance of the wider business and for our passenger and freight customers.

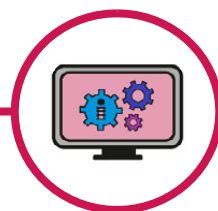
In addition to our core work, our portfolio of programmes, which will continue into year three, include:



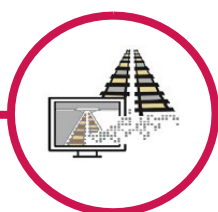
Weather Risk Task Force (WRTF) will champion a more resilient and sustainable railway, using learning from expert reports about the effects of environmental change on the railway.



The Freight Safety Improvement Programme (FSIP) will improve key areas of freight safety including climate change resilience, terminal operations, derailment reduction, trespass prevention, and operational security.



Access Planning Programme (APP) will replace the outdated Possession Planning System (PPS) with a modern system designed for today's railway and meeting the needs of 5,000 users across the industry.



Timetable Planning Systems and Data Enhancements will deliver Timetable Planning Rules (TPR) improvements, a more automated TPR system, Train Planning System data improvements and performance modelling enhancements.



Mobile Network Data will continue to provide valuable information about travel patterns and trends to support strategic, operational, and tactical planning.

System Operator CP7 in figures	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total
Expenditure budget (£m)	108	138	137	122	108	614

Table 1: System Operator Expenditure Budget (£m), cash prices taken in February 2026.

Introduction to this document

Who we are

We are one of Network Rail's functions, working across the five regions and fourteen routes, and passenger and freight train operators, to keep passengers and freight moving seamlessly.

Purpose and background

In March 2024, we published our CP7 delivery plan which set out our planned activities, outputs, and expenditure between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2029.

This document provides an update on our progress in delivering our CP7 Delivery Plan and provides an overview of our updated plan for years three to five of CP7, clearly identifying any key changes compared to our March 2025 delivery plan.

How we have updated our plan

System Operator's activities for CP7 are shaped by ongoing engagement with key industry stakeholders to ensure we are delivering customer priorities. We gather feedback through our stakeholder advocacy survey, identifying strengths and areas for improvement, which are addressed in our action plans for the year ahead.

Service, Assurance & Leadership (SAL) workstream has allowed us to have a common understanding across System Operator and the wider business of what we do at a level of detail that we have not had before. By undertaking this activity, we have been able to have structured conversations about our role within Network Rail, for example, clarifying where System Operator leads on future timetabling decisions and where other functions provide assurance. It is helping us refine how we add value and where we need to adapt.

As part of our regulatory settlement set by the Government, we have a role to support all

regions to deliver the high-level output specification (HLOS). We have worked closely with all Network Rail's regions to support them to track and deliver their HLOS commitments and continue to support with the delivery of their 'journey time' metrics.

An example of this is the successful delivery of the December 2025 East Coast Main Line (ECML) timetable which marked the largest change in over a decade, significantly enhancing capacity and connectivity. System Operator focused resources on ECML corridors, emphasising early planning and collaboration with performance and simulation to balance passenger and freight needs. The new timetable adds over 60,000 additional seats weekly, reduces London to Edinburgh journey times to around four hours, and increases service frequency to six trains per hour during peak times for London North Eastern Railway (LNER).

This document provides an update on key activities and initiatives as we enter year three of the Control Period. While it highlights important themes and any necessary changes, please note that this document is not exhaustive. For more detailed information, refer to the Strategic Business Plan for Control Period 7.

2025 Spending Review

The 2025 Spending Review, covering the final three years of CP7 (i.e. April 2026 – March 2029), included consideration of Network Rail's Operations, Maintenance and Renewals (OMR) budget. The primary outcome is that a manageable proportion of our budget has been recategorised under government accounting rules. In addition, we have received a minor stretch to our plan (covering operational expenditure and income) across England and Wales over the three years. Our current plans to achieve this stretch should have minimal impact on our CP7 outputs.

Our vision and strategy

Our strategy supports Network Rail's vision for a simpler, better, greener railway.

Over the past year, we have continued to listen to feedback from both internal and external stakeholders. This has given us a clearer insight into how we can improve what we deliver and how we operate as a function.

Many stakeholders told us they want more clarity on the role of System Operator in a decentralised railway; this insight has shaped the way we prioritise and collaborate across the business and industry. The 2025 Stakeholder Advocacy survey confirms that our stakeholders have seen improvements in how we understand their needs, their confidence in our ability to get things done, our proactivity and responsiveness,

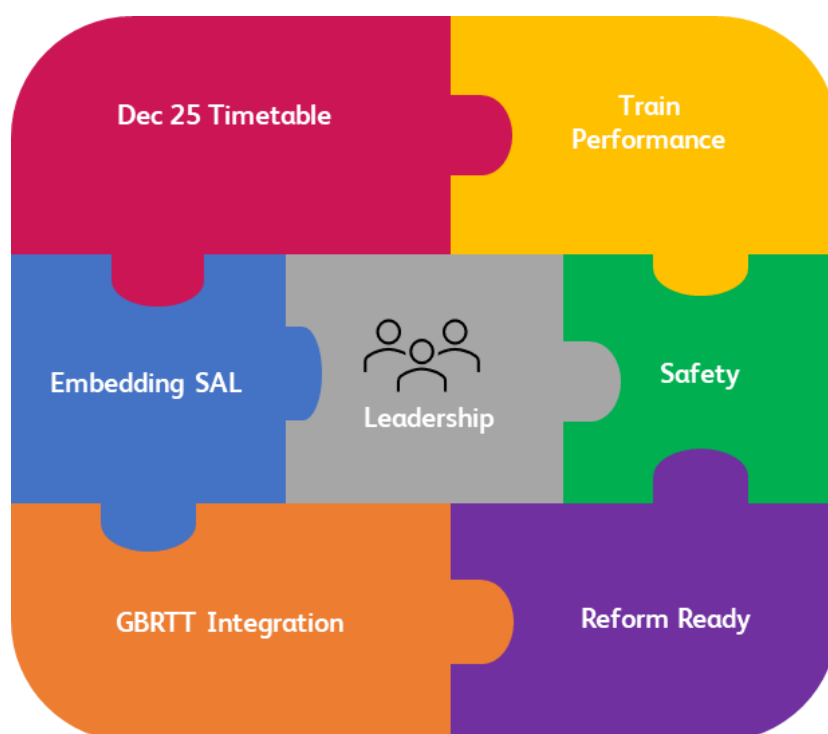
and how well we react to their feedback.

As we look ahead, our focus is on collaborating more closely with colleagues across the industry to support the transition to Great British Railways (GBR). While the GBRTT teams have already moved into Network Rail, the work does not stop here.

System Operator has a pivotal role in shaping and influencing the design of GBR; particularly how the system integrates, how decisions are made, and how the whole railway works together for passengers and freight. Strengthening these relationships and embedding consistent ways of working is central to where we are heading next.

System Operator's role is to make sure the rail network operates as one that's seamless and high performing.

To support this, we have a clear set of System Operator priorities and 'must- s.' These short- to medium-term priorities help us stay focused on the things that make the biggest difference: improving performance, strengthening safety, preparing for reform, and delivering the December 2025 timetable. The must-wins bring our work together into a small set of activities that cut across teams and require joint ownership. They are about being aligned, consistent, and intentional in how we deliver, making sure we are building the foundations needed for a simpler, better, more joined-up railway.





Safety



Our Network Rail ambition: Everyone home safe, everyday.

Our key Network Rail 2024 to 2029 safety objectives:

- Reduce safety risks to our workforce.
- Reduce passenger and safety risk.
- Effectively control threats to railway security.

Our key initiatives

Employee Health, Safety and Wellbeing will continue to be a priority by raising awareness through strategic communications, along with regular newsletters where there will be a topical subject on Health and Safety matters.

The System Operator Health and Safety guide is now accessible to all Network Rail employees, providing guidance and key contacts. The guide has been expanded upon with focus areas such as Mental Health & Wellbeing, Operational Work Activity Risk Assessments and Fatigue Management.

Year three will see a focus shift toward improvement of operational safety through better data collection, allowing us to determine true risk and formulate mitigation against potential incidents in the future. This will include assessment of line blockage irregularities, stranded train management, and speeding of trains, strengthening the reliability of our operations, and providing a more dependable service for our customers.

Rail freight operations carry unique risks and hazards which require specialist arrangements. The Freight Train Accident risk is managed by System Operator at Level 1 due to its potential to impact on Network Rail's strategic objectives and essential services, this remains stable with the overall risk rating of significant given potential consequences, such as derailment or spillage of dangerous goods. Clear, tangible outcomes are being seen, including regular representation at industry safety forums where we provide direction and leadership, contributing to a safer, more reliable railway.

The Keeping Trains Safely Moving (KTSM) programme is part of the System Operator safety must-win which will continue to support our regional and industry colleagues to deliver a high-performing railway safely and appropriately. We will deliver training and provide tools to support colleagues when making operational decisions, such as the G-FORCE tool, developed by the Road Safety and Standards Board (RSSB), which provides training to railway staff for decision making in non-standardised situations. We will develop operational initiatives, route- and operator-based trials, and test new ways of working to support operators and routes.

As leaders of the new industry-wide trespass programme, **we will support our regional and industry colleagues to deliver better performance and reduce the trespass impact.** We will achieve this by ensuring collaboration and sharing best practices for prevention across industry, implementing targeted interventions, and defining processes to deliver the right outcomes.

We will enhance operational capability through improved detection technologies (drones and Forward-Facing CCTV), streamlined control processes, consistent enforcement approaches, and improved evidence quality for prosecutions. A consistent data model to improve attribution of trespass associated delay data will be developed to ensure accurate reporting of benefits and better decision-making. Alongside this, we will focus on shifting public and judicial

attitudes to make trespassing less tolerated, increasing awareness of safety and economic risks, and securing government support for legislative change. These changes are central to customer safety, aiming to reduce trespass incidents and prevent service disruptions.

Through the National Operating Centre (NOC), we look at operations from a whole network perspective to provide coordination and support during the day-to-day running of the operational railway. We are looking to evolve the role of the NOC and improve how we share information to provide the best possible support to our customers each day. We will also continue to coordinate trespass, fatality management, and large incident support, acting as a critical friend in times of crisis or a developing major incident.

We will continue to set the standard for operational resilience during national events and exercising and improving our approach to major operational incidents, working more effectively with the British Transport Police (BTP) and other emergency services to keep the railway operating reliably for our customers.

We are also committed to continuing to move to quality-based assurance across the operations process to improve learning and understanding of our control effectiveness. The process has been published with a 12-month period to work closely with the regions to embed the approach to assurance using the

Risk Management Maturity Model (RM3), promoting continuous improvement of Health and Safety management.

We will work across System Operator to review the RM3 functional assessments and identify where we can share good practice across teams and develop improvement action plans. This will give an opportunity for System Operator to improve its overall Health, Safety and Wellbeing frameworks and therefore our people management and governance arrangements.

Work will continue to fully embed the control framework across the business for safety critical communications with improved monitoring and reporting. This is supported through improvements to the capability assessment frameworks which will target weaker areas within our control framework to reduce the number of incidents related to safety critical communications.



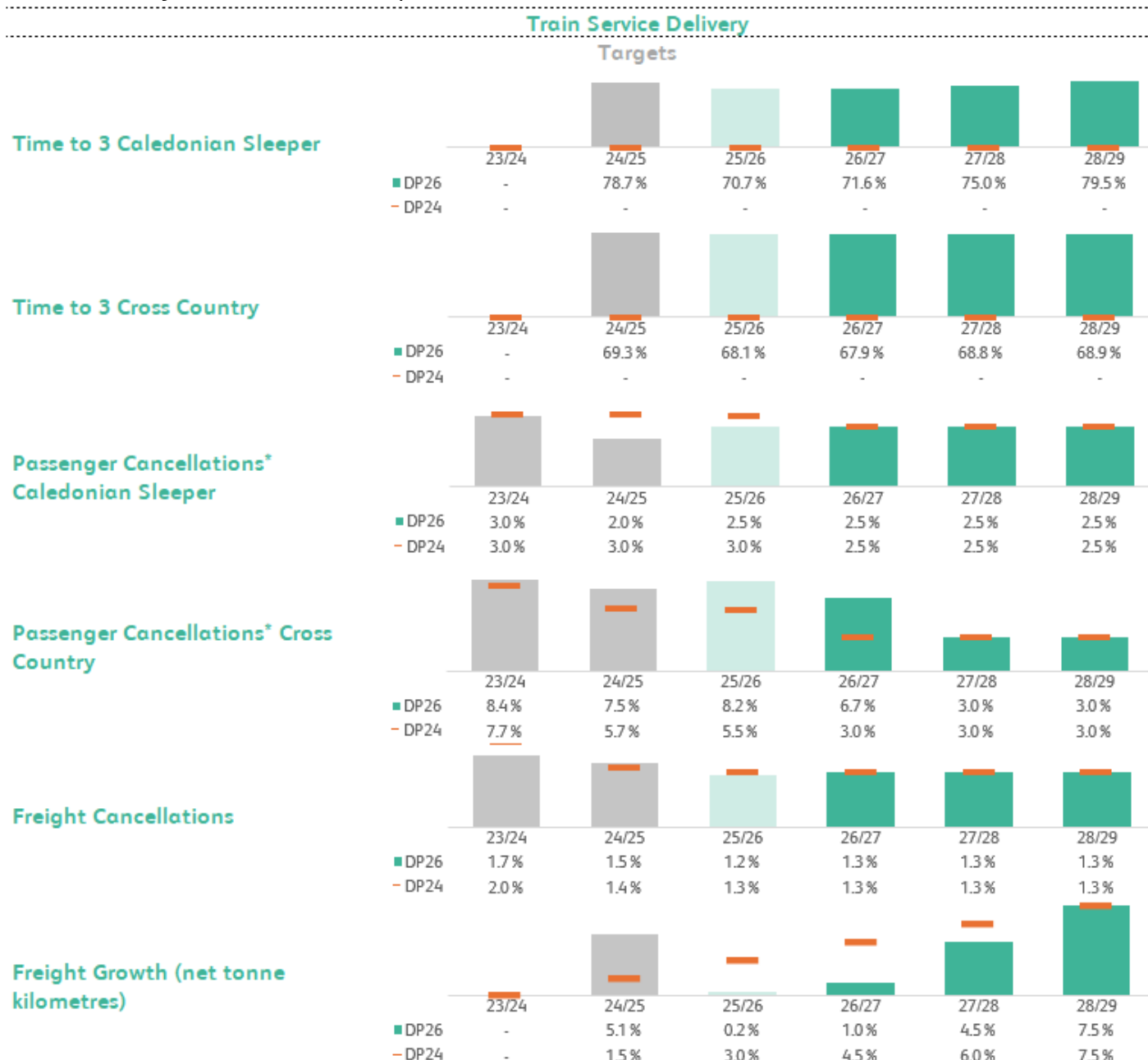


Train service delivery

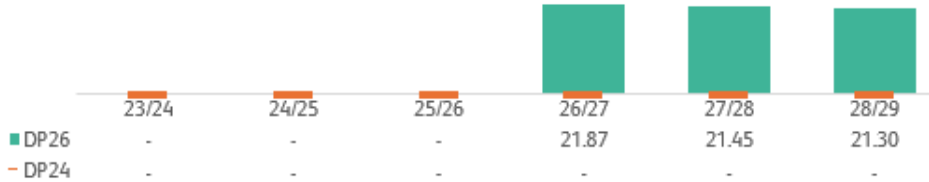
Our Network Rail ambition: Delivering reliable and punctual train services.

Our key Network Rail 2024-2029 train service delivery objectives and targets:

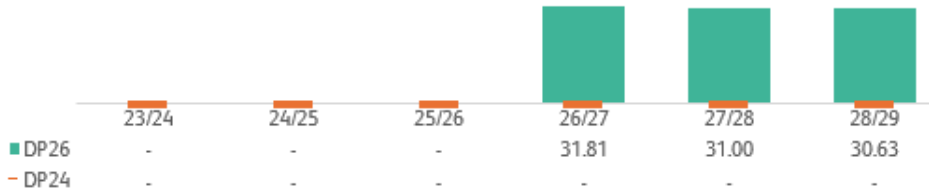
- Give passengers the highest levels of train performance possible so we get them where they need to be on time.
- Improve planning of the train service and maintenance access to minimise disruption for passengers and freight users.
- Minimise asset Service Affecting Failures (SAFs) in line with our asset condition forecasts.
- Reduce Delays Per Incident (DPI).
- Prevent delays and minimise disruption.



**Passenger Only Delay Minutes
per 1000 Miles Train Travel
(Network Rail contribution) -
Caledonian Sleeper**



**Passenger Only Delay Minutes
per 1000 Miles Train Travel
(Network Rail contribution) -
Cross Country**



Note: Grey columns are confirmed outturn for past years. Lighter coloured columns are forecasts for the current year.
 * Performance on Network Rail Network only
 * Lowest figure shown for ranges

Our key initiatives

The System Operator plays a leading role in shaping and driving the Network Performance Board (NPB) to deliver initiatives that enhance train service delivery. The focus includes refining the ‘Building Blocks’ of the Operating Plan, such as scheduled running times and station dwell times, with a self-service toolkit provided to routes and operators for targeted analysis and intervention.

As part of the industry Smarter Information Smarter Journeys (SISJ) programme, Capacity Planning are playing a key role in the DfT/FTR funded extended booking horizons project, which aims to publish timetables earlier to facilitate the sale of tickets much earlier to customers, providing overall benefits to passengers and supporting better train service delivery. Early work is underway to explore automating association data input and train linking in the Train Planning System (TPS), with a benefits case being developed and alignment to the TPS Master Renewal planned for year three.

As part of the SO train performance ‘must-win,’ the Western perpetual model project focuses on maintaining up-to-date simulation models against a base timetable and iterative updates, providing a deeper understanding of performance impacts across the full development cycle. The project aims to reduce modelling timeframes, create a readily available base model, streamline inputs and processes, and deliver additional outputs beyond

punctuality, and could be extended to other areas if successful.

In year two, a structured plan was implemented to manage an unprecedentedly high volume of unsupported access applications following the ORR’s call for applications in areas of complex and potentially interacting access rights for December 2024, May 2025, or December 2025 timetables. 82 unsupported applications were received - a record number compared with only 55 over the past 12 years.

With deadlines often driven by statutory deadlines and other external pressures, System Operator has supported colleagues across the business, reviewing representations to assist the customer teams in dealing with over 8,000 rights sought by operators across multiple interacting locations.

Coordination of access applications included enhanced stakeholder engagement through regular meetings with routes and regions for process alignment and timely issue escalation; as well as weekly interactions with ORR to ensure transparent progress updates, reinforcing confidence in Network Rail’s governance and assessment capabilities. Throughout the process we have driven high standards and reliable consistency that have allowed ORR to positively respond to the submissions it has received and make regulatory directions in line with Network Rail’s submissions.

We are boosting the reliability of freight services by working with our regions to deliver our National Freight Performance Strategy. We are analysing data and trends to identify areas where we can drive the greatest improvements, with the aim of reducing overall delays across the industry.

Network Rail was named Business of the Year at the 2025 Rail Freight Group (RFG) Awards after demonstrating innovation, flexibility, and collaboration with a range of stakeholders, resulting in reduced costs, greater productivity and new freight flows being brought to rail.

The December 2025 East Coast Main Line (ECML) timetable change was a huge success, with System Operator playing a pivotal role in ensuring this. Post-implementation assurance activities were undertaken, including the deployment of timetable production team members to key signally centres and major stations during the first week of operation, enabling real-time support and immediate response to operational challenges. Ongoing monitoring of sectional running time (SRT) and dwell time adherence will continue, providing data-led insight to Network Rail routes and assessing the root causes of non-adherence, whether driven by the operational plan or on-the-day operations, to inform appropriate remedial action.

System Operator has established an Artificial Intelligence (AI) working group that have reviewed AI use cases from Capacity Planning, Operations, and the Performance & Analysis functions. Specific use cases were identified and then considered in light of available data to enable AI agents to be developed to automate the processes. The Capacity Planning opportunities that are most suitable for early AI activity are around auto-timetabling and improving the base plan. However, in CP7 timescales it is believed that taking a smaller business process such as validation of possessions against the timetable, or testing platform lengths against the train plan, will be better use cases for early AI adoption.

Similarly, operations aim to implement this technology to target performance

improvements effectively. Over half (55 %) of On Time failures in 2025 were classified as sub-threshold (below 3 minutes) and unexplained, meaning there was no actionable cause or remediation. This limits the ability to target performance improvements effectively. However, by harnessing advances in technology, we have an opportunity to deliver insights that were previously unobtainable. A three-pronged approach is being taken that seeks to optimise existing systems, utilise AI to analyse complex data and to put in place the required enablers that will embed the confidence to act on this insight. This solution aims to enable fact-based, strategic decisions and targeted performance improvements. It strengthens sub-threshold analysis and scales over time, delivering incremental benefits as the three elements mature, to reduce delays for our customers.

We are working closely with the Department for Transport to deliver a unified, whole industry approach to target alignment, ensuring that performance expectations are developed consistently across operators, routes, and regions. Through a jointly managed programme, clearer roles, and structured milestones, we are establishing a single T3 (where lateness is under three minutes) and Cancellation target framework that supports shared planning cycles and enables teams to jointly work from the same baseline assumptions. This collaborative approach provides greater transparency, strengthens joint ownership of outcomes, and creates a more structured pathway to setting targets that reflect both local operational realities and the outcomes sought by passengers.

To further support the train service delivery strategy, our performance team have been involved in several activities. These include developing the governance structure to support effective management and oversight, ensuring that each pillar of the Whole System Model of Performance has a corresponding expert group driving continuous improvement; supporting industry performance objectives including the Network Performance Board's Performance Restoration Framework, the alignment of performance targets across track and train, and

establishing appropriate policies and processes for Great British Railways (GBR) to support improved passenger and freight outcomes; and finally driving performance improvements of the timetable and the industry's preparation for each timetable change, to manage risk and minimise the impact on our customers.

In August 2025, we reset the Network Strategy and Planning (NS&P) team to strengthen our identity and ways of working while delivering integrated, forward-looking outputs for the industry. Clarifying our value proposition and improving visibility will enhance stakeholder engagement and collaboration. Our focus is now on developing an integrated programme that aligns strategy, planning, and analysis with regional and national priorities. Key areas include addressing major programme impacts, system capacity challenges, and supporting initiatives such as Long-Term Rail Strategy (LTRS) and rolling stock integration. In year two, the Strategic Planning Framework and Analytical Toolkit were established. Year three will focus on embedding these frameworks, improving integration, and enabling data driven collaborative decision making to prepare for GBR transition and future funding cycles. The work in Network Strategy and Planning (NS&P) aligns with and supports key aspects of GBR design, in particular the future of strategic planning and ensuring a whole system approach is taken as GBR is

established, so the benefits of track and train integration can be fully realised for customers and funders.

The Weather & Climate team is also working towards the integration of GBR, collaborating with our train operator colleagues to operate seamlessly across the company boundaries. The team assists regions in managing weather risks and preparing for the key seasons: autumn, winter, and summer. Through setting guidelines, coordinating preparations across the network, and providing accurate weather forecast data, we improve performance and reduce delays in any weather to keep the railway operating for customers all year round.





Customers & communities

Our Network Rail ambition: Be a dependable partner that puts service at the heart of everything we do.

Our key Network Rail 2024-2029 customers & communities' objectives and targets:

- Deliver inclusive and accessible services and facilities.
- Step change in passenger information particularly during disruption.
- Safe, secure, sustainable stations reflecting local communities.
- Embed customer-led thinking in current and future ways of working.
- Improve relationships with our lineside neighbours.

Our key initiatives

In year three we will continue to acknowledge the customer at the forefront of future thinking. We are committed to responding to existing and emerging priorities from within the industry and the government, while focusing on continuous improvement based on customer insights.

An example of this includes the transition from Diversity Impact Assessments to Equality Impact Assessments to align with other organisations. Our processes will be adopted by train operators in accordance with the Accessibility Roadmap. This roadmap sets out a series of government established steps for improving accessibility across the rail industry in preparation for Great British Railways (GBR). This consistent approach across the industry will enable sound and uniform decision-making in customer-facing activities.

We are successfully co-leading Smarter Information Smarter Journeys (SISJ) programme in collaboration with Rail Delivery Group (RDG) and industry colleagues to enhance customer information throughout the customer journey. Notably, we have delivered the 'Better Information when Booking' project, which stops the sale of tickets for trains which the industry knows will not run due to engineering works. This

industry: and finally concluding the Darwin Evolution Project which provides critical train running information, including real-time arrival and departure information as well as delays and cancellations using several sources. The conclusion of this project will see it being re-platformed, providing greater resilience and reduced Opex costs for this key information system.

The next phase of Visual Disruption Maps has been launched, featuring videos that offer alternative route information using a presenter and live map for on the day disruptions. This followed successful launch of videos for planned events earlier in 2025.

Several other programme focus areas have now been established including, but not limited to delivering automated, national-live lift availability information across customer-facing information channels to enhance data management and quality compared to the current manually derived information; delivering specific projects as part of the Accessibility Roadmap, including an industry British Sign Language (BSL) feed for use across the project has been shortlisted for several awards.

We have also now commenced an operational trial for improving on board

announcements via the Global System for Mobile Communications-Railway project (GSM-R) which will see us rolling out new technical capability to four early adopting train companies to enable announcements to be made from Train Operating Company (TOC) control directly to passengers on board trains. This will play a critical role in improving customer information on stranded trains.

We are continuing to deliver improvements to customer experience during disruption and customer service standards at our stations. These are complemented by the introduction of a new stations framework to focus our activity on the key priority areas for customers and stakeholders, and a significant update to our Station Toolkit, which serves as the primary online resource for station management.

We will continue to improve accessibility at our stations through the development of a dedicated passenger assistance improvement strategy in addition to improvements to the information we provide to our customers, the capability of our staff and customer facilities.

The annual SO Stakeholder Advocacy survey was conducted in the final quarter of 2025. Members of the leadership team interviewed 30 internal and external stakeholders (up 50 % from 2024) to understand how they perceive System Operator, how well they understand what we do and to identify any areas for improvement.

Findings this year suggest an improvement in positive perceptions of System Operator, a high regard for the SAL framework and recognition of ‘good people doing great work’ across System Operator. Areas for improvement include the need for more proactive communication, simplification of processes, a call for System Operator to be a more dynamic and assertive industry leader and – most critically – the need for clarity around the transition into GBR and beyond. As we move into year three, we will carry these insights forward to ensure that we are implementing changes that will benefit our Stakeholders and improve how we operate as a function.

The Rail Customer Experience Survey (RCXS) is a new, industry wide survey providing a single, consistent view of rail customer experience across the network. It replaces Wavelength and other legacy surveys, creating a shared evidence base for Network Rail, train operators, and the wider industry. RCXS measures overall satisfaction, value for money and advocacy, alongside key stages of the customer journey, using a continuous on-train survey approach to deliver robust, comparable insight for both local action and national benchmarking.

RCXS builds on the strengths of Wavelength while offering broader coverage, more regular surveys, a consistent methodology and richer insights. Faster access to results, improved comparability across the network, and shared dashboards will give Network Rail and operators clearer, more actionable insights.





Efficiency



Our Network Rail ambition: Run a safe, efficient, and reliable railway.

Our key Network Rail 2024-2029 efficiency objectives and targets:

- Deliver a 10 % efficiency on operational expenditure.
- Deliver a 15 % efficiency on capital expenditure.
- Contribute towards £1.5bn industry efficiencies and assist operators to enable industry benefits.

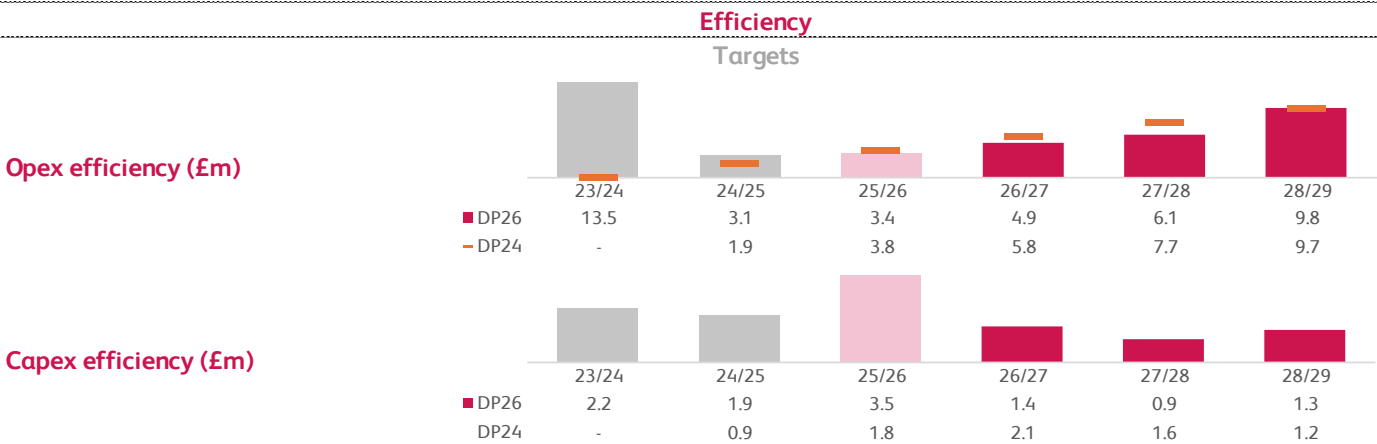


Table 3: CP7 Efficiency outcomes forecasts for Opex and Capex
Note: These targets are from a CP6 exit baseline. Lighter coloured columns are forecasts for the current year.

Our key initiatives

Efficiency targets for operating expenditure (Opex) have been achieved in the first two years of CP7 by managing recruitment across the function, meaning outputs remained consistent but with a reduced headcount. Plus, our efficiencies have been realised through the delivery of the national exercise (testing the response and recovery to major railway incidents), where enhanced capabilities across regions have allowed us to conduct more exercises in-house, reducing our reliance on external support. There have also been cost reductions achieved through successful contract negotiations and securing discounted commercial agreements.

Capital Expenditure (Capex) efficiencies have been achieved by reducing reliance on external consultants and transitioning more work in-house through greater utilisation of Network Rail staff. Additional efficiencies have also been delivered by reshaping the

delivery model for programmes such as 21st Century Operations, moving more activity into business as usual (BAU) and further reducing the need for consultancy support.

Following a successful phase 1, Capacity Planning is progressing phase 2 of its insourcing approach, responding to regional demand by expanding the service that brings work currently delivered by external consultancy firms into the organisation. To date, 24 roles have been added into the organisation, with a further 10 being introduced by July 2027.

This approach provides measurable benefits to both Capacity Planning and Network Rail’s regions by using lower-cost internal resources, improving quality through established internal relationships, and reducing the volume of unpaid assurance activity associated with external consultants.



The establishment of Great British Railways prompts additional resource demand in year three and four to undertake the activity requirements for key teams. We will undertake a range of activity to design, consult, and implement fundamental components of the new industry architecture covering topics such as network licences, framework agreements, network codes, track, station and depot contracts, and the transfer of DfT planning and ORR access decision activities to Great British Railways (GBR).

Looking forward, efficiency plans for the remainder of the control period are evolving. All functions and programmes are focused on achieving their efficiency targets. A substantial portion of these efficiencies are expected to come from headcount reductions, resulting from further review of our organisation structure and roles. This is being carried out through the Management Efficiency Programme (MEP). MEP is proposing changes to team sizes, focused on management grades (bands 1-4) and contractors.

At a strategic level, the organisational changes will reduce the operating cost base through improved spans and layers, simplify the operating model by removing a sub-function, and strengthen leadership accountability. They will enhance insight from data science and performance management, clarify ownership of the performance narrative and responses to railway-related crime, and ensure alignment with anticipated GBR operating models.



Sustainable growth

Our Network Rail ambition: To serve the nation with the cleanest, greenest mass transport.

Our key Network Rail 2024-2029 sustainable growth objectives and targets:

- Reduce carbon: progress towards net-zero emissions by 2050.
- Improve air quality: reduce harmful pollutants at stations by 25 % by 2030.
- Feed in 100 % of our non-traction by renewable sources by 2030.
- Weather resilience and climate change adaptation (WRCCA).
- Positive impacts on biodiversity and impacts on biodiversity net gain by 2035.
- Reuse, recycle or redeploy all non-hazardous infrastructure materials by 2029.

Our key initiatives

Freight growth is an important part of our CP7 plan. We are committed to delivering the regulatory freight growth target of 7.5 % for England and Wales and 8.7 % for Scotland over CP7. Network-wide, volumes are 2.9 % above the CP6 baseline, however rail freight growth is reflective of, and heavily reliant on, external market conditions, such as the closure of the Grangemouth oil refinery which has significantly impacted Scotland's volumes. In England and Wales, further growth has been stunted by suppressed demand from the construction sector.

Working cross-functionally we have established route and regional freight growth boards to provide high levels of scrutiny, enabling us to effectively monitor the progress made against our key growth initiatives across the business.

At the 2025 RFG Awards, Network Rail won both the Driving Rail Freight Growth category (jointly with Tata Steel and DB Cargo) and the Innovation and Talent category for the Digital Freight Loads Books project. The introduction of Digital Freight Load Books replaces paper-based methods of calculating length and weight limits with an efficient, digital system, helping train planners identify new growth opportunities, save time, and enhance safety.

A Faster Freight Industry workstream has been established to understand what needs to be true to run Freight trains up to 90mph. This is led by System Operator (Capacity Planning and Railfreight). Technical assessments are underway, and a trial plan is being produced. Running freight trains at faster speeds will enable further economic growth, support the government freight growth target, reduce carbon emissions, and improve customer satisfaction through reduced journey times of freight and passenger paths and increased capacity on the network.

We are exploring Artificial Intelligence (AI) applications in Capacity Planning which aims to enhance timetable development. Key initiatives include optimising train planning rules through GB-wide point-to-point timing calculations, comparing these with actual performance, identifying data-driven improvements, and analysing potential changes to train planning rules (TPR) for added value. This strategy enhances insights, creates efficiencies, and scales existing processes.

We have made significant progress in our work on climate change adaptation with publication of the Greener Railway Strategy setting out our vision for a well-adapted railway system that is

flexible, reliable, operates safely and is responsive to a changing climate.

The Climate Change Resilience and Adaptation team continues to work closely with regions and functions to support and enable the business to embed climate change considerations into our standards, processes, and the work we deliver. Network Rail's flagship adaptation pathway strategies are progressing well with System Operator providing coordination, best practice sharing, guidance, and support across the regional programmes.

We are working with the Weather Academy (a hub for cross-industry learning) to make smarter weather decisions in rail operations, and Technical Authority to develop climate change training materials and to update and improve standards and processes in relation to managing climate change risk for project delivery.



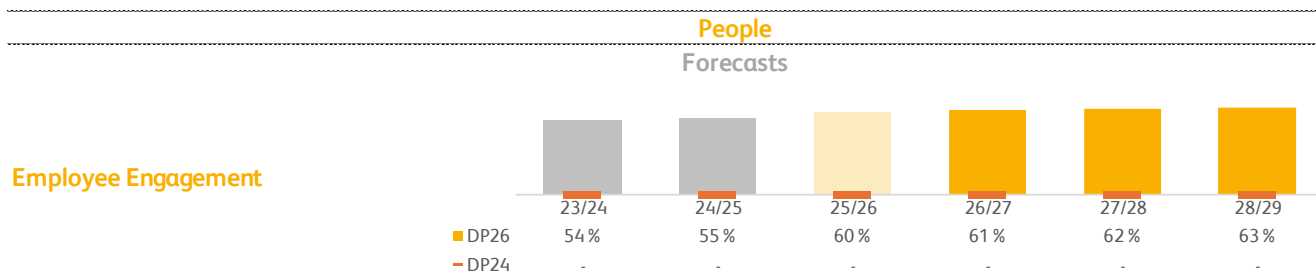
People



Our Network Rail ambition: Become a high-performing service-led organisation.

Our key Network Rail 2024-2029 people objectives and targets:

- Enable a great employee experience through an engaging, safe, and inclusive culture.
- Right people, right place, right time.
- Great leadership.
- Better work.



Note: Grey columns are confirmed outturn for past years. Lighter coloured columns are forecasts for the current year.



Our key initiatives

Year three will see continued action across all four targets of the SO people plan. We aim to build on the significant improvement in engagement that year two brought. Leadership through change has become a focus in year three as we prepare for integration and industry reform, in line with our reform ready and leadership must-wins.

We will work to create an even more inclusive System Operator with a refreshed EDI plan for 2026/7. This will include continuing our partnership with Career Ready (which supports the social mobility agenda) and working closer with networks across the industry to deliver and promote inclusion events. We also aim to increase data declarations to inform interventions and improve statistics, introduce listening groups with colleagues.

Creating a safe workplace is fundamental to everything we do. And safety does not stop trackside; it extends to how we behave towards each other. A safe, reliable, and high-performing railway depends on trust and on everyone treating each other with respect. We are committed to Network Rail's Prevention of Sexual Harassment Policy, which aims is to define sexual harassment, set clear behavioural expectations and consequences, provide support, and empower individuals to raise concerns confidently, and ensure that everyone, especially leaders, takes responsibility for challenging and eliminating sexual harassment in the workplace.

We are developing leadership capability for industry reform by creating a change management strategy which will equip our senior leaders with tools, understanding and capability to drive forward integration activity. This strategy will move this leadership group from awareness and acceptance into action and impact. We will grow change advocacy beyond this immediate leadership group and help all our colleagues understand what reform means for them through a network of change agents.

Year three will see a significant focus on how we manage change across our function, connecting various change packages into a clear narrative for our employees. We will focus on organisational design, culture and

behaviours which are essential as we move towards Great British Railways (GBR), creating the need for an effective integrated industry function. Understanding key capabilities required for a successful integrated network and refreshing talent work to reflect this are critical.

An industry learning and development forum has been established to identify core timetable planning competencies across the industry for new Train Planning Analysts. This coordinated approach supports consistency and collaboration as we progress into GBR. A third industry training module was recently piloted and will start delivery from year three.

Year three will focus on enhancing the professional accreditation within Capacity Planning to deliver benefits that will be reflected in the Timetable Planning Process. Further competency accreditation is being reviewed to make it more accessible for experienced planners and provide additional training support. These initiatives aim to help planners broaden their industry knowledge, enabling them to produce timetables with greater depth and accuracy.



Preparation for Great British Railways (GBR)

GBR will see the creation of a fully integrated railway, with the potential for many opportunities from improved performance to fare reform. To ensure the transition to GBR is successful we have established a Policy and Reform (P&R) team, with this year concluding the consultation to formalise these changes. The following section outlines some of the work P&R have been doing to prepare us for GBR day one.

GBR's network framework will be formally agreed in early 2026, setting out GBR's network-level directorates and their high-level accountabilities. When design activity is devolved locally, we will continue to assure that designs remain aligned to the vision envisaged and any proposed changes and their implications are understood.

We will develop an interim operating model for System Operator aligned to GBR's day one design, ready for go-live from summer 2026. Combined with new ways of working with the sector, this will enable us to begin delivering benefits ahead of GBR. In parallel, System Operator will lead detailed design and implementation of the relevant GBR day one functions. This will be supported by an increased focus on our approach to change management, including developing plans to build essential capabilities required for GBR (e.g. Access and Use).

We published the Access and Use Policy discussion paper in December 2025, shaping a programme for delivering the benefits of access reform in the first year of GBR. We will establish a legally robust draft policy ready for formal consultation in Summer 2026, before finalisation in Winter 2026. Key deliverables include new processes to manage access requests proactively and reactively, a transition plan for commercial arrangements, development of GBR contractual artefacts, and a plan to build internal capability across the people, data, and systems that will be GBR.

The Decision Framework is a structured approach developed to enable GBR to make whole-system decisions consistently, predictably, and transparently. It leverages new legislative powers and integrated control to help GBR optimise financial performance, service reliability, and long-term planning. We are testing out the framework in integrated business units to start building the capability.

We will work closely with DfT to support them in developing the accountability and financial frameworks that GBR will be required to operate within. This includes defining how GBR is overseen, including development of the GBR Licence, DfT guidance on business performance and the Framework Agreement. The work on the financial framework will set the financial controls that GBR must operate within, as well as addressing the implications of subsidy control. We will also coordinate input on the design of GBR's corporate structure, including the nature of the holding company (CLS or CLG), the future of Network Rail debt and GBR's classification. In carrying out this activity, we will work closely with the Planning & Regulation team.

The GBR Integrated Railway Programme will continue to support the development of local integrated railways (early versions of the future GBR model that bring track and train teams closer together ahead of new legislation). After successfully launching three integrated railways in 2025 (Southeastern Railway, South Western Railway and Anglia Railway) and drawing on lessons learnt, we will set out a wider strategy for local integration across Network Rail routes and publicly owned train operators in 2026, with the core aim of improving outcomes for customers. The programme will also provide practical tools - such as a playbook with guidance for local teams - and help coordinate work across DfT, Network Rail and other partners to ensure alignment and prepare for the future GBR model to support an improved customer-facing railway.

Our income and expenditure

In this section we provide an overview of our income and expenditure (based on a forecast as of February 2025) and our planned income and expenditure for years two to five of CP7, highlighting any changes from our March 2024 CP7 Delivery Plan.

CP7 income

System Operator holds income for fixed track access for national passenger operators (CrossCountry and Caledonian Sleeper). Our income assumptions follow the CP7 planning process guidance to assume that:

- Fixed track access will be as per the price lists for each TOC released at RF11 FY24
- Schedule 4 access charge supplement (ACS) will be zero for CP7 as this income will sit in the routes.

In year two, planning assumptions remain unchanged, with income variations driven solely by movements in inflation.

CP7 operations and support

The budget reflects our ongoing commitment to operational efficiency amid wider industry challenges. While financial resources are more constrained than in CP6, this enables a more strategic deployment of resources and a targeted portfolio designed to deliver improved outcomes for our customers.

The 2022 modernisation programme streamlined our organisational structure, resulting in reduced staffing levels. Throughout CP7, we remain focused on achieving substantial efficiencies to meet increasing customer expectations. By embedding structured continuous improvement and maintaining strong governance of our capital portfolio, we are positioned to enhance operational expenditure efficiencies and deliver high quality results.

In Year 2 of the control period, staff from GBRTT transferred into System Operator to support on GBR transition. We also rephased elements of our operating expenditure across the control period as forecasted spend became clearer.

Considering financial challenges across Network Rail, our latest plan accounts for a small reallocation of funding to our regions to support the delivery of renewals activity in CP7. This was achieved through the reprioritisation of future projects.

Overall capital expenditure has been lower than originally budgeted during the year. Challenges in delivering expenditure to forecast have resulted in budgets being rephased into future years, particularly within the Timetable planning systems and data enhancement projects and the Weather Risk Taskforce. The descoping of the Network Capability Project has released additional funding to accommodate potential increases in scope within these programmes.

Our key programmes

As we end year two, our portfolio of programmes has made steady progress, achieving 29 out of the 41 milestones. Looking ahead, we will continue to focus on refining our delivery plans and maintaining momentum in year three to ensure we meet our commitments and continue delivering benefits for passengers and freight users.

Weather Risk Task Force

This programme leads transformational change delivering systems, tools, processes and training through implementation and coordinating whole industry efforts to improve service during adverse and extreme weather in CP7.

Through year two we have delivered all our planned projects and interventions (including our collaborative work with the Technical Authority on drainage, lineside and earthworks). We remain on track to deliver the new Rail Operations Weather Service (ROWS) which will improve weather forecasting capabilities from year four of CP7.

Year three milestones

- Implement most recommendations from the 2023/24 Extreme Heat Task Force findings and test continued embedment.
- Improved resilience of the network to extreme heat/heat dome events.
- Reduced asset failures during periods of adverse heat.
- Embed the Weather Academy into the business for continued best practice learning.
- Continue collaborative delivery of Mair/Slingo action plans with the Technical Authority (Earthworks, Drainage and Lineside).
- Improve passenger service through better, data driven risk-based operations decisions that keep safety risk as low as reasonably practicable (ALARP).

Freight Safety Improvement Programme (FSIP)

FSIP is already considering 32 new proposals of work for year three, actively encouraging focus on technology and innovation. The estimated value of year three proposals at this time is £7.5m including £500k currently allocated for forward facing CCTV.

FSIP authorised funding for 37 schemes overall for the second year of CP7, with 17 of these now complete. Nine are currently in delivery with a further 11 due to start and finish before the end of the financial year.

Load Books development has £105k allocation for year three, with £650k currently forecast for digitisation, helping to streamline industry processes further. The current discovery phase will provide a more accurate year three forecast towards the end of this financial year.

The flagship FSIP workstream, the Wagon Condition Programme (WCP) is due to be completed in July 2026 when outputs will move into business as usual. A new priority project – Dignity for Drivers – will be picked up by WCP in its place.

FSIP will be co-hosting our own event next year partnering with RIA and RSSB. The event will focus on innovation and safety in freight.

Access Planning Programme

Following completion of the discovery phase, the decision was taken to progress the programme to detailed design. This phase concludes in February 2026, and the programme has the authority to begin phase 2 from early 2026.

The next phase will include build, testing, and a business trial of the new Access Planning System along with trade union engagement activities.

Following this, the final phase will undertake a controlled deployment to all users, supported by teaching and transition activities. Following Early Life Support, the system will transfer into BAU with support from Digital Data and Technology (DDaT) services, allowing decommissioning of Possession Planning System (PPS). The programme is scheduled to be completed in late 2028.

Timetable planning systems and data enhancements

These projects will enhance timetable planning efficiency and accuracy, **reduce the cost of timetable production, and reduce delays on the railway network. The performance modelling improvement projects will deliver improvements to the software and data used to undertake timetable performance modelling.**

All year two milestones were completed on time, except for the RailSys National Infrastructure Model Project, where re-authority has been requested and due to be completed in the first quarter of year three.

Year three milestones

- Timetable Planning Rules (TPR) System – PACE 3 Ends
- RailSys National Infrastructure Model Project Completion
- Timetable Planning System (TPS) Enhancement patches - TPS Renewal (Patches 1 + 2)

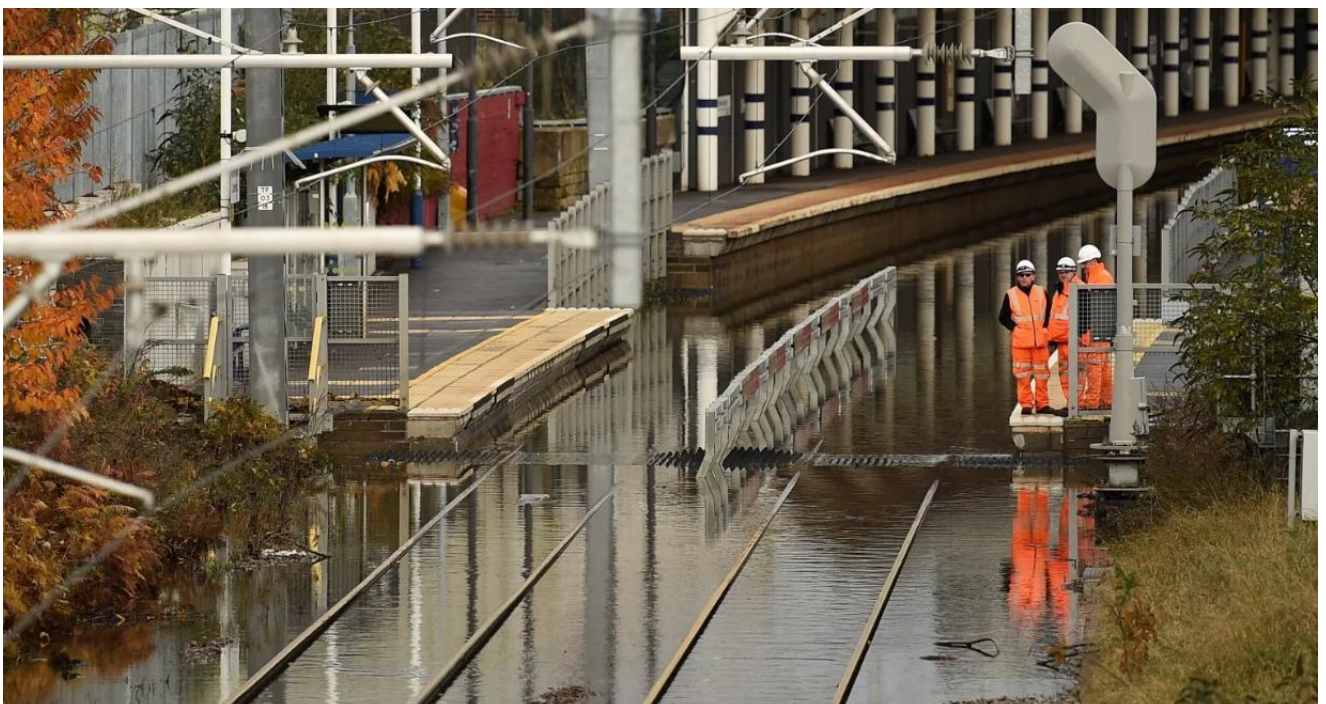
Mobile network data (MND)

MND continues to provide valuable insight to the rail industry to improve decision making across a range of processes. From access planning to driving revenue growth, MND has been used to supplement industry data to improve passenger experience and outcomes. We signed up and onboarded beneficiaries from across the industry, including funders, Subnational Transport bodies and Train Operating Companies giving them access, support, and expertise to use this data.

All year two milestones were completed on time, except for the release of version four software. This milestone was set to be achieved by the third quarter of year two but has been delayed as, despite extensive software development by BT, Network Rail's improvement KPIs have not yet been met. We are actively working with BT to expedite the delivery of this enhancement.

Year three milestones

- Finalise requirements and strategy for continued procurement of data for the industry.
- Identify pathway for MND based delay disruption framework to inform CP8 payment rates and GBR incentive regime.
- Continued use of data for revenue growth use cases.



Risks, uncertainty, and opportunities

CP7 we will see the creation of Great British Railways, bringing DfT procured operators back into public ownership and providing a single directing mind for track and train. The Railways Bill has confirmed the transfer of access decision making from ORR to GBR and the requirement to develop an Access and Use Policy that will inform the industry of GBR's approach to its role.

We welcome the Government's commitment to establish GBR and are working closely with train operators to deliver early benefits from integration for customers.

As we update our plan, we have identified and documented our key CP7 risks. We will continue to monitor these risks as we progress through CP7, adhering to the frameworks and processes we have established.

We continue to manage our enterprise level risks in accordance with Network Rail's Enterprise Risk Management Policy, making risk management integral to delivering for passengers and freight.

Risk of fluctuating inflation has been managed using input price risk funds, contingencies, and active CPI negotiations. We have carefully managed this throughout the year. General inflation and our own input price inflation is higher than assumed in the Statement of Funds Available and continues to put pressure on our funding. Financial values expressed in this document are in cash prices (using the Office for Budget Responsibility's (OBR) November 2025 inflation forecast), unless otherwise stated.

There is a financial risk where activities may be delayed and fall into future years, we will have to manage these within our annual funding, which may mean reprioritising certain aspects of programme work.

We monitor our programme delivery periodically via our SO portfolio board. Instances of rising costs are taken seriously and are scrutinised to ensure the right decisions are made for delivery and ensure programmes continue to deliver best value for money, in line with business needs. We continue to discuss progress with our regions and functions to make sure we remain transparent regarding any updates to our plan.

The recently announced changes to employers' National Insurance contributions have increased our employee costs and will also affect our supply chain, with the cost of materials, equipment, and projects likely to increase for years three to five of CP7.

We have developed our CP7 plans at a time of significant uncertainty for the industry and the wider economy. This means that while our delivery plan reflects the latest view of our activities, these plans will inevitably evolve as we respond to risks during CP7. The original plan contained a small overlay (c. 2 % of our plan).

We have identified opportunities that have closed out the overlay and have been reviewed with Network Rail's chief financial officer. We will continue to monitor delivery against plans as the control period progresses.

We continue to work closely with our industry partners to support the setting up of GBR. Our experts in System Operator are helping to drive cross-industry thinking and alignment while setting up processes and operating models to create a simpler, better, greener railway for Great Britain.

Annex

A. CP7 outcomes

Strategic theme	Measure	CP7 exit (March 2024 Delivery Plan)	CP7 exit (March 2026 Delivery Plan)
Train service delivery	Freight Cancellations	1.3%	1.3%
	Freight Growth (net tonne km)	7.5%	7.5%
Efficiency	Operational Expenditure Efficiency	10	9.80
	Capital Expenditure Efficiency	1	1.30
	Financial Performance Measure (FPM)	0	0
People	Employee Engagement	-	63%

B. CP7 financial summary

CP7 expenditure

£m in cash prices	March 2026 (March 2024) Delivery Plan					
	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	CP7 Total Expenditure
Operations & Support	86 (94)	112 (90)	96 (91)	95 (88)	96 (86)	485 (449)
Maintenance	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Renewals	28 (30)	26 (27)	41 (21)	27 (11)	12 (6)	134 (96)
Input Price Risk Funding	0 (0)	0 (2)	0 (2)	0 (2)	0 (2)	0 (9)
Industry costs and rates (excl. BT Police) *	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Electricity for traction (EC4T)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Allocated Expenditure	-114 (-124)	-138 (-119)	-136 (-114)	-122 (-101)	-108 (-95)	-619 (-553)
Total Expenditure (excl. EC4T)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Total Expenditure	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)

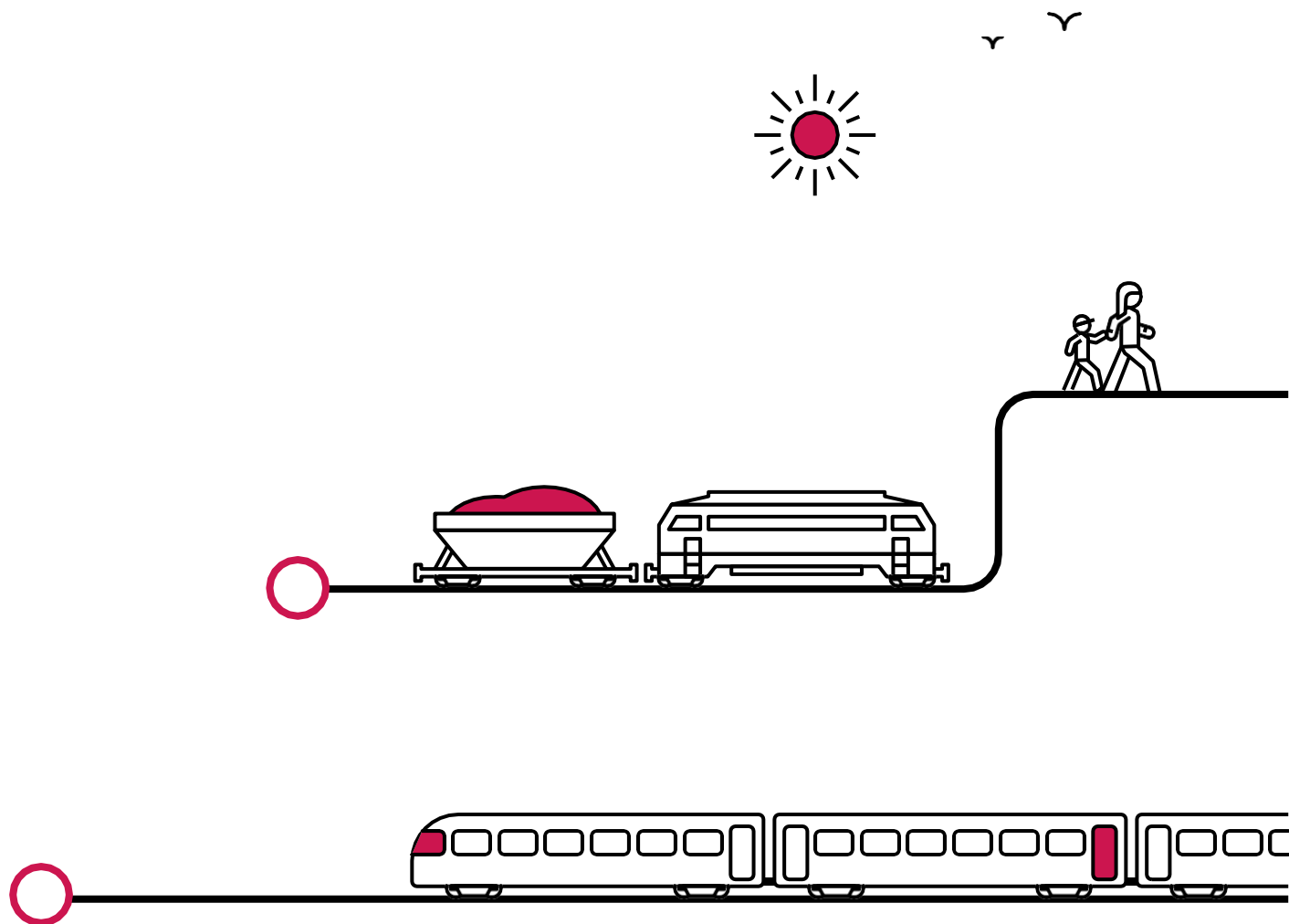
* All numbers in brackets refer to March 2024 Delivery Plan Figures

CP7 income

£m in cash prices	March 2026 (March 2024) Delivery Plan					
	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	CP7 Total Income
Access Charging Income **	53 (53)	53 (53)	55 (54)	55 (54)	58 (57)	274 (270)
Commercial and Other Income ***	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Network grant	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Net Schedule 4 & 8	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	-1 (0)
Allocated Income	-53 (-53)	-53 (-53)	-55 (-54)	-55 (-54)	-58 (-57)	-273 (-270)
Electricity for traction (EC4T)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Total Income (excl. EC4T)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Total Income	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)

For more information please visit the [System Operator CP7 2024-29 Delivery Plan](#).

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