



Light Rail Transit Association

Advocating modern tramways and urban light rail transit

Established 1937, incorporated 2004

PRESS RELEASE

4th February 2007

LRTA WELCOMES NETWORK RAIL INITIATIVE

CALL FOR DEVELOPMENT OF LIGHTER TRAINS OPENS WAY FOR MORE ATTRACTIVE PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The Light Rail Transit Association - the world's leading organisation campaigning for better public transport through light rail - has warmly welcomed comments by the Chief Executive of Network Rail identifying the need to cut the weight of railway rolling stock (trains) in order to improve environmental performance and cut the costs of operating the rail system.

This initiative, proposed for passenger routes away from the high-speed main lines, would make railways more like modern light rail systems. Modern trams - introduced in recent years to many cities in the UK, Europe and the USA - have proved to be especially effective at reducing car use as people switch to attractive public transport.

Lighter systems are able to accelerate more quickly than main line trains, while using less energy and emitting less greenhouse gas. They cause less damage to the track, so that the maintenance of the railway is more efficient. They could lead to more stops on existing routes - so more people could use the rail system - and, because they resemble trams, could be extended along streets to get to places people need to get to.

"Making trains lighter brings a whole host of advantages," said the LRTA's Vice Chairman Geoff Lusher. "It turns conventional thinking on railways on its head, and makes them more attractive and environmentally-friendly at the same time."

For more information about the Light Rail Transit Association, its activities and the benefits of high-quality public transport, visit www.lrta.org.

NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. The Light Rail Transit Association is the world's leading organisation campaigning for better public transport through light rail, tramway and metro systems in our towns and cities for nearly 70 years. It also supports the revitalisation of suburban and rural transport through the application of light rail.

2. The LRTA acts through its network of local branches, which campaign for better transport in their localities.

3. Membership of the LRTA costs just over 10p a day. To join, visit www.lrta.org or write to the Membership Secretary, LRTA, 38 Wolseley Road, Sale, Greater Manchester, M33 7AU. Members of the LRTA receive the monthly magazine *Tramways & Urban Transit* - written and read by experts in the field - and gain other benefits including discounts on videos and books, tours of transport systems and cut-price admission to selected transport sites.

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