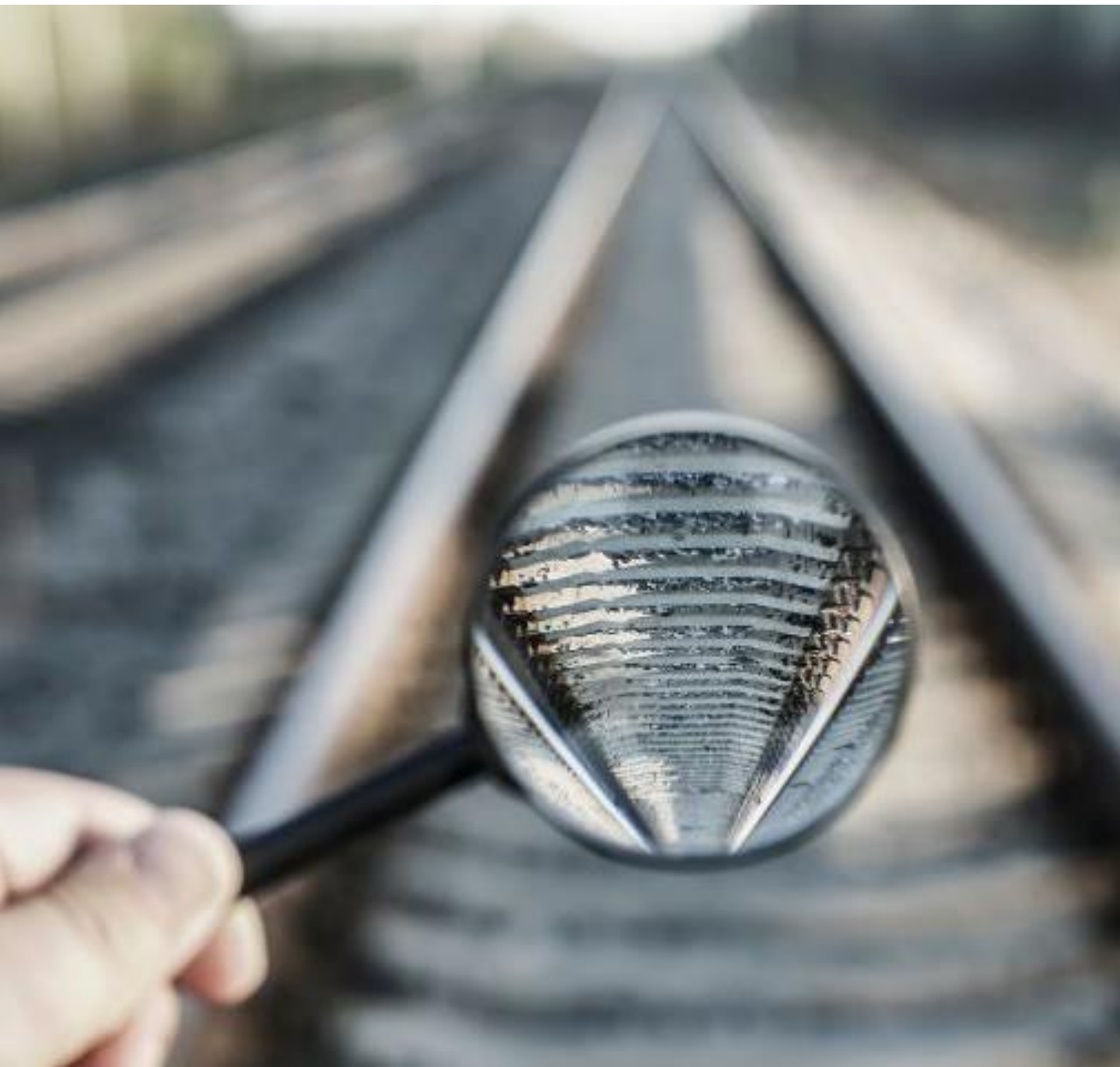


**STEPHENSON
HARWOOD**

Engagement and Influence on industry reform

Stephenson Harwood rail industry market research

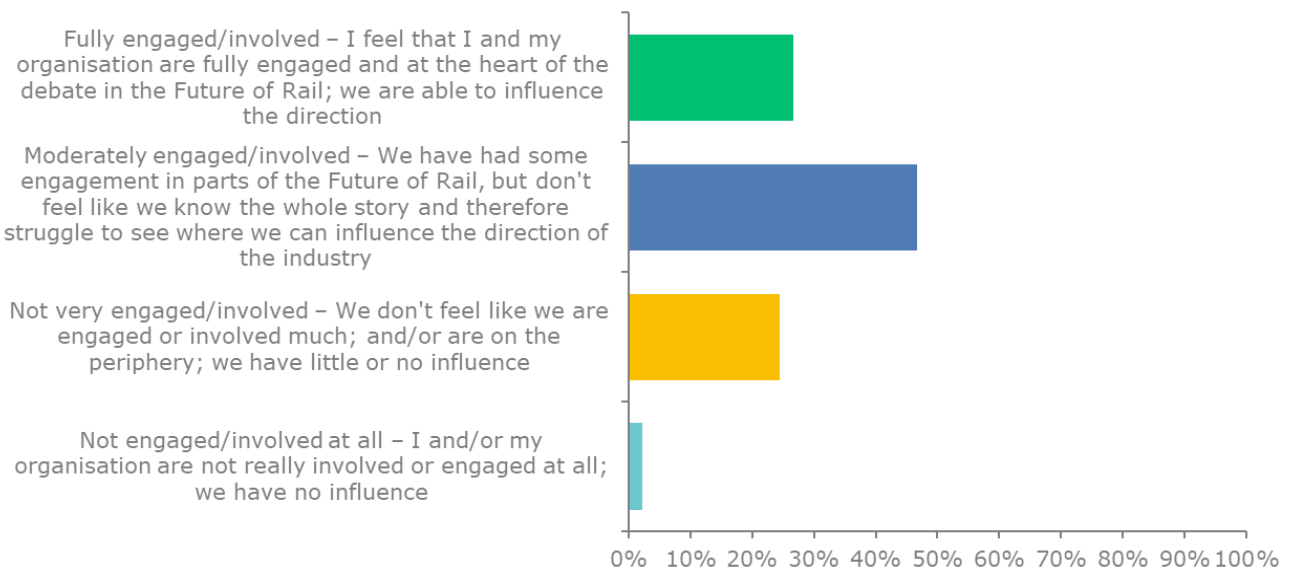


What are the key issues?

The rail industry has undergone unprecedented change over the last 2 years – with more change to come as we continue to transition to Great British Railways. The Stephenson Harwood Rail Team conducted an industry survey to hear from our clients and contacts at the coal face about their views of the challenges and priorities that are facing the rail industry, and their businesses specifically, in the coming years.

One of the key questions we asked the respondents taking part in this research was **“How much do you and/or your organisation feel that you are able to be involved and/or influence where the rail industry is going?”** and **“The Whole Industry Strategic Plan (WISP) is one of the first pieces of work to set the direction of the Future of GB Rail – what value do you think it will offer to your business?”**. In this report we will explore what the rail industry considers to be the key important issues and the not so important issues.

Engagement and Influence:



It seems clear from the responses received that the industry needs to do more around engaging those people who, ultimately, will be the ones driving the industry forward. We can only deliver change if we engage and collaborate with the industry itself. This was made clear from responses received to all of the questions posed; respondents noting that more collaboration and the creation of an industry structure which is built upon involvement and empowerment was key. What seems promising from the chart above is that we have the foundation on which to build.

...while we can see the current industry challenges, figuring out how they are resolved for the better is very difficult and is unsettling people who now see themselves at risk.

Create an industry structure which is built upon involvement and empowerment.

Empowering people through an appropriate structure of delegation.

The Whole Industry Strategic Plan (WISP) is one of the first pieces of work to set the direction of the Future of GB Rail – what value do you think it will offer to your business?

A standard template but only a starting point with regards to Customer Experience not a complete blueprint.

Probably of limited value given its time horizon is very different indeed to the term of our operating contract.

It will generate some clarity of direction however taking advantage of strategy will be limited as this needs long term strategy which is directly in conflict with short termism of the business plan cycle.

Some, but it will be dependent on the willingness of the government to fund its delivery.

Value will depend on what role the plan envisages for the private sector in driving innovation.

There is a risk it won't be as specific as it needs to be, but if it delivers as promised it should allow us to focus effort in the right places.

No value if it does not lead to a deliverable long term plan, driven with a single overall goal and free of short-term decision making.

How does this affect the rail industry?

With the rail industry at a pivotal point, engagement and collaboration has a far greater role to play than ever before. Engaging with employees, passengers and stakeholders in the rail sector has never been so key. However, it is clear from the results of the survey that there is some way to go – both in terms of employees and organisations being engaged in the future of the industry. This is probably not helped by a myriad of changes taking place at the highest political level (including in Treasury) – throwing rail reform into uncertainty with perhaps a lack of direction.

The WISP is a real opportunity to not only shape the future of the industry but to unify an industry towards a shared set of goals. As one respondent noted the WISP has the real potential to help set an overall strategic direction and enable us to provide ideas in the railway. However, without transparency and engagement we run the risk of a WISP written in pieces without proper integration and not addressing what needs to be done in practice or issues that that need to be addressed in the reform of the rail sector.

Engaging with the industry therefore needs to be at the forefront of any change – identifying what the issues and problems are before we try to solve them. Only in this way can we get true buy-in and drive to create a new future that is better than the past.

The engagement has not been deep engagement. There has been engagement on a set idea rather than open collaboration.

Contacts



Tammy Samuel

Partner and co head of rail

T: +44 20 7809 2227

M: +44 7766 991 053

E: tammy.samuel@shlegal.com



Suzanne Tarplee

Partner and co head of rail

T: +44 20 7809 2389

M: +44 7718 247 220

E: suzanne.tarplee@shlegal.com



Darren Fodey

Partner

T: +44 20 7809 2388

M: +44 7920 201 290

E: darren.fodey@shlegal.com