

PRESS RELEASE

Release date: 23 September 2026

Mike Noakes Joins Rail Forum as Policy & Strategic Engagement Lead



Mike Noakes has joined the Rail Forum as Policy and Strategic Engagement lead.

Mike was previously Head of Rail at the Department for Business & Trade (DBT) and has 25 years' experience working across government and more than a dozen years with the rail supply chain sector. He helped lead his former department's positive engagement with the rail sector, developed a number of key initiatives designed to support the supply chain both at home and abroad - including the Rail Sector Deal in 2018 and funding for the Global Centre of Rail Excellence - as well as playing a key role in delivering cross departmental initiatives such as the Rail Supply Group.

Elaine Clark, CEO of Rail Forum said: "I am thrilled that Mike has joined the team in advance of the creation of Great British Railways, his insights and experience will prove invaluable as we strengthen our engagement with transport authorities across the devolved nations and regions.

"Mike will be well known to many of our members and the wider industry as a highly effective advocate for the UK based rail supply chain. With a wealth of government, industry and inward-investment experience he will significantly contribute to the Rail Forum team as we develop the strategic support we provide to our members."



Mike Noakes, Rail Forum's new Head of Policy and Strategic Engagement, said:

"I'm delighted to be joining the Rail Forum's expert team. I want to use my experience to contribute to the support Elaine and her colleagues provide for the rail supply chain during these challenging times, as the opportunities offered by GBR and the new Government become apparent. These are interesting times for the railway with devolution of transport budgets and decision making having the potential to create additional heavy and light rail opportunities for the UK supply chain".

Mike begins his new role on the 1 October.

-Ends-

Notes to Editors

For further information contact:

Dylan Jones, Communications Executive at Rail Forum | dylan@railforum.uk

About Rail Forum [www.railforum.uk]

Rail Forum is a national industry organisation representing and supporting the nationally and internationally important UK rail supply chain. Our almost 400 member companies cover every aspect of the industry and include major global players through to a myriad of SMEs all making a vital contribution to the railway. Rail Forum actively conveys the need for a national rail agenda and strategy that puts the industry at the heart of wider economic prosperity. Rail Forum encourages collaboration, promotes members' capabilities, leads a number of skills initiatives and supports safety, innovation and export priorities.