

**1st April 2004**

## **The Future for Britain's Rail Passengers: New Franchises Begin**

The start of two new rail franchises today (1 April 2004) - serving London's Liverpool Street and Paddington stations - are a step towards the future for Britain's rail passengers, the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) said today.

The SRA's new franchise contract - which the Greater Anglia franchise is the first to benefit from - incorporates rewards and penalties for key indicators like train and station cleanliness, security and passenger information. It provides train companies with clear guidelines and incentives on customer service and on business priorities such as containing short and long-term costs.

The introduction of a single operator at both Liverpool Street and Paddington stations is expected to deliver a better and more reliable service to passengers, with improved punctuality and a greater ability to manage disruption to services.

### **Richard Bowker, SRA Chairman, said:**

"As the Government undertakes a fundamental review of the rail industry's structure, the start of the first new-model franchise contract - and the introduction of a single operator at two key London stations - will deliver performance and value, and bring about a better service for Britain's rail passengers."

### **Note to Editors**

Six franchise extensions also commence today: Central Trains, First North Western, Great Northern, Scotrail, Thameslink and Wessex. The extensions pave the way towards new and in some cases reshaped franchises such as the Greater Western and Northern Rail, or ensure stability through periods of major engineering work.