

A long-exposure photograph of Edinburgh at dusk. The city's historic architecture is illuminated with warm lights, and the Castle of Edinburgh sits atop a hill in the background. In the foreground, a railway station is active with several trains, including a red high-speed train, and light trails from cars and trains create a sense of movement.

RIA Scotland Manifesto

Scottish Parliament Elections

May 2026

A decorative graphic in the bottom right corner consisting of four overlapping, rounded, diagonal bars in shades of blue, teal, and green.

RIA Scotland Manifesto

2026

The Railway Industry Association was founded in 1875 and has 450+ companies in membership, many across Scotland. We represent businesses across the rail supply chain, covering a diverse range of products and services and including both multi-national companies and SMEs (60% by number).

RIA Scotland has worked with MSPs from all parties throughout the current session to champion rail suppliers across the country. They work to ensure that the industry plays a central role in Scotland's economic, environmental, and social development. Rail in Scotland supports 56,000 jobs, contributes £3.1bn in GVA, and delivers £1bn in tax revenue to the economy.

The Group engages closely with the Scottish Government, Transport Scotland, Scotland's Railway (ScotRail and Network Rail), and Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) to represent suppliers' interests. Our advocacy also includes attending and hosting fringe meetings with Transport leads across the party conferences.

Our sector employs tens of thousands of people (directly and indirectly) and, we believe, is strategically important for Scotland's economy. Below are RIA Scotland's key policy recommendations ahead of the May 2026 elections. We look forward to working with MSPs from across all parties after the new cohort of MSPs have taken their seats. Look out for our annual RIA Scotland Holyrood event later in the year.

What rail offers:



£3.1 billion

gross value added to Scotland's economy p.a.



56,000 jobs

across the country



£1 billion

in tax revenue each year



Over 1.1bn km

in road travel avoided



Deliver Scotland's future rail infrastructure

- Build on existing rail investment plans and support further projects including Clyde Metro and Glasgow Airport rail link, Edinburgh Tram extension and electrification between Edinburgh and Dundee.
- Accelerate new rail fleet procurement, low-carbon network upgrades and explore alternative options bringing private capital into Scotland's railways to complement public funding.
- Continue to support the commitment from Transport Scotland to investing in rail enhancements; TS and the industry know that a continued pipeline of investments helps give industry confidence to recruit for the future and support our ongoing drive for innovation and efficient delivery.



Secure tomorrow's rail workforce

- Upcoming demographic shifts in the rail workforce will drive significant recruitment into Scotland's railways over the next five years. This is an opportunity to create jobs, increase apprenticeships and retrain parts of the existing workforce in areas such as digital and green skills.
- Our members are already working with further and higher education institutions in Scotland to develop courses which meet the needs of industry both today and tomorrow. A clear pipeline of work in rail renewals and enhancement work will help Scottish rail suppliers plan future investment in people and plant.

Drive growth through innovation

- Innovation helps generate efficiency savings and added-value. RIA members across Scotland are bringing new products and services to market which can help deliver performance and reliability improvements across the network.
- Work with industry and higher education institutions to set out a strategic plan for innovation in rail alongside parallel sectors, which focuses on research and development (R&D) and future skills needs.

Contact

For a further/more detailed discussion about any of the 'asks' please don't hesitate to contact RIA Scotland's Public Affairs Adviser DEVIN SCOBIE on 07900 397 872 at any time. Confidentiality assured and an online meeting can easily be arranged with a RIA or RIA member expert.



Visit RIA Scotland's website by scanning the QR code