

DBT support to the GREAT UK Rail Sector

This document is designed to highlight the different types of support offered by the Department for Business and Trade (DBT) to small businesses in the Rail Sector, with hyperlinks directing you to support service websites. DBT is the department for economic growth which supports businesses to invest, grow and export, creating jobs and opportunities across the country.

Business Growth

[Gov.uk](#) is a comprehensive source of online information on all business support, including guidance on tax and regulation.

The [Help to Grow](#) campaign site brings together information on what businesses need to start up, scale and grow. This includes guidance on how to access finance and funding.

The [Business Support Service](#) provides free, impartial advice to 30,000 businesses across England each year. The service team are accessible by phone (0800 998 1098), webchat, email and social media from Monday to Friday. Businesses elsewhere in UK can use [Find Business Support Scotland](#), the [Business Wales Helpline](#) or the [Invest Northern Ireland Helpline](#).

[Growth Hubs](#) support businesses locally in England, offering a free-to-access triage, diagnostic and signposting services to all businesses. Growth Hubs services are supported by advisors and specialists with a deep understanding of local business issues. Help may be delivered on a one-to-one basis through workshops and online self-help content.

[Help to Grow: Management](#) is an intensive, 12-week course for SME leaders, delivered by top business schools across the UK. Participants develop skills in key areas such as leadership and management, operations, financial management, innovation, sales and marketing, and sustainability. The programme is 90% funded by Government.

The [King's Award for Enterprise](#) are for outstanding achievement by UK businesses in innovation, international trade, sustainable development and promoting opportunity through social mobility. Successful organisations benefit from worldwide recognition, press coverage, staff moral and increased commercial value.

The [Invest in Women Hub](#) is helping women to succeed in entrepreneurship including to find finance, a network, an accelerator/incubator and a mentor.

[Innovate UK](#), part of UK Research and Innovation, is the UK's innovation agency, and aims to help companies to grow through their development and commercialisation of new products, processes and services. They offer funding and support across all academic disciplines and industrial areas including engineering, environmental sciences, and the rail sector.

The [DBT Rail Sector team](#) supports companies with UK rail supply challenges, exporting and inward investment. Domestically the team provides a route into rail policy making and acts as a health check for the supply chain, raising concerns as needed. It also seeks to make links within the industry and externally to exploit opportunities in the domestic market and challenges the supply chain to support broader Government priorities, such as in regional economic growth, investment in skills and machinery and in achieving Net Zero for the railway. The team encourages R&D in the sector, including the creation of the Global Centre of Rail Excellence, and working closely with Innovate UK.

Finance Support

The **British Business Bank** helps SMEs to access finance, including through its Start Up Loans programme that provides loans of between £500 and £25,000 at a fixed rate to new entrepreneurs. In addition, successful applicants received 12 months of free mentoring. The British Business Bank's Finance hub supports UK businesses to scale up and provides information on finance options and other support.

The **Small Business Commissioner** helps SMEs navigate late payments and unfavourable payment practices across the UK. It is impartial, free to use and independent. It provides general advice and information to businesses including resolving disputes, checking contracts and signposting to dispute resolution services. It can also investigate complaints about payments to small businesses.

Export Support

Great.gov.uk is our online self-serve offer that provides support for any UK business of any size. It acts as a single-entry point bringing together all DBT's export support. It is designed to help businesses self-serve more efficiently by offering access to quick answers to exporting questions via tools and how-to articles such as 'learn to export' and 'choosing the right export opportunities'.

The **Export support team** helps businesses that have a specific question or would like to access in-person support, and will triage enquiries to direct businesses to the right type / level of support. Contacted through a questionnaire on great.gov.uk (<https://www.great.gov.uk/contact/domestic/export-support/>) the Export Support Team links digital and in-person support by providing a first response to enquiries from businesses that have not been able to self-serve, or that want to access DBT's wider network of in-person support.

The **UK Export Academy** is a free training programme for UK businesses looking to grow internationally. The programme is aimed at both new and experienced exporters. The courses include essentials, masterclasses and sector/market events. Currently there are no sector events for the rail sector.

International Trade Advisors are dedicated market and sector specialists. They provide export support and account management for companies that want to accelerate their international growth. They can undertake export health checks, develop export strategies, identify trade exhibitions, advise on grants, advise on "Documents & Declarations" and support digital trade.

DBT's **overseas teams** based in British embassies and high commissions across the globe offer extensive local expertise and bespoke in-market support to businesses. They are proficient in the nuances of in-country business culture and can help find agents/distributors/partnerships and export opportunities.

DBT organises a variety of online and in-person **events and trade missions**. These support companies to build exporting knowledge, highlight market opportunities and meet buyers.

UK Export Finance is the UK's Export Credit Agency and provides export finance, insurance and guidance to help UK companies of all sizes sell overseas. It helps companies win contracts by providing attractive financing terms to their buyers, fulfil orders by supporting working capital and trade finance and get paid by insuring against buyer default.

The **DBT Rail Sector team** supports companies with UK rail supply challenges, exporting and inward investment. On exporting, the team generates opportunities, presents the UK offer, provides tools to the DBT overseas team and supports inward and outward missions.