

Providing best value solutions

PROFESSIONAL ADVICE AND MANAGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION BY FIRST CLASS PARTNERSHIPS

Planning and management of operations is fundamental to railway businesses and projects. The timetable sets the costs of an operation, and influences the farebox income. Infrastructure developments will be shaped by the required train service throughout the development and value-engineering processes. Delivery of a safe and reliable public service underpins a successful and sustainable business.

Metro systems



Freight operations



Urban networks



High speed routes



Main line services

To support operators, infrastructure owners, developers and governments, First Class Partnerships offers analysis and advice throughout the planning and operations process. We deliver training and education, and provide interim managers. Our capabilities cover the development and delivery of high speed lines as well as freight and passenger services over main line, urban and regional routes.

Our expertise also extends to metro and light rail systems, both in the UK and overseas.

This brochure describes many assignments that demonstrate the depth of skills and experience we hold in providing a wide range of consultancy advice.

Who we are...

FCP offers experienced rail professionals, with careers in rail management and planning, many of whom have played key roles on the Boards of franchised and open-access operators. Our Directors and Consultants include some of the best-known names in the rail industry today. They bring a strategic understanding of industry issues as well as detailed knowledge of operations and safety management including timetable planning, performance and capacity studies.

Our clients include the Government and its agencies, Transport for London, Scottish Executive, Welsh Assembly Government, Passenger Transport Executives, train operators and Network Rail as well as multi-functional consultancies working in partnership with us.

For full details of our company, please visit:
www.firstclasspartnerships.com

What we can do...

Operations skills underlie the safe, punctual and economical delivery of the current train service, but also offer a vital contribution to planning the strategy of a rail business and shaping the network for the future. Our unique set of capabilities covers all facets of the operator's role, whilst linking operations planning and management with the strategies of railway businesses and organisations.

Operational planning

The operational plan is crucial to a rail business, influencing revenue and determining costs, underpinning service performance, and providing the basis for agreements with Government and the Office of Rail Regulation. Ultimately, a train plan that meets forecast demand shapes the infrastructure specification. FCP is experienced in drafting timetables and resource plans, for franchise bids, new passenger, freight operations and longer-term development projects. A detailed knowledge of rolling stock types and performance characteristics is held.

Operations and infrastructure costing

Control of current costs is vital to the viability of a railway operation, and valid forecasting of future costs can be crucial to the authorisation of projects and success of new services. FCP maintains a practical understanding of cost behaviour supported by a database of typical unit costs for train operations, to ensure valid estimation in support of strategic and business planning, the financial case, and benchmarking exercises. For infrastructure developments we are able to generate capital cost estimates for option screening and selection, and refine specifications to achieve value for money and maximise benefits.

Start-ups

FCP has been instrumental in the start-up of new passenger and freight services, and now maintains an unrivalled capability in business planning, obtaining licences, access bidding and mobilisation for new operations. We have identified feasible paths for new services, both passenger and freight, and taken these through the access planning and approvals processes to the point of implementation.



Project development

It is never too soon to involve the operations function in development and enhancement projects, and FCP offers capabilities to support all stages of a project. Operations planning will define feasible service patterns to support demand forecasting, and scope the required infrastructure. As project development proceeds, timetables will be refined to assess resource needs and operating costs as inputs to the business case. Performance modelling will assist selection of a favoured option and support detailed design, whilst experienced operations managers will oversee the tasks of implementation and mobilisation covering all aspects of approvals and resource requirements.

Access planning

In depth experience is offered of regulatory and track access regimes to facilitate the planning and implementation of new services. FCP has also provided input to define maintenance regimes and advise how rail services can be maintained during engineering work as part of the Network Rail goal of achieving 'seven-day' railway operations that match best practice in other countries.

Performance

FCP offers capabilities in all aspects of performance management, including modelling and simulation. We have advised on the management of current operations, control organisations and facilities, and procedures covering contingency planning to maintain services during periods of disruption.

Safety

Staff of FCP have capabilities in occupational and operational safety, management of safety-critical staff especially train crew, and preparing Rules and Regulations. Current board level experience is held of safety management monitoring and control.

Customer services

Leading a number of successful franchise bids has ensured that FCP articulate 'best in class' solutions for the delivery of high quality customer services. At stations projects have been carried out on customer information systems, ticketing requirements and accessibility for passengers with mobility needs. The design of on board product offers and fare structures related to interior vehicle design are an essential part of successful customer facing operations of which FCP has a great deal of experience.

Training and education

FCP has devised and presented workshops for operational staff and seminars aiming to share best practice and provide a forum for discussion within the industry. We also offer capabilities in mentoring and coaching, staff development and competence management. Many directors and staff at FCP are members of appropriate professional institutions and participate in management development programmes including the educational activities of the Institution of Railway Operators.

Interim managers

Where specialist skills and experience are required and suitable candidates cannot be identified to fill vacancies on either a long or short term basis, FCP has provided interim managers. This has included senior appointments for government departments and passenger/freight operating railway companies.

Due diligence and expert witness

The specialist experience of FCP Directors and Consultants has allowed us to make a valuable contribution in advising clients in the sale and acquisition of companies in the rail sector. We also provide representation for planning inquiries, regulatory hearings, stakeholder consultation, and litigation.

First Class Partnerships acted as lead adviser to Arriva in its successful bid to secure the Cross Country franchise. A mobilisation team was also established working with Arriva and the outgoing organisations. FCP was responsible for the launch of the Cross Country brand and supplied key personnel for senior management positions. Matthew Wilson/Cross Country



Our track record...

Franchise bidding and management

- FCP has been retained by many UK passenger franchise bidders and has achieved a number of successful outcomes. This has included the successful bid for the Cross Country franchise, and London Overground concession. Typically bids involve expertise in demand management, operational / financial planning, and rolling stock provision. We have provided key leaders for bid teams.
- A team led by the company on behalf of the MTR Corporation was awarded the concession to operate the Stockholm Metro.
- FCP is the Department for Transport's nominated Operator of Last Resort, retained to plan and implement the takeover of franchise operations in the event of a contract default. This occurred with the South Eastern franchise where we provided a transitional management team.

Projects and developments

- West Coast Route Modernisation - Working with the Department for Transport, we made a major input to the planning and implementation of the upgrade, and FCP was credited with identifying many opportunities for significant cost savings in the project.
- Transport for London – We have focussed on planning for future rail services and infrastructure developments, demonstrating the feasibility of proposed service patterns and providing operational cost estimates for input to business cases.
- Crossrail – We undertook an analysis of the timetable, service performance and depot operations.
- Thameslink – FCP has provided an analysis of service performance risks.

Metro

- Hong Kong – FCP developed plans for merger of maintenance activities of the MTR and Kowloon – Canton Railway.
- East London Line Project – we conducted a series of studies into timetabling feasibility that led to the granting of an access option.
- Stockholm Metro – FCP planned operations and mobilisation for the operations concession winning bidder.

Due diligence and risk assessment

- On behalf of a potential purchaser of Laing Rail, FCP provided a forecast of the operating implications of new service proposals, and prepared input data for performance modelling to predict train running times for new traction types.
- A review of the operations and finances of an eastern European railway was undertaken on behalf of a potential purchaser.
- FCP has acted as lead adviser in the value-engineering and value for money assessments underpinning the CP4 Track Access Charging and Performance Regime Review.

Freight

- International - FCP is currently advising Transnet, the freight operator for South Africa, in a major programme of studies to improve the efficiency and safety of heavy-haul freight operations.

- UK intermodal market – We undertook a detailed analysis of market prospects for a UK freight operating company
- Freight Multiple Unit – FCP has organised operability tests and can model business plan illustrations for specific traffic flows.
- Bulk freight contract mobilisation – In an interim management role a significant contract for the movement of coal from UK and imported sources to power stations was mobilised.
- UK bulk freight market - For a potential freight customer, FCP has forecast price per tonne outputs for a variety of UK rail hauls to support strategic decision-making for the movement of gypsum.
- Demand forecasting – For Transport for London, we provided an analysis of future demand for freight capacity covering the London rail network.



A Grand Central Class 180 125mph DMU, acquired to enhance the open access operator's train fleet following regulatory approval to run additional services. FCP provided this operator with an interim safety management team to ensure compliance with industry best practice. Gary Matthews

Interim managers

- Interim managers have recently been supplied for the Department for Transport, Welsh Assembly Government, Olympic Delivery Authority, Jarvis Fastline Freight, and train operating companies including Chiltern Railways, Northern Rail and Grand Central.
- The DfT's Rail Professional and Technical group retained FCP to undertake compilation, editing and production of its Rail Technical Strategy.

Education and development

- Institution of Railway Operators – FCP planned and delivered courses on train planning in a business context.
- Association of Train Operating Companies – we prepared and facilitated workshops in traffic management to improve joint working between Network Rail and train operators.

Inquiries

- We have assembled evidence on feasibility of rail operations in connection with planning inquiries for new freight terminals.
- FCP provided expertise in operational planning to support passage of the Crossrail bill through Parliament.