

Press release: HS2 Press Statement on Steve Allen

The company's Chief Executive, Mark Thurston, said:

When I joined the organisation earlier this year we faced a number of issues that needed to be addressed, particularly around our administrative controls and mechanisms on redundancies agreed by the company, as highlighted by the recent NAO report into High Speed Two (HS2) Ltd's annual accounts.

Steve has been absolutely critical in identifying the ways to rectify those issues and make sure they do not happen again.

But, having done that, I respect Steve's decision that now is the right time for him to move on. I would like to thank him for all he has done for the company in this formative period. His honourable decision will enable me to build the executive team for the next phase of the project.

Steve Allen said:

HS2 is a hugely important project for the future of Britain and it has been a great privilege to have been part of the process of putting in place the foundation stones for its successful delivery.

The weaknesses highlighted by the NAO report resulted in both the HS2 Executive and Board being misinformed about the status of critical approvals for redundancies. Those assurances were given by teams for which I was responsible and, obviously, I regret that.

So, whilst we are now putting in place the measures to strengthen financial governance systems and to provide robust financial stewardship for the company, I believe it will be appropriate for me to move on.

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