



ASLEF Political Update – February 2009

Railway Stations: Closures.....	2
Railway Stations: Merseyside.....	2
Railways: Fares.....	2
Railways: Finance.....	3
Railways: Merseyside.....	3
Railways: Standards.....	4
Railways: Accidents.....	4
Railways: Bus Services.....	5
Railways: Freight.....	6
Railways: Scotland.....	7
Rail Services.....	7
Freight: Grants.....	7
Railway Network.....	10
Rolling Stock.....	11
Railway Stations: Yorkshire.....	11
First Capital Connect: Standards.....	12
Passenger Focus.....	13
Thameslink: Procurement.....	13
Railways: Franchises.....	14
TransPennine Express: Franchises.....	14
Trains.....	15
Railways: Rolling Stock.....	15

Railway Stations: Closures

Mr. Burrowes (Con): To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many manned railway stations have been permanently closed in each of the last five years. [251780]

Paul Clark: The following stations in England have closed in each of the last five years (closures in Scotland and Wales are a devolved matter):

	<i>Station</i>
2004	None
2005	Etruria
2006	Garston
	Silvertown
	North Woolwich
	West Ham, Canning Town, Custom House and Stratford Low Level ⁽¹⁾
2007	King's Cross Thameslink
2008	None
⁽¹⁾ National Rail platforms closed as part of the new DLR line from Stratford International to Canning Town.	

Railway Stations: Merseyside

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas (Lab): To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps are being taken to improve standards of (a) seating, (b) shelter and (c) passenger facilities at rail stations in Merseyside. [253189]

Paul Clark: Stations in Merseyside are eligible for funding from the national stations improvement programme (NSIP) and the access for all programme. In particular, the national stations improvement programme can be used to provide improved seating, shelters and passenger facilities. On 23 January, the Minister of State opened the newly refurbished Sandhills station, which benefited from funding under the access for all programme.

Railways: Fares

Mr. Amess (Con): To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will bring forward proposals to require the Association of Train Operating Companies to introduce railcards for persons over 25 years of age for train journeys (a) commencing and (b) ending outside South East England; and if he will make a statement. [252988]

Paul Clark: The Government have no present proposals to require the Association of Train Operating Companies to introduce any additional railcards on the National Rail network.

Railways: Finance

Norman Baker (LD): To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what funding his Department has allocated for new railway infrastructure in each year since 1997 and in (a) 2008-09, (b) 2009-10 and (c) 2010-11. [253313]

Paul Clark: Network Rail is responsible for investing in the majority of new railway infrastructure in the United Kingdom. The company is funded through a combination of direct grants from Government and track access charges levied on train operators.

Details of Government expenditure on the railway as a whole, as well as investment in rail by the rail industry are set out in “National Rail Trends” which is published by the Office of Rail Regulation. Copies of “National Rail Trends” are available in the Library of the House and on the ORR’s website at:

<http://www.rail-reg.gov.uk>

Details of the Government’s plans for future investment in the railway years are set out in the White Paper “Delivering a Sustainable Railway” which was published and announced to Parliament on 24 July 2007. This can be found on the Department for Transport website at:

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/about/strategy/whitepapers/whitepapercm7176/hitepapersustainable1.pdf>.

Mr. Sanders (LD): To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make it his policy to establish a regional rail budget to allow local transport authorities to (a) re-open closed rail stations and (b) open new rail stations. [253805]

Paul Clark: There are no proposals to establish a regional rail budget. Regions can consider investment in rail schemes alongside other transport schemes when determining priorities in the use of their regional funding allocation (RFA).

Railways: Merseyside

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the average level of ridership on rail services in Merseyside in each of the last two years. [253190]

Paul Clark: Statistics on rail passenger numbers are published by the Office of Rail Regulation (QRR) in the National Rail Trends Yearbook, which is available in the House Library, or from the ORR website:

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what percentage of trains in Merseyside ran no more than five minutes late in the last 12 months. [253191]

Paul Clark: In the last 12 months, 94.7 per cent. of trains operated by Merseyrail were no more than five minutes late at their destination.

Other companies provide train services in this area, but the Department for Transport does not hold information specific to Merseyside for these operators.

Railways: Standards

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his most recent assessment is of the performance of train operating companies against their targets; and if will make a statement. [253186]

Paul Clark: The public performance measure of rail punctuality has risen to 90.8 per cent. in January 2009, up 1.6 per cent.. in only a year. Performance is now at its best since this measure was introduced in 2000-01.

Train operators' franchise agreements contain minimum performance standards, and actual results compared with these are monitored on a regular basis.

Railways: Accidents

Mr. Evans (Con): To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many (a) injuries and (b) deaths have occurred in accidents on railway crossings in (i) Lancashire and (ii) the UK in each year since 1998. [253723]

Paul Clark: The data below is based on incidents reported to the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR), under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR 95). Figures for 2008 are provisional and may change with the receipt of coroners' findings for inquests that are currently outstanding.

The following tables cover incidents at level crossings in Great Britain, as the ORR is not responsible for rail safety in Northern Ireland.

Table: 1 Fatalities and injuries at level crossings 1998-2008⁽¹⁾ (excluding trespassers and suicides) Great Britain

	<i>Fatalities</i>	<i>Lancashire figures</i>	<i>Injuries</i>	<i>Lancashire figures</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Lancashire figures</i>
1998	13	1	40	2	53	3
1999	11	1	26	0	37	1

2000	13	0	28	0	41	0
2001	10	0	20	2	30	2
2002	14	1	32	1	46	2
2003	16	1	26	0	42	1
2004	16	0	64	0	80	0
2005	15	0	21	0	36	0
2006	8	0	28	1	36	1
2007	11	0	14	0	25	0
2008 ⁽¹⁾	15	0	27	0	42	0
⁽¹⁾ Provisional figures						

Table : 2 Fatalities and injuries to trespassers and suicides at level crossings 1998-2008⁽¹⁾ Great Britain

<i>Year</i>	<i>Fatalities</i>	<i>Lancashire figures</i>	<i>Injuries</i>	<i>Lancashire figures</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Lancashire figures</i>
1998	12	0	0	0	12	0
1999	8	1	0	0	8	1
2000	9	0	2	0	11	0
2001	10	0	3	1	13	1
2002	13	0	0	0	13	0
2003	15	1	0	0	15	1
2004	12	0	1	0	13	0
2005	20	2	3	1	23	3
2006	19	1	0	0	19	1
2007	17	0	0	0	17	0
2008 ⁽¹⁾	15	1	2	0	17	1
⁽¹⁾ Provisional figures						

Railways: Bus Services

Graham Stringer (Lab): To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of rail replacement bus services in each of the last 12 months. [253983]

Paul Clark [holding answer 3 February 2009]: Only one rail replacement bus service is funded by the Department for Transport. This is the service between Ealing Broadway

and Wandsworth Road. Estimate of cost for this service since the start of operation in December 2008 is £1,410 in December 2008 and 1,880 in January 2009.

The rules for the route registration of local bus services have been amended. This has enabled the introduction of flexibly routed, demand-responsive bus services. We also extended to these services eligibility to receive bus service operators grant (BSOG) from the Department for Transport. BSOG eligibility has also been extended to include community transport operators, with over 1,000 operators, many in rural areas, now claiming BSOG.

The Local Transport Act 2008 includes a number of important steps to enable local authorities to secure better local bus services in rural and urban areas alike by means of:

- more effective partnerships with bus operators;

- making the introduction of quality contracts (i.e. franchising as in London) a more realistic option;

- a new regime to deliver improved punctuality; and

- measures to support development of the community transport sector and to extend to the private hire vehicle sector the ability to provide taxibuses.

The Department has implemented the community rail policy on many rural routes, particularly branch lines. This policy aims to bring together the efforts of the train operating company, Network Rail (NR), the local authority and also local communities to put local or rural services on a steady footing by working together to promote and support local rail operations, increase patronage and awareness of the service. In each individual case, the route is assessed and designated as a 'community rail' route, supported by a community rail partnership.

Railways: Freight

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the effects on the environment of the decision to reduce funding for rail freight schemes. [253179]

Paul Clark: The Government are not reducing funding for rail freight. We have recently announced additional funding of £67 million to the Sustainable Distribution Fund. £61 million of this is allocated to the capital budget from which the freight facilities grant allocations are made, and in the last 18 months the Government have announced record levels of rail freight investment to support continued growth including £200 million towards the development of a strategic freight network and over £150 million of funding towards the provision of infrastructure enhancement for freight through the Productivity Transport Innovation Fund.

Railways: Scotland

Mr. Sanders (LD): To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of (a) demand for a high-speed rail link between London and Scotland and (b) the effect of such a rail link on levels of demand for domestic flights. [253501]

Paul Clark: A new company, High Speed Two (HS2) Ltd. has been formed to develop the case for high speed services between London and Scotland

As a first stage, the company is expected to bring forward proposals for Britain's second new high speed line, between London and the West Midlands, by the end of the year, and to consider the potential for new lines to serve the North of England and Scotland.

The company will need to assess the likely environmental impact and business case of different routes—including the propensity for modal shift from road, air, and conventional rail.

Rail Services

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Geoffrey Hoon): Local authorities and passenger transport authorities have a duty to promote effective public transport for their area. From time to time they wish to bring forward proposals for new or enhanced rail services. They have the required powers to secure the provision of such services but they are sometimes inhibited by the risk that significant funding may need to be committed over the long term. I am keen to encourage the best solutions for identified local needs, and have therefore considered how to make it easier for authorities to develop rail options.

I would therefore like to announce to the House the Government's intention to fund in control period 5 (2014-19) the provision of new or enhanced services promoted by authorities which have rail industry support and can be funded from a budget which would be set for this purpose in 2012.

It is important that the promoter demonstrates that a rail scheme is the best way to address regional and local transport issues; hence promoters would be expected to fund a new or enhanced service for the first three years to demonstrate their commitment to the service and show that it delivers value for money in the light of actual experience.

Schemes which the Department would consider funding in this way would be subject to a number of conditions, details of which have been deposited in the Libraries of both Houses and will be made available on the Department for Transport's website.

Freight: Grants

Julia Goldsworthy (LD): To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will place in the Library a copy of the economic model against which freight facilities grant

applications are assessed; when this economic model was last updated; and if he will make a statement. [254519]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The principles of the economic model used for the assessment of freight facilities grant applications are outlined in Department for Transport publication "Guide to Freight Facilities Grant (FFG) in England" which was published in November 2006 and is currently being reviewed. The document can be downloaded free of charge from:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/freight/railfreight/rfg/freight_facilitiesgrantguide.pdf

The purpose of the economic model is to ensure that grants are only awarded when there is a financial need for funding. Annex 4 of the aforementioned guide deals with the financial appraisal of FFGs and, in its first paragraph, states that:

"The main financial requirement for a FFG is that compared with the road alternative, the proposed rail or water scheme would not be financially justified without grant.... This can only be a general guide; it may not cover the entire issues specific to each application. The Department can offer help and advice on specific cases."

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the average length of time taken to process a freight facilities grant application is; how many applicants waited (a) more than six months, (b) more than nine months and (c) more than one year in the most recent five year period for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [254520]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Department for Transport has aimed to assess standard freight facilities grant (FFG) applications within four months and more complex applications within six months. However the time taken to assess applications depends on many factors, including the completeness of the initial data supporting the application. There is also the potential for further information being received from the applicant through the course of the assessment and the potential need by the Department for clarification, which inevitably takes time.

In the past three years, the Department has assessed the following cases:

<i>Year application received</i>	<i>Cases assessed within six months</i>	<i>Cases assessed within nine months</i>	<i>Cases assessed within one year</i>
2006	3	1	0
2007	3	0	0
2008	1	1	0

In addition, a further application was received in October 2008 which is currently being assessed.

The process of applying for FFGs is currently being reviewed, with a view to shorten the time taken to assess applications and make the process clearer for applicants.

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many grant applications were made to the freight facilities grant scheme for each year since 2000; how many of those applications were successful; and what the average value was of each (a) application and (b) grant. [254521]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Department for Transport and the then Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) do not keep details of every application submitted. Details are retained for each offer of grant made to successful applicants.

The number of successful applications and the average value of grants awarded for each year since 2000 are set out in the following table.

	<i>Successful applications</i>	<i>Average value of grant awarded (£)</i>
2000	35	711,944
2001	28	797,076
2002	33	989,859
2003	7	822,188
2004	2	2,514,083
2005	4	565,978
2006	5	359,000
2007	3	843,483
2008	1	1,325,578

The SRA suspended the FFG programme for most rail projects in 2003, although grants continued to be available for aggregate-based facilities through the aggregates levy sustainability fund. FFGs were reintroduced for all rail schemes by the Department in 2007.

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the total public resource allocated to the freight facilities grant scheme was for each year since 2000. [254522]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Department for Transport and the then Strategic Rail Authority has allocated the following budget for Freight Facility Grants (FFGs) since 2000.

<i>Freight facility grants: Budget</i>	
	<i>£ million</i>
2000-01	32
2001-02	61.8
2002-03	50.5
2003-04	32.5
2004-05	9.7
2005-06	7
2006-07	7
2007-08	7
2008-09	4
2009-10	7
2010-11	10
2011-12	16
2012-13	20
2013-14	25

The SRA suspended the FFG programme for most rail projects in 2003, although grants continued to be available for aggregate-based facilities through the aggregates levy sustainability fund. FFGs were reintroduced for all rail schemes by the Department in 2007.

Funding for the FFG programme was boosted in September 2008 with the announcement of a long-term increasing budget to provide certainty for potential applicants. This included £61 million of capital funding over three years from April 2011.

Railway Network

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps his Department has taken to identify corridors for potential future rail use; and what steps he is taking to safeguard the routes of disused railway lines. [253903]

Paul Clark [*holding answer 3 February 2009*]: Network Rail’s strategic review of the case for new rail lines is considering five of Network Rail’s strategic routes north and west of London: Chiltern, East Coast, West Coast, Great Western and Midland main lines. Initial results from this review suggest a future need for a new line between London and the West Midlands. To take forward the detailed work needed to make a firm decision on this, the company “High Speed Two (HS2) Ltd.” has been created.

Local and regional authorities can use planning processes to protect sites or alignments if they deem this appropriate. In addition, we have used our national safeguarding powers in cases such as Crossrail and consideration will be given to more specific use of these powers as our long term transport planning advances.

Rolling Stock

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many contracts have been signed for new rolling stock in each month since the Rolling Stock Plan was published; what the (a) value of each contract and (b) company with which each contract was held was; and how much additional rolling stock each contract represented. [253311]

Paul Clark: Please see the table for detail of contracts:

	<i>Number</i>	<i>(a) Estimated value (£ million)</i>	<i>(b) Company</i>	<i>Rolling Stock</i>
January 2008	1	11	Bombardier	8 DMU vehicles
February 2008	0	—	—	—
March 2008	1	57	Bombardier	44 EMU vehicles
April 2008	0	—	—	—
May 2008	0	—	—	—
June 2008	0	—	—	—
July 2008	0	—	—	—
August 2008	0	—	—	—
September 2008	1	269	Alstom	106 EMU vehicles
October 2008	0	—	—	—
November 2008	0	—	—	—
December 2008	0	—	—	—

255 of the HLOS carriages were on order when the rolling stock plan was published in January 2008, bringing the total now in order to 423.

Railway Stations: Yorkshire

Mr. Greg Knight (Con): To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many new rail stations are scheduled to be opened in Yorkshire in the next three years; what the location is of each; and what car parking provision is planned to be provided at each. [254942]

Paul Clark: Responsibility for promoting new stations rests primarily with local authorities and passenger transport executives (PTEs). The Department for Transport has

received outline proposals for four new stations in the West Yorkshire PTE area at Apperley Bridge, Kirkstall Forge, Horsforth Woodside and Low Moor and one in the City of York area at Haxby.

West Yorkshire PTE and the City of York council should be able to provide information on proposed opening dates and car parking provision at these stations.

First Capital Connect: Standards

Nadine Dorries (Con): To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many peak-time First Capital Connect train services ran to timetable on the Brighton to Bedford line in each year since 2005; and if he will make a statement. [255700]

Paul Clark: The following number of peak-time First Capital Connect services on the Bedford to Brighton route which arrived on time at their destination in each year between 2005 and 2008 is as follows:

	<i>Number</i>
2005	17,895
2006	17,758
2007	17,931
2008	18,998

Nadine Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many peak-time First Capital Connect train services on the Brighton to Bedford line were cancelled in each year since 2005; and if he will make a statement. [255701]

Paul Clark: The following number of peak-time First Capital Connect services on the Bedford to Brighton route which were cancelled in each year between 2005 and 2008 is as follows:

	<i>Number</i>
2005	544
2006	457
2007	412
2008	344

Nadine Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many peak-time First Capital Connect train services on the Bedford to Brighton line ran more than three minutes behind timetable in each year since 2005; and if he will make a statement. [255702]

Paul Clark: First Capital Connect services are not measured within three minutes of their timetable arrival time for Public Performance Measure (PPM) purposes. For a First Capital Connect service to meet the Public Performance Measure, it must either arrive at its destination early, right time or within four minutes 59 seconds of its timetabled arrival time.

First Capital Connect peak-time services on the Bedford-Brighton line that arrived more than four minutes 59 seconds behind timetable were:

	<i>Number</i>
2005	4,166
2006	4,072
2007	3,908
2008	2,731

Passenger Focus

Sir John Stanley (Con): To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the cost to the public purse was of Passenger Focus in the latest 12 months for which figures are available. [256560]

Paul Clark: The total cost of Passenger Focus to the public purse in 2007-08 was £5.315 million.

Thameslink: Procurement

Stephen Hammond (Con): To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the latest expected timing is of the (a) (i) start and (ii) completion of Stage 1 and (b) the delivery of the new units to the Thameslink franchise for Phase 1. [255998]

Paul Clark: The Thameslink timetable change which comes into effect on 22 March 2009 marks the start of the Key Output One stage of the Thameslink Programme. This stage is due for completion in March 2012.

The first new Class 377 dual voltage unit was delivered to Southern trains on 30 January 2009. The remaining 22 units will follow over the next few months.

Railways: Franchises

Graham Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what criteria his Department uses to assign red light status to a rail franchise in its assessment of the financial position of train operating companies. [257008]

Paul Clark: The Department for Transport uses a number of criteria in its routine reviews of the operational and financial performance of train operating companies. These include an examination of forecast costs and revenues going forward, as well as an analysis of wider economic forecasts that might have an impact on the franchise in question.

Graham Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the value was of the bond deposited by each of the train operating companies awarded a rail franchise. [257010]

Paul Clark: The value of bonds deposited by train operating companies are based on a formula relating to the assessed costs of the franchise in question. As such the values of the bonds are commercially confidential.

TransPennine Express: Franchises

Dr. Blackman-Woods (Lab): To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of First TransPennine Express's performance in operating their franchise. [257989]

Paul Clark: First TransPennine Express has been a successful franchise to date, delivering all obligations contained within their franchise agreement that commenced on 1 February 2004. This includes:

management of the build and delivery into service of a fleet of 51 new diesel trains, together with construction and implementation of dedicated maintenance facilities including new depots in Manchester and York.

Completion of a £12.2 million expenditure plan delivering improvements and enhancement to the 30 stations for which they are responsible.

Improvements in train operating performance year on year, meeting public performance measure targets.

Introduction of additional routes and services, between Manchester airport and Blackpool and Scottish destinations.

Trains

Miss McIntosh (Con): To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what proportion of the number of new trains will be (a) hybrid, (b) diesel and (c) electric models. [257957]

Paul Clark: Assuming no further electrification of the rail network, the mix of train types is approximately one third electric, one third self-power (diesel) and one third bi-mode (electric and diesel capability). That ratio will be subject to change depending on future decisions about further electrification.

Railways: Rolling Stock

Question

Asked by Lord Bradshaw(LD)

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have undertaken any research into the potential for a further extension of the life of the present fleet of high-speed diesel passenger trains, including improving the doors and toilets.
[HL1490]

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Lord Adonis): Prior to issuing the Intercity Express specification, the Department for Transport assessed the costs and technical feasibility of extending the life of the existing high-speed diesel train fleet.

Given the age of the vehicles, and the need for major structural modifications to meet accessibility legislation and the provision of modern safety features for staff and retention toilets, it was not considered cost-effective to extend their lives compared with procuring a new train.