



ASLEF Political Update April 2009

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Manchester-Southport Railway Line

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent discussions he has had with Northern Rail on levels of service on the Manchester-Southport line; and if he will make a statement. [266712]

Paul Clark: Officials in the Department for Transport have regular meetings with Northern Rail. Service provision and performance is always an agenda item. The Secretary of State for Transport is content that despite poor performance recently and a period of planned engineering work, Northern Rail are doing everything possible to reduce levels of disruption to its passengers.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will include the level of disruption to Manchester-Southport rail services on the morning of Thursday 19 March on the agenda of his next franchise review meeting with Northern Rail. [266803]

Paul Clark: Officials in the Department for Transport met with Northern Rail on 25 March and performance was discussed; this included disruption on 19 March. The Secretary of State for Transport is content that the underlying issue was a points failure and that Northern Rail made every effort to restore services as quickly as possible.

Gospel Oak-Barking Railway Line

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent discussions he has had with Transport for London on the electrification of the Barking to Gospel Oak line. [267717]

Paul Clark: The Minister of State for Transport, Lord Adonis; has met Transport for London to discuss their interest in developing a proposal to electrify the Gospel Oak to Barking line.

Railways

Mr. David Anderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will take steps to ensure that Network Rail maintains its expenditure levels on track and overhead line renewals. [268669]

Paul Clark: Determining the appropriate level of expenditure on track and overhead line renewals is a matter for Network Rail and the independent Office of Rail Regulation. The Office of Rail Regulation's document, "Periodic review 2008—Determination of Network Rail's outputs and funding for 2009-14", assesses the expenditure that Network Rail will need to undertake in 2009-14 on track and overhead line renewals as £3,869 million and £182 million respectively (both in 2006-07 prices).

Railways: Construction

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will publish the analysis his Department has made of high speed rail using the criteria set out in his Department's New Approach to Transport Appraisal. [267522]

Paul Clark [*holding answer 27 March 2009*]: We have asked High Speed Two to report by the end of the year on a new line from London to the west midlands and advise on potential development further north. This will include relevant appraisals. The Department for Transport has not separately appraised high speed rail against New Approach to Appraisal criteria.

Railways: Freight

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his Department's policy is on the proposed Kent International Gateway project at Junction 8 of the M20; and if he will make a statement. [266843]

Paul Clark [*holding answer 26 March 2009*]: The Strategic Rail Authority document, "Strategic Rail Interchange Policy" of 2004, which can be found at:

www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/freight/railfreight/railfreightinterchange.pdf

is still the basis for the Department for Transport's policy on rail freight interchanges.

I cannot comment on merits of the Kent International Gateway terminal development proposal which is currently under consideration within the planning system.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the Highways Agency has given any advice to (a) his Department and (b) other interested parties in respect of the Kent International Gateway project proposal at Junction 8 of the M20. [266845]

Paul Clark [*holding answer 26 March 2009*]: The Highways Agency has not given any advice to (a) other parts of the Department for Transport and (b) any other interested parties, although they have held discussions with the developer, Kent International Gateway Ltd and the respective local authorities, Kent county council and Maidstone borough council.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the Faber Maunsell Report on logistical aspects of the Kent International Gateway project prepared for his Department; and if he will make a statement. [266847]

Paul Clark [*holding answer 26 March 2009*]: The Highways Agency has made the assessment that the operation of the proposed development and the transport impacts may not be as forecast by the developer for the Kent International Gateway Project.

Rolling Stock

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the Statement of 12 February 2009, *Official Report*, columns 1531-44, on new trains (investment), how many of the carriages to be supplied by Agility Trains for the contract for new inter-city express trains will be manufactured solely in Japan. [265034]

Paul Clark: Agility Trains has indicated that only around the first 70 pre-series vehicles, out of an order for up to 1,400, will be manufactured solely in Japan. They are committed to spending 70 per cent. of the super Express Trains contract value in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Binley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many of the 217 new carriages announced for London Midland in August 2008 are in use. [267640]

Paul Clark: As of March 2009, 52 new Class 350/2 carriages are in service with London Midland. The remaining 165 new vehicles are expected to be in service with the operator by the end of 2010.

Mr. Binley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many of the 1,300 new rail carriages announced by the Government in August 2008 are in use on the rail network. [267641]

Paul Clark: As of March 2009 the following new carriages are in service on the rail network:

London Midland—52 Class 350/2 vehicles

First Capital Connect—4 Class 377/5 vehicles.

A further 253 new carriages are expected to be in service with these operators by the end of 2010.

Mr. Binley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many rail users (*a*) complained about and (*b*) received compensation for overcrowding on trains in the latest period for which figures are available. [267642]

Paul Clark: The Department for Transport does not hold this information. However, The Office of Rail Regulation publishes complaints data supplied by train operators to the department in National Rail Trends, which can be found at

<http://www.rail-reg.gov.uk/server/show/nav.1863>.

Mr. Binley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many reported incidents of passengers being (*a*) taken ill and (*b*) injured on board trains as a result of overcrowding

there were in the latest period for which information is available; and if he will make a statement. [267643]

Paul Clark: There have been no reports of passengers taken ill as a result of overcrowding on board trains. In 2008, one passenger injury due to overcrowding on board trains was reported to the Office of Rail Regulation.

Railway incidents are reported to the Office of Rail Regulation under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR 95). Under RIDDOR 95 the reporting trigger for a non fatal injury to a passenger is that they are removed from the site of the accident immediately to hospital.

Incidents involving people being taken ill on board trains are only reportable if the illness or medical condition can be directly attributable to the operation of the railway; and the person is removed from the site of the accident immediately to hospital.

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of March 2009, *Official Report*, columns 1611-2W, on rolling stock, whether the additional vehicles for South Central and South Eastern listed in his Department's Rolling Stock Plan will be cascaded ex-Thameslink stock. [267669]

Paul Clark: It is not possible to be definitive in respect of the actual solutions for capacity enhancement for these franchises at this time.

Discussions with the respective train operators (or, in the case of South Central, the bidders for the new franchise) are ongoing.

Underground Railways: Freight

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he plans to enable the London Mail Rail tunnel to be used for transporting goods. [266466]

Paul Clark: The Department for Transport has no plans in relation to the Post Office Underground Railway system. Decisions on the use of the system are a commercial matter for the Royal Mail.

Waterloo Station

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the Answer to the hon. Member for Richmond Park of 26 January 2009, *Official Report*, column 16W, on Waterloo Station, whether agreement has been reached with South West Trains on the use of former Eurostar platforms at Waterloo. [264108]

Paul Clark: The Department for Transport is working with Network Rail to extend platforms at Waterloo station and across the whole South Western network to increase capacity on some suburban routes from eight to 10 carriage trains by 2014.

We are continuing to work with Stagecoach South West Trains to provide the additional capacity. These services are subject to concluding value for money negotiations. We expect these services to align with the Network Rail delivery date.

West Coast Railway Line

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will meet the Chairman of the Office of the Rail Regulator to discuss the reliability of service on the Crewe-Euston route provided by London Midland; and if he will make a statement. [266589]

Paul Clark: The Secretary of State met recently with the Chairman of the Office of Rail Regulation, when the reliability of services on the West Coast Main Line was raised. The Office of Rail Regulation is giving particular attention to monitoring Network Rail's performance on the route.

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the reliability of the London Midland train service on the Crewe-Euston route on (a) weekdays and (b) Sundays. [266789]

Paul Clark: In the year to 28 February 2009 London Midland achieved an average punctuality of 86.5 per cent. across the franchise as a whole and 81.6 per cent. during the four weeks ending on that date. Performance on the Crewe to Euston route has been below this level.

Improving rail performance is a key objective for the Department for Transport. Joint action plans are in place between Network Rail and London Midland to address performance issues. London Midland has also developed an Improvement Plan, progress against which is monitored regularly. The Minister of State, Lord Adonis, meets senior representatives of the Rail Industry every four weeks to discuss performance.

Reliability of the London Midland train service on the West Coast Main Line route from Crewe to Euston has been a particular concern recently. Both Network Rail and the train operators on the route are being urged to seek improvements in punctuality and reliability.

East Anglia Rail Service

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Geoffrey Hoon): In July 2007, the Government published their White Paper "Delivering a Sustainable Railway". Within this the Government set out their High Level Output Specification (HLOS) for the railways, detailing the outputs they wanted the industry to achieve by the end of the five year period from the 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2014—known as Control Period 4 or CP4. These outputs covered the areas of capacity, reliability and safety.

In terms of capacity, targets for the accommodation of extra demand were produced for each of the main London termini and major cities. The White Paper indicated that a total of 1,300 additional carriages were expected to be required to meet these requirements. So far 423 of these additional carriages have been ordered, even before the start of CP4.

I am pleased to announce to the House that today that my Department has signed a deed of amendment to its franchise agreement with London Eastern Railway Ltd, which trades as National Express East Anglia (NXEA) and is part of National Express Group plc.

This contractual variation will enable NXEA to add 188 carriages to its existing fleet, boosting capacity into London Liverpool Street by providing approximately 11,000 extra seats during the morning three hour peak period by December 2011.

NXEA will lease 120 new Electric Multiple Unit (EMU) carriages, that will be built by Bombardier Transportation UK Ltd in Derby. These trains which have a capital cost of £160 million will be owned by Lloyds TSB General Leasing (No.8) Limited, a subsidiary of Lloyds TSB Bank plc. This is the first time this bank has provided finance for trains. The trains will principally be used on the Stansted Express route, enabling a cascade of rolling stock within the franchise to lengthen other services.

NXEA will also lease 68 Class 321 EMU carriages which are currently in use on the London Midland franchise where they are due to be replaced in July 2009. These carriages will receive an internal refresh.

NXEA will increase car parking space at four stations (Broxbourne, Audley End, Harlow Town and Diss), install two carriage washers and increase its workforce to implement the scheme.

Network Rail will be undertaking infrastructure enhancements to facilitate the changes to NXEA's operations, including platform lengthening, power supply upgrades and two passing loops.

This is one of the largest contract changes negotiated with a Train Operating Company (TOC) during its franchise term since privatisation of the railways in 1997. I hope to make further such announcements over the next 12 months, although this requires TOCs to co-operate in providing my Department with affordable and value for money proposals which meet the capacity requirements for their franchise areas.

Railways

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what rules and regulations would apply to a Translohr guided rail system established in England.
[263699]

Paul Clark [*holding answer 16 March 2009*]: It is not possible to provide definitive guidance on the rules and regulations applicable to the Translohr-guided rail system.

However, if such a system was allowed to run on a highway in England it could be considered as vehicular traffic and, therefore, in such a case, all relevant rules and regulations for road vehicles would apply accordingly.

Mr. David Anderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps his Department is taking to bring forward capital expenditure on rail infrastructure projects. [268670]

Paul Clark: Capital expenditure on rail infrastructure projects is primarily the responsibility of Network Rail which is funded in accordance with the Office of Rail Regulation's determination of its income requirement. This income requirement is derived from the outputs set out in the High Level Output Specification set out by the Government in its White Paper—Delivering a Sustainable Railway.

We are also bringing forward around £300 million for an additional 202 train carriages to relieve overcrowding, pursuant to the previously announced High Level Output Specification. The trains are due to enter service by 2012 subject to negotiations with train operators.

Railways: Franchises

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 17 March 2009, *Official Report*, column 990W, on railways: franchises, what timetable has been set for completion of the research. [269028]

Paul Clark: As described in the previous answer of 17 March 2009, the current research project into rail passenger demand forecasting is due to conclude by the end of 2009. Work is currently on schedule.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which rail franchises and concessions were fully or partly operated by non-UK companies in each of the last five years; and how much public subsidy each such franchise received in each of those years. [269792]

Paul Clark: All franchises let by the Department for Transport have been awarded to companies registered in the United Kingdom. Details of the ultimate shareholders should be available in the relevant filed accounts at Companies House.

Subsidy paid to all franchises is published annually by the Office of Rail Regulation in National Rail Trends which is available in the Library of the House and online at:

www.rail-reg.gov.uk

European Rail Traffic Management System

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress there has been on the introduction of the European Rail Traffic Management System, with particular reference to the UK. [269054]

Paul Clark: The first deployment of the European Rail Traffic Management System in the UK is under way on the Cambrian lines in Wales. Level 2 of the European Rail Traffic Management system will be installed on the infrastructure from Sutton Bridge Junction to Aberystwyth and Pwllheli and the existing line side signalling will be decommissioned.

The Arriva Train Wales fleet of 24 Class 158 vehicles will be fitted with European Rail Traffic Management on-board equipment, as well as three class 97 locomotives which will act as pilot locomotives for non-fitted vehicles.

The first part of the route, from Pwllheli to Harlech, is expected to enter into passenger service in the third quarter of 2009. The remainder of the route is expected to enter service in the final quarter of 2009.

This first deployment on the Cambrian lines enables the UK to develop the rules and processes needed for the successful roll-out of the European Rail Traffic Management System across the UK.

The national roll-out of the system is described in the UK 'ERTMS National Implementation Plan' published on the Department for Transport website at:

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/adobepdf/165234/349552/ukertmsplan.pdf>

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what studies have been carried out on the introduction of the European Rail Traffic Management System, with particular reference to the UK; and what the results of those studies were. [269055]

Paul Clark: In 2007 the Department for Transport commissioned a study into the suitability of the European Rail Traffic Management System for use in high density networks such as Thameslink. The study also evaluated whether the system could be successfully integrated with an Automatic Train Operation overlay. The study contract was awarded to Parsons in October 2007.

The study concluded the following:

That the European Rail Traffic Management System is capable of delivering high density rail service operations; and

There is nothing within the European Union specifications for the European Rail Traffic Management System that prevent it from being integrated with Automatic Train Operation.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects the European Rail Traffic Management System could be introduced across the rail network, with particular reference to the UK. [269056]

Paul Clark: The Department for Transport has notified its European Rail Traffic Management System deployment plan to the European Commission. It was notified in 2007 and is published on the Department for Transport website at

www.dft.gsi.gov.uk

It describes the national roll-out plan for the European Rail Traffic Management System, of which the first deployment is on the Cambrian lines, due to enter service in the third quarter of 2009. The overall deployment will be evaluated in the context of the lessons learnt from the first deployment on Cambrian.

The plan is being deployed in a number of member states. At the end of 2008, approximately 2600 km of lines within the European Union were in commercial European Rail Traffic Management System service within nine countries, including Switzerland.

High Speed Trains

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport with reference to the letter which he placed in the Library from the Permanent Secretary of his Department to a director of High Speed Two Limited of 14 January 2009, if he will place in the Library a copy of the programme of anticipated expenditure and breakdown of the costs of High Speed Two Limited. [269006]

Paul Clark: A breakdown of High Speed Two's proposed expenditure budget (up to the end of the financial year 2009-10) is set out in the following table.

	<i>Total (including VAT) (£)</i>
Staff costs	2,654,458
Board costs	209,226
Facility costs	175,393
Travel and Subsistence	38,500
Admin costs	44,799
Project costs and consultancy costs	3,944,500
Total	7,066,876

Railways

Mr. David Anderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) if he will take steps to ensure that Network Rail does not defer essential renewal work; [268666]

(2) if he will take steps to ensure there is no reduction in the frequency of signal maintenance on railway lines; [268667]

(3) if he will take steps to ensure that there is no reduction in the frequency of rail track inspections. [268668]

Paul Clark: These are operational matters for Network Rail as it aims to deliver the value for money needed to meet the output and efficiency targets for maintenance and renewal of the national network over the next five years of Control Period 4, set by the Office of Rail Regulation. Details of these targets can be found in “Periodic review 2008—Determination of Network Rail’s

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outputs and funding for 2009-14”. As the industry economic and safety regulator, the Office of Rail Regulation will independently monitor the work.

Network Rail has announced that it will be investing almost £4 billion on an intensive track renewals programme to further improve the network between 2009-14. Total outputs will remain as previously planned, though phasing adjustments in the early part of the five-year period will result in less track renewal work in 2009-10 to allow time for new, more efficient working practices to take effect. Network Rail has made clear that only non-critical work will be deferred.

Network Rail’s decision relates solely to track renewals. The company has assured the Department for Transport that maintenance and track inspections will not be affected.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the likely change in the number of rail passengers in the 12 months from April 2009. [269755]

Paul Clark: The Department for Transport does not make forecasts of year-on-year changes in rail passenger numbers. The Government’s High Level Output Specification for the railways for the period 2009-14 is set out in the White Paper “Delivering a Sustainable Railway”, published in July 2007. This forecasts rail passenger numbers for 2008-09 and specifies the additional numbers to be accommodated on the network by the end of the 2013-14.

Railway Stations

Mr. Dai Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans his Department has to upgrade facilities at railway stations in the next 12 months. [270772]

Paul Clark: 2009-10 is the first year of implementation of the National Stations Improvement programme. Under this programme, the Government are providing £150 million over five years for the modernisation of around 150 stations. The programme is being led by Network Rail.

The Access for All programme is continuing to install obstacle free, accessible routes into priority stations. 145 stations have been identified for enhancement through to 2015. 24 sites are now finished and Network Rail expect to complete a further 20 during 2009-10. In addition, the Access for All Small Schemes programme has awarded funding of £6.2 million towards a variety of access improvements with a total value of around £37 million at over 500 stations during this financial year.

In addition, Reading station is being re-developed. This is a five year project with a total value of around £800 million and will increase capacity and improve performance on a key railway junction on the Great Western main line. Planning consent is underway and when achieved, enabling works will commence, scheduled for the beginning of 2010.

At Birmingham New Street station the Department for Transport is providing a significant contribution to the £600 million gateway scheme to redevelop this station. Work is scheduled to begin later in 2009 and will deliver significant improvement in passenger handling capacity, access, facilities and environment.

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