



**The Future Development of Transport for Wales – Welsh Assembly
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee – January 2019**

1. The Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (ASLEF) is the UK's largest train driver's union representing approximately 20,000 members in train operating companies and freight companies as well as London Underground and light rail systems. The union has just over 600 members in Wales.
2. ASLEF has responded to previous consultations and calls for evidence regarding the development of Transport for Wales, as well as the Welsh Government consultation on the Design of the Wales and borders rail service in May 2017.
3. ASLEF believes that during the development of Transport for Wales and implementation of the Wales and borders rail service contract, the Welsh Government has taken into account the views of a wide range of stakeholders including trade unions. We are glad to have the opportunity to input into this inquiry into the future of Transport for Wales.
4. While the inquiry also looks at the governance and structure of the organisation, we will mostly focus on the role of Transport for Wales in delivering transport policy.
5. ASLEF's view is that Transport for Wales as Wales' national body for transport should take a holistic view of transport policy and work to ensure

that safe, efficient and sustainable transport is prioritised in every part of the country.

6. The Welsh Government's stated well-being objectives include plans to 'Drive sustainable growth and combat climate change', 'Build healthier communities and better environments' and 'Deliver modern and connected infrastructure'. All of these objectives support the imperative to develop an integrated vision for transport in Wales. With the management contract for rail services now awarded and in place, the union believes that Transport for Wales should now focus on integrating the wider transport system.
7. To ensure that the use of rail continues to increase in Wales, alongside more frequent services and new rolling stock, all stations must be fully connected to their communities and provide easy access to onward travel whether this be by buses, safe walking routes or sufficient cycle storage and access. Rail travel must be accessible or the travelling public will be discouraged from using the rail service.
8. ASLEF welcomes the implementation of the management contract for rail services, while maintaining its disappointment that a fully public model of ownership was rejected. The union also acknowledges Transport for Wales' willingness to work with a range of stakeholders including trade unions in the development of the contract. The union wants to make sure that, as Transport for Wales moves into the future, rail services are not seen as 'completed' and are not forgotten or de-prioritised in any future decision making.
9. Additionally, ASLEF objects to any proposals for the future development of transport policy in Wales which would put rail freight at a disadvantage or undermine rail freight's access to the network. Rail freight, having declined every year since 2006-07, is beginning to show signs of growth across the UK and it is important that this growth is fully supported by effective transport policy. In 2018-19 Q2, total freight moved was 4.4billion net

tonne kilometres, an increase of 2% on 2017-18 Q2. The total number of freight train movements in 2017-18 was 215,826, a decrease of 3.5% from the previous year.

10. Road congestion is estimated to cost businesses £17 billion a year and the Department for Transport has calculated the cost of congestion to be 99 pence per lorry mile on the most congested roads. As part of any future transport planning, the union believes that all efforts should be made to increase the use of rail to transport both passengers and freight, as the effects of relying on road transport are not just economically but environmentally damaging. Rail freight produces 76% less CO2 emissions than the equivalent HGV journey. The ORR also states that rail is 20 times safer than road, another reason to support rail as a priority in future planning.

11. As ASLEF has previously outlined, the creation of a not-for-profit Transport for Wales is welcomed and a management contract for rail services is a more progressive option than a franchise which keeps revenue. The union remains disappointed that genuine public ownership of the franchise has been rejected but nevertheless looks forward to continuing to work closely with Transport for Wales to ensure that both the railway in Wales and the country's wider transport systems provide a quality, integrated service where people are put before profit.

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