



Department for Transport

Ruth Hannant & Polly Payne
Directors General for Rail Group
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
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London
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Web site: www.gov.uk/dft

12 June 2018

Dear Joanna

In light of recent problems with the introduction of the May 2018 timetables, it is the Department for Transport's top priority to make sure that the industry restores reliability for passengers to an acceptable level as soon as possible.

The ORR's status as independent economic and safety regulator for the railway gives it a unique and valuable perspective. We would like to draw upon this independent perspective by requesting that the ORR, in accordance with Section 51 of the Railways Act 2005, provide the Secretary of State with advice on:

- the factors that contributed to the failure to produce and implement a satisfactory operational timetable in May 2018;
- the conclusions that should be drawn around the management of major network changes, based on evidence about the causes, consequences and management of disruption around the timetable changes in May 2018; and
- the steps that ORR recommends are taken to improve the future management of major network changes, based on evidence about the causes, consequences and management of disruption around the timetable changes in May 2018.

In carrying out this work, we would like to ask the ORR to consider the roles played by the various participant parties in the rail sector, including train operators, Network Rail, the ORR and the Department for Transport. We would encourage you to ensure appropriate governance mechanisms are in place around the work to enable effective scrutiny of the ORR's own role where required.

In particular, we are grateful for your proposal to appoint a panel of independent experts to provide advice, challenge and scrutiny. We are also reassured that you intend to establish formal separations between this work and individuals or teams within ORR who were involved in May 2018 timetable discussions.

We recognise that given the scope and complexity of the issue, the ORR may require some time to carry out a thorough investigation. We would therefore be grateful to receive the outputs of this work ahead of the introduction of the December

2018 timetable changes. We would encourage you to engage fully with passenger representatives, including the independent passenger watchdog Transport Focus, in the course of this work, given the significant passenger impacts and their particular expertise in representing passenger perspectives.

Should, as is likely, ORR require any co-operation from DfT in order to understand the sequence of events that have taken place, then all staff have been instructed to offer full co-operation. We have assigned Rail Markets Strategy Division to act as a point of contact for ORR in respect of this work to facilitate effective communications.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Ruth Hannant & Polly Payne', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ruth Hannant & Polly Payne
Directors General for Rail Group