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Ben Mason
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Dear Ian and Ben

Directions in respect of a charter passenger track access contract between Network Rail Infrastructure Limited and SLC Operations Limited

We have today issued directions under section 18 of the Railways Act 1993 (the Act) to Network Rail Infrastructure Limited (Network Rail) to enter into a charter passenger track access contract (TAC) with SLC Operations Limited (SLC Operations) (jointly the parties). The application was submitted to the ORR by Network Rail on 25 October 2021. This letter explains the reasons for our decision.

Purpose

The purpose of this contract is to allow SLC Operations to run charter passenger services on routes in all Network Rail regions. This agreement does not grant any specific firm rights for train paths, but gives SLC Operations the right to bid on such services by means of a Train Operator Variation Request. The rights are to commence upon the date of direction and will expire on 31 December 2024.

Industry consultation

As the rights sought do not conflict with the interests of any other operator, an industry consultation was not required for this application.

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ORR review

Our review of the application raised no operational, performance or economic concerns.

Our duties under Section 4 and our decision

We have concluded that approval of this agreement strikes the appropriate balance in discharging our statutory duties under section 4 of the Act; in particular, those relating to promoting improvements in railway service performance (section 4(1)(b)), protecting the interests of users of railway services (section 4(1)(a)), promoting the use of the railway network for the carriage of passengers (section 4(1)(b)) and enabling persons providing railway services to plan their businesses with a reasonable degree of assurance (section 4(1)(g)).

Public register and administration

A copy of the Directions and the signed contract will be placed on our public register. Copies of this letter and the contract will also be placed on the ORR website. I am also copying this letter to the Department for Transport and Network Rail's Policy and Access Team.

Once the agreement is signed, in accordance with Section 72(5) of the Act, you must send a copy to ORR within 14 days.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Louise Beilby', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Louise Beilby