

Phil Dawson  
Regulation & Track Access Manager  
East Coast Main Line Company Limited  
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25 Skeldergate  
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6 March 2015

Dear Phil,

**Virgin Trains East Coast (VTEC) 51<sup>st</sup> Supplemental Agreement for Section 22A, Edinburgh Mon-Fri**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above application.

Having examined the application, XC Trains Limited (XCTL) is unfortunately unable to support it at this stage and we request further timetable and performance data before we are able to change our position. We do not believe the paths are robust enough to be included in the timetable, on the basis of the data provided.

Timetable

- From the data provided there appear to be TOC-on-self conflicts at Edinburgh, for example the proposed 06:15 service from King's Cross to Edinburgh (arr. 11:16) would appear to potentially run into the path of the 07:00 departure from King's Cross to Edinburgh (arr. 11:20 in the 2015 Subsidiary Timetable), depending on the calling pattern;
- Has platforming work been undertaken for Edinburgh Waverley station? If so, XCTL request a copy of the work for reassurance. There are no terminating platforms capable of accommodating the proposed train lengths, the same is true of existing Virgin Trains West Coast terminating services and meanwhile there will be existing long distance through services (both XCTL and VTEC) requiring through platforms to West and North East Scotland;
- Two of the proposed services (12:58 ex Edinburgh and 15:58 ex Edinburgh) are expressed as achieving a 1h22 journey time between Edinburgh and Newcastle. We do not believe this is realistic or achievable. Whilst the existing 1E01 service (05:40 ex Edinburgh) makes the journey in 1h22 it has no station calls between Edinburgh and Newcastle, is the first service south in the morning (so few conflicts) and only has 3 minutes engineering time between Edinburgh and Newcastle in the schedule, whilst the Timetable Planning Rules stipulate 4. Additionally, there are no journey time improvement schemes in Control Period Five that will make existing stock capable of achieving this journey time. This concern is

linked to our performance concerns listed below – we do not believe that the capacity exists as *described* in the application;

- We additionally note that “timings and calling patterns... will be confirmed following completion of the timetable development process”. In practical terms this means that XCTL is unable to fully assess the impact these new services will have on available capacity and the existing timetable until we at least have sight of calling patterns, to overlay on proposed departure/arrival times and timing loads.

### Performance

- I note in the telephone conversation we had in the week commencing 16<sup>th</sup> February that any additional services would be formed of Class 91 sets. XCTL would like formal clarification, either from Network Rail directly or via VTEC, that there is sufficient power capacity north of Newcastle to satisfy this demand;
- Please can VTEC formally confirm that it is committed to working with XCTL to maintain and improve performance, should these services be introduced? We are particularly concerned about delay from Scotland being imported onto our Newcastle to Reading services. For example, the current 14:25 from Newcastle (1Y38) regularly impacts on XCTL’s 1V91 between Newcastle and York. We would not expect an improvement in this situation if the service were to start from Edinburgh. We expect a continuation of the existing regulation policies that have been agreed within the industry.

Yours sincerely,



**Tamzin Cloke**  
**Track Access and Possession Strategy Manager**