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Rachel Gilliland.
Head of Commercial Freight,
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8th April 2015

Dear Rachel,

**CONSULTATION ON EAST COAST TRAINS LTD. NEW TRACK ACCESS CONTRACT
(TAC) FROM DECEMBER 2018 TO DECEMBER 2028 – INDUSTRY CONSULTATION:**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Section 17 application between East Coast Trains Ltd. and Network Rail Infrastructure Ltd.

GB Railfreight Ltd. (GBRf) has a number of issues and concerns with this application, some of which will require clear information before a considered assessment can be made. GBRf would expect East Coast Trains Ltd. and Network Rail to share clear answers to these points before Network Rail and the Office of Rail Regulation give directions on this application.

- The Executive Summary states that East Coast Trains Ltd. is confident that there is sufficient capacity on the route to operate these services alongside those proposed to be operated by the new East Coast franchisee. This doesn't state how and why this is the case and evidence to this effect is really required to assess the application. GBRf, particularly, wants to see how this, competing passenger applications and capacity for freight and freight growth all sit together. Please provide more evidence so GBRf can properly assess this application.

With respect to the above, GBRf notes that terms have not been agreed with Network Rail due to the number of competing applications for rights on the East Coast Main Line for the December 2018 timetable and beyond.

- Reinforcing the above point, in Section 4.2 *Adequacy*, East Coast Trains Ltd. is confident of available capacity for its proposed services, current LDHS operators, proposed new VTEC services and Thameslink services. It isn't clear whether or not this assessment has included other proposed open access operations and to what degree and frequency Class 4 and Class 6 freight services have been taken into account. Please advise in detail.
- Section 4.32 and 4.33 of ORR's Criteria & Procedures (December 2011) document discusses the requirement of supporting information to help all parties more easily understand the application. The following information would be extremely useful and really needs to be supplied to all consultees:

- a) A specimen timetable (with passenger and freight services) to demonstrate that the required capacity is available. This must be available as, without it, many of the statements made in this application could not be made with any authority. (Also see next point).
- b) A report of performance modelling of the proposed timetable, so a better picture can be obtained on any changes on the East Coast Main Line. (Also see next point).
- Section 4.3 *Flexing Rights* section states that there is no limitation, other than in relation to the journey time protection being sought. However, Section 4.4 *Journey Time Protection* states that no journey time protection is sought. Which is the case? Please advise.

For the very specific reasons listed above, GB Railfreight cannot support this East Coast Trains Ltd. new track access contract, neither for its length or specificity of services.

Please contact me if you have any further enquiries.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Kapur.
National Access Manager.