

From: Hedderly, Michael (Hampshire County Council)
To: Abigail Grenfell (ORR)
Sent: Mon 20/06/2011 16:44
Subject: ORR Consultation on provision of information to rail passengers, especially during unplanned disruptions

Dear Ms Grenfell

I have pleasure in responding to the consultation on behalf of Hampshire County Council.

We applaud the ORR for tackling this issue which continues to tax the railway companies despite efforts to address the situation by them and Network Rail since the Hatfield disaster.

Our responses to the questions posed are as follows, and are principally framed in relation to unplanned disruption incidents.

1. Yes we agree that there is a lack of clear accountability in the current framework for providing information to passengers.
2. Certainly, amendments to operators' and Network Rail licences are a necessary ingredient in setting out aligned accountabilities for providing information.

However, going beyond this, we believe that there is a need for leadership within the industry in relating to both passengers and the general public, bringing together the responsibilities of Network Rail and the TOCs and that this is best carried out by Network Rail. (We recall that in the aftermath of the Hatfield disaster, Gerald Corbett, the Chief Executive of Railtrack, Network Rail's predecessors, eventually took on this role as industry spokesman almost by default. This did however demonstrate the need for such a role.)

Depending on the scale of the incident and its ramifications, the Rail Leader could be local, regional or national.

The weakness of the information provision and dissemination structure is that Network Rail has no direct contractual link with the passenger, whose contract (the ticket) is with the TOC. We would suggest that in these circumstances responsibility is laid on Network Rail to respond not only to TOCs but to passengers themselves.

3. Subject to any variation necessary as a result of implementing the suggestion in the foregoing paragraph, yes, we agree the split of responsibilities is sensible.
4. See comments under Q.2
5. The proposed amendments to the licences meet with our approval.

6. The proposals for amendment to licences will apply to TOCs, Network Rail and ATOC.

7. We believe the impact of the proposals, together with our suggested Rail Leader role concept will be wholly beneficial to the travelling public.

8. The National Rail Enquiries website and TOC websites should carry details of the new arrangements. Monitoring their effectiveness in practice should be a task for Passenger Focus.

Yours sincerely

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