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8 May 2015

Copy list below - **by email only**

Dear colleague

Access to the East Coast Main Line (ECML) – industry hearing

1. Further to my letter of 6 February, this is to update you on our next steps in dealing with the applications we have received to use the ECML.
2. In March you will have seen East Coast Trains Limited (ECTL, First Group) applied for access rights to the ECML. We are content to consider that application alongside those we already have because we do not believe that doing so will unduly delay our decision making; the industry consultation on ECTL's proposals closed in April.
3. In February we raised with you the issue of whether an industry hearing would be useful; after considering stakeholders' views we have decided to hold a hearing. Whilst a hearing will add some time to our decision making process, it will give stakeholders an opportunity to clarify the key issues, air views and test arguments in an open, transparent way. We feel this is important in this complex case where there are multiple competing proposals to use the limited capacity on a key route.
4. The hearing will take place on Friday 12 June 2015, at our London office. At this stage please email us at AccessandEconomicsAdmin@orr.gsi.gov.uk to confirm if you want to be represented and who, space permitting, you would like to come. Please hold the day in diaries. We will be in touch by the end of May to confirm arrangements, to highlight the background documents attendees should read and to get your comments on a draft agenda. We will then finalise the agenda at least a week before the hearing.
5. Please do not hesitate to contact me, Ian Williams or David Reed if you need to discuss. We will publish this letter on our website.

Yours sincerely



Rob Plaskitt

Copies to:

Andy Sparkes (VTEC)
Ian Yeowart (GNER)
Leo Goodwin (East Coast Trains Ltd)
Chris Burchell (Arriva Group)
Tim Wright (Network Rail)
Paul McMahon (Network Rail)
Peter Craig (Network Rail)

Andrew Murray (DfT)
Steven McMahon (Transport Scotland)
Phil Dawson (VTEC)
John Beer (GTR)
Other current ECML operators
Passenger Focus/London TravelWatch