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Blue Category

From: Dave Ashton   Sent: Tue 20/10/2015 23:12
To: ORRSystemOperation
Cc:
Subject: System operation consultation

Dear Sir,

I'm writing with regards to the "System Operation" consultation that ORR are running until 2345 today,(from gov.uk),to make a short comment.

As an ordinary passenger I understand that a lot of the issues discussed in the consultation document are more concerns for within the industry,but the main thing that a passenger would notice about efficient system operation is when it fails to work as planned,and how well the industry then acts to recover and inform passengers about what's going to happen. This is only mentioned in passing in Paragraph 52,and I think it's an issue that ORR can take stronger action over,as well as incentivize NR to improve how incidents are managed.

The specific area I mean is the over-run of planned engineering works/track possessions that cause services to be delayed/cancelled etc.,not things like trees falling on the line or wires being blown down,which NR can't plan for until they happen. There was a major incident in London recently where a possession over-ran,and the railway press found NR was rather slow in both realizing that it would over-run,reacting to it,and then telling the TOCs what contingency plans were activated for them to inform passengers. This highlighted an issue which I believe ORR can act on in regards to this consultation.

Thus I'd like to propose that ORR require NR [unless it already does] :

a) For every significant track possession/engineering works etc.,create a contingency plan for what will happen if the works over-run and notify it to all relevant users [TOCs/Freight companies/Open-Access operators etc] of the line in advance

b) Regularly review progress on works being undertaken,and activate the contingency plan and inform all users as soon as it is clear that an over-run will occur,and state an estimate of how long the over-run will last for

In order to incentivize NR to reduce to a minimum unplanned over-runs,I also propose ORR introduce a performance measure of "percentage of scheduled services lost/delayed to over-running engineering possessions" for each main line,with NR getting a bonus payment if it is successful ; a penalty if not

I think this would encourage NR to improve its management of engineering works,and so ensure both improved system operations and more passenger confidence in the reliability of the network.

Dave.