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Dear Mark

London Bridge

Passengers who use London Bridge station continue to endure a sub-standard service. I wish to make four points.

First, despite the changes to the passenger information screens in the new year, it is clear that any disruption to Southern and Thameslink trains using the terminating platforms causes crowding requiring passengers to be 'held' on the concourse or outside the station to ensure their safety. I appreciate that when London Bridge redevelopment is complete there will be vastly more space for passengers to wait in the event of service disruption. However, I am very concerned about the travelling experience and welfare of passengers between now and then. From a passenger perspective, the conclusion that the interim station layout would cope during service disruption appears to have been flawed. I do not believe it is acceptable for Network Rail to expect passengers to put up with this happening time and again before project completion in December 2018. I look forward to hearing from you about what will be done in the interim to markedly improve the passenger experience at the station itself.

Second, given the vulnerability of the terminating platforms and concourse to crowding whenever something happens to the train service, what will Network Rail do to ensure that the infrastructure on the approaches to London Bridge is exceptionally resilient and that its response to any incident is very fast? Is there a case for response arrangements similar to those used to great effect during the Olympics in 2012?

Third, and notwithstanding the 'one off' incidents that keep causing disruption to passengers using London Bridge station, the underlying punctuality appears simply not to be good enough. We have looked at two major flows over the last four weeks* – one from the Kent direction



(Dartford) and one from the Sussex direction (East Croydon). The appendix gives details, but half of the 12 trains from East Croydon scheduled to arrive at London Bridge between 08:00 and 09:00 were late on three out of four occasions (and two of those were late every single day). Of the five trains from Dartford scheduled to arrive at London Bridge between 08:00 and 09:00, four arrived late more often than they arrived on time (one was late on nine out of 10 occasions). This level of punctuality in the key hour when people are trying to get to work is simply not acceptable. I look forward to hearing what will be done to deliver a level of punctuality commuters have a right to expect.

Finally, while passengers would rather that trains ran on time, I should also emphasise that compensation arrangements used by all train companies serving London Bridge do not recognise delays under 30 minutes however frequently they occur. This is certainly not helping passengers' trust in the rail industry.

Yours sincerely

A. J. C. 

Anthony Smith
Chief Executive

* using the website www.recenttraintimes.co.uk which presents data made public by Network Rail

AJC.



Appendix

Arrivals at London Bridge from Dartford between 08:00 and 09:00 in the 4 weeks to 13 March 2015*

Depart Arrive Punctuality

Dartford London Bridge(right time)

07:24 08:08 52%

07:45 08:28 33%

07:43 08:30 38%

08:04 08:39 10%

08:06 08:47 24%

Depart Arrive Punctuality

East Croydon London Bridge(right time)

07:41 08:02 55%

07:44 08:04 24%

07:57 08:18 57%

07:59 08:20 52%

08:02 08:24 52%

08:05 08:28 43%

08:11 08:32 24%

08:25 08:42 0%



08:29 08:48 14%

08:28 08:51 43%

08:33 08:53 0%

08:33 08:58 24%

* using the website www.recenttraintimes.co.uk which presents data made public by Network Rail