

Anthony Smith
Chief Executive
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By Email

3rd June 2021

Dear Anthony,

Thank you for your letter dated 28th May in further relation to the recent Hitachi trains incident.

As mentioned in our response dated 19th May, we have continued to work closely with operators ensuring that customers receive accurate, relevant and concise information across all the impacted operators. This approach continues to be of paramount importance and focus. Whilst we recognise, that full repairs could be months away, our focus around information provision will continue with the same rigor and determination ensuring there is no negative impact on customers.

With regards to your challenge to operators, we too continue to challenge information provision through our audits conducted by the National Rail Communications Centre (NRCC). These audits are designed in complete collaboration with yourselves and other key stakeholders and continue to be fed back to operators on a frequent basis.

The Smarter Information programme is designed to improve customer information across the end-to-end customer journey and is driven by customer insight. All of the headline points from your letter are within the scope of the smarter information programme, however the detail and the relative priority of the points will be discussed as part of the appropriate workstreams; Transport Focus are represented on these. We will of course share the points you raise with the relevant workstreams, having real life examples certainly adds context for the teams. The workstream on personalised journey notifications that Guy is chairing on behalf of the industry is key to addressing your points 1 and 2. Personalised journey notification has the vision and potential to be a “game changer” in terms of providing confidence to customers about what is running and our commitment to be proactive in keeping customers informed.

Work continues at a pace across the whole the Smarter Information programme, ranging from identifying opportunities for improving the timeliness and personalisation of disruption bulletins to getting endorsement through governance for significant investment in improving the accuracy of real time information provided through Darwin.

In terms of your specific points regarding Passenger Assist, this has and always will be a priority. We have taken a proactive approach by contacting customers who were due to travel on a service which would have been provided by a class 800-series train. In each circumstance, a range of options were given to customers from re-book for another day, alternative transport or alternative services to enable the customer to adjust their travel plans.

Thank you once again for your letter and your continued support on the smarter information programme, the collaborative approach can and will make a fundamental difference to customers.

Yours sincerely



Jacqueline Starr
Chief Executive Officer