c2c

Caroline Pidgeon AM
Transport Committee
London Assembly
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
London SE1 2AA

28 January 2010

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Dear Ms Pidgeon,

RAIL SERVICES INTO LONDON DURING RECENT ADVERSE WEATHER

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the service we provided during the winter weather over the last four weeks. At c2c we take great pride in consistent delivery of a punctual and reliable service and we did this throughout the recent period of bad weather. We were able to operate a full, normal timetabled service throughout the winter conditions of late December and early January, with no service reductions or special timetables and with no need for shortened train formations. This was also true during the heavy snowfall of February 2009.

In response to your five specific queries our responses are set out below.

We operated our full published timetable throughout the period between Monday 4 January-Thursday 14 January (inclusive). There was some impact on punctuality on two days of the snow, on 6th and 7th January. Our full daily PPM is shown in the table below. This shows c2c's Public Performance Measure (the number of trains arriving within 5 minutes of their scheduled arrival time). The table also shows the number of trains that failed the PPM measure as a result of the weather conditions.

Date	Scheduled Trains	Daily PPM %	Weather Related PPM Failures	Proportional effect on PPM
4th Jan	352	94.89%	1	0.28%
5th Jan	354	95.48%	0	0.00%
6th Jan	354	89.27%	8	2.26%
7th Jan	354	83.62%	40	11.30%
8th Jan	354	97.46%	2	0.56%
9th Jan	280	97.86%	0	0.00%
10th Jan	161	96.89%	0	0.00%

Date	Scheduled Trains	Daily PPM %	Weather Related PPM Failures	Proportional effect on PPM
11th Jan	352	96.01%	0	0.00%
12th Jan	351	98.58%	0	0.00%
13th Jan	351	96.31%	0	0.00%
14th Jan	351	97.73%	0	0.00%

On the two days where PPM fell below 94.0%:

- Wednesday 6th January – There was heavy snowfall during the mid-afternoon. Most of our commuters working in the City and Docklands decided to leave work in the early afternoon. This caused delays to services as we experienced peak loadings from early afternoon and the normal timetabled off-peak train formations were not sufficient to accommodate this peak load, which was earlier than anticipated.

- Thursday 7th January – We experienced some train coupling and electrical issues caused by snow ingress, although our fleet continued to operate to normal levels of availability. In response to these technical issues, arrangements were made on this and subsequent days for off-peak trains to run as 8-car formations all day, every day, rather than the usual single unit 4-car off-peak trains.

The primary source of information to passengers is via our website and our Journey Check Alerts service. c2c Customer Relations, National Rail Enquiries, the DfT, ATOC, London Travel Watch and the local media were also briefed on c2c's plans to run a full timetable. Alterations to individual services and general advice to customers that c2c were operating a good service appeared on the c2c website which experienced significantly high demand on both 6th and 7th January. On 6th January, our website, 'c2c-online.co.uk' was reduced to a single page of travel information however the website remained running. During the 6th January the website was completely rebuilt in order to cope with a 270% increase in traffic.

The key to our success in maintaining the service to customers is preparation. Almost all our staff managed to get into work, and both c2c and Network Rail have contingency plans in place to mitigate the effects of winter weather. These were activated well in advance by both businesses and we were able to ensure that all c2c route key locations and junctions were watched throughout the day, with Network Rail deploying additional operational staff out at key locations for monitoring and any contingencies. As a result the infrastructure remained reliable even in the heaviest periods of snowfall. We also implemented extensive winter working arrangements to ensure station platforms and forecourts were treated and cleared to prevent the build up of snow and ice, including out as far as 12-car markers on all platforms. We incurred a considerable amount of extra spend to call in extra staff and agency workers to do this.

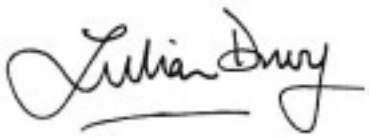
We learned a lot of lessons in our winter review following the heavy snowfall in February 2009, and key lessons were built into revisions to our Winter Preparedness and Customer Communications procedures during the Spring and Autumn. For example, we put enhanced arrangements in place to ensure that depot infrastructure (in particular sets of points) are individually monitored and treated, as a lesson learnt from an incident at

c2c's East Ham depot last February. We have held another internal review of our performance during the recent snow to ensure any further lessons are learned – this took place on 27 January 2009.

Recently published industry figures show that for the full period 13 December 2009 to 9 January 2010 c2c's performance was again the best in the UK. Our PPM for the period of the Winter conditions was 94.6%, well above the industry average for the period, of just 80% and our moving annual average at the end of the same period was 96.2%. c2c has now been the UK's best performing operator for the last ten months.

We are proud of this record, but will continue to review and learn from past events, including recent snowfall.

Yours sincerely



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26 JAN 2010

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Date: 25 January 2010

Dear Ms Pidgeon

Re: Rail Services into London During Recent Adverse Weather

Further to your request for information regarding National Express East Anglia train services between Monday 4 January and Thursday 14 January, I can advise that on all days during this period, normal service patterns were planned to operate. The only variations to the plan were as follows:

- Stansted Express services reduced to a 30-minute interval from the 15-minute norm.
- Diesel-powered Lowestoft and/or Peterborough services to Liverpool Street were terminated at Ipswich. Additional electric services which are able to provide extra capacity than the planned diesel services were then run between Ipswich and London to compensate.
- Norwich to London services reduced to a 30-minute interval during the morning and evening peaks.

These amendments were designed to ensure the following:

- that if weather conditions significantly deteriorated (to the extent that Network Rail response teams were unable to access more remote parts of the rail network for the purposes of snow clearance to ensure the safe operation of the railway), network capacity would not be compromised.
- a consistent service was available to our customers.
- a consistent message was available to our customers to mitigate potential confusion.

The above-mentioned measures were in place from Wednesday 6th to Friday 8th January with near normal services in place again from Monday 11th. The following table breaks down the services affecting London for the period requested:

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West Anglia Inner/ Outer, GE/ Metro and London-Norwich services	Booked	Run	%	Reason
Mon 04 Jan	1,514	1,253	82.8%	Engineering overrun at Bethnal Green
Tue 05 Jan	1,516	1,485	98.0%	
Wed 06 Jan	1,362	1,290	94.7%	Hackney Downs overhead wire failure
Thu 07 Jan	1,355	1,076	79.4%	Hackney Downs overhead wire failure
Fri 08 Jan	1,343	1,312	97.7%	
Sat 09 Jan	1,168	1,014	86.8%	Reduced service plan due to weekend engineering work
Sun 10 Jan	762	760	99.7%	Reduced service plan due to weekend engineering work
Mon 11 Jan	1,405	1,367	97.3%	
Tue 12 Jan	1,499	1,484	99.0%	
Wed 13 Jan	1,514	1,498	98.9%	
Thu 14 Jan	1,514	1,504	99.3%	

There was a number of infrastructure factors that played their part that were not weather-related. Firstly, engineering overruns from the renewal of the overhead line infrastructure in the Bethnal Green area severely affected the start-up of services on Monday 4th January. Through that week, due to the overhead line works being incomplete, two key junctions remained unavailable until they were reinstated during further engineering works over the weekends of 8/9 and 16/17 January. Until these junctions were reinstated, this had a significant impact on the operational flexibility of the rail network in the London area for National Express East Anglia. A subsequent failure of the overhead line (de-wirement) at Hackney Downs on the evening of Wednesday 6th January caused considerable disruption to National Express East Anglia services on that evening and throughout most of the following day. This was because a large number of trains based at our Chingford depot were unable to take power due to the electrical isolation needed for the Network Rail engineers to effect repair work to the damaged overhead line equipment. Planned engineering work took place over the weekend of 9/10 January for which a special timetable was in place.

It must be stressed that National Express East Anglia and Network Rail worked very closely together during the bad weather of last two weeks and preparations regarding route strategies had been agreed beforehand. Network Rail held daily joint Extreme Weather Action Team (EWAT) conference calls and during these calls the following items were discussed:

1. the short-term 24 hour forecast but also reviewed the 2-5 day forecast;
2. Network Rail maintenance depot preparation, including the deployment of 'snowmen' teams, signal and telecoms, permanent way and off-track teams at critical junctions; and
3. resourcing and deployment of route proving locomotives (fitted with miniature snow ploughs), and 'ice maidens' (locomotives used to dislodge icicles from the overhead wires.

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National Express East Anglia used these calls as a basis for cascading information across the business. After each EWAT conference call, National Express East Anglia held an internal conference call with senior representatives from operations, customer services, fleet and the press office. A briefing with the key actions was then sent out to on-call staff and senior management.

Customers were provided with frequently updated service information through our website, via text and e-mail alerts to subscribers, regular media briefings and through Trafficlink for local news travel bulletins. Additional announcements were provided through the customer information screens and public address systems at our stations.

Some of the above followed on from the lessons learned from the previous snow fall during February 2009. In addition, a fleet modification was put in place to minimise the impact of snow on the electric motors on two of our biggest train fleet types. Furthermore, we placed speed restrictions of 60mph across these fleets to further limit any damaging effects of the snow on the motors. De-icer was liberally employed on depots and at stations to keep train doors from freezing. In all, everything possible was done to keep the trains moving.

Whilst there were many stories in the press regarding poor conditions such as icy roads and pavements due to a shortage of grit, National Express staff, including our drivers and station teams, turned out in force every day to ensure that our platforms were cleared of snow and ice and our trains operated in what were difficult conditions for all. Hopefully, the figures contained in the table above demonstrate the joint commitment of the Network Rail and National Express East Anglia teams to provide a comprehensive train service to our customers, not only in the London area but crucially to the more remote and inaccessible parts of East Anglia.

I trust this meets with your requirements. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information.

Yours sincerely

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28th January 2010

Dear Caroline

Thank you for your letter dated 15th January regarding TfL London Rail modes during the recent adverse weather. I have answered each of your questions for London Overground, DLR and Tramlink.

How many and what proportion of services into and out of London were changed because of the weather on each day between Monday 4 January and Thursday 14 January?

London Overground
Between 4th – 14th January there was a very small number of planned cancellations, no more than 6 trains (c.1%) in any day. There were no changes to hours of operation with 92.2% of services timetabled to run actually operated.

DLR
DLR services operated very well. No weather related changes to the services were implemented at any time between 4th – 14th January.

Tramlink –
Tramlink services operated very well with no planned changes to service frequencies or hours. There were minor problems with trams awaiting repairs on 7th and 8th January

Where services were changed because of adverse weather, what particular circumstances led to the changes, in particular any reliance on track and signalling services beyond your control?

London Overground
The weather related failures were all a result of ice forming on the third rail. This situation results in reduced conductivity between the rail and the train and can lead to train failures. At certain times, Network Rail was unable to guarantee the de-icing of the third rail on sections of the network.

DLR
There were no service changes due to adverse weather.

Tramlink
With the precautions taken there were no weather related track and signalling difficulties encountered. .

What steps were taken to keep passengers informed and how effectively did telephone and web-based information services operate

London Overground
A poster was produced for display at all stations across the London Overground network to advise customers that delays could occur due to the adverse weather conditions.

Service updates were posted on the TfL and National Rail sites and PA announcements were made at stations.

The LOROL Customer Services department did experience a higher than expected call volume due to the expected disruption. Additional resources were able to cover when high volumes of phone calls were received.

In addition, as part of the London Overground TRIP (Travel Recovery and Information Programme) strategy for managing service disruption, a dedicated Information Controller was provided during the period of adverse weather to ensure that staff were kept fully informed of the status of the service so they could keep passengers updated

DLR
DLR has introduced an enhanced information system that links directly into the real-time information and TfL web site to augment the normal operation of our customer services helpline.

Tramlink
The Tramlink telephone information operators were kept fully appraised of any changes to the service pattern, and were able to give up-to-date service information to any caller.

The Information displays at stops are regularly updated with service information. The "Help Points" at stops were also available to passengers requiring information.

Service information was also updated on the TfL website.

What contingency arrangements were put in place to minimise the need to change services because of adverse weather?

London Overground

When low temperatures are forecast, 'Ghost Trains' are run overnight to keep the rails free of ice. Ghost Trains have been effective on previous occasions but had limited success this year with the very high levels of snow fall and freezing temperatures. Once it became clear that the Ghost Trains were not proving to be as effective as we had expected, Network Rail were able to provide some de-icing trains on the North London and West London lines and some manual de-icing was undertaken on the Euston- Watford line north of Harrow.

DLR

The process for monitoring upcoming adverse weather and planning our response was improved and fully-documented in the DLR's Winter Preparedness Plan. Points heaters were in use and overnight 'sleet trains' were operated. Alternative travel arrangements were also in place to ensure staff could report to work.

Tramlink

Pro-active arrangements were made (informed through forecasts) to ensure sufficient staff were on duty to arrange for gritting of segregated tramway, platforms and approach paths.

Senior staff remained on site overnight to supervise operations, as did key rapid response staff in case of asset failure.

Key items of equipment were lubricated and sprayed with de-icing equipment as appropriate.

Additional 'sleet trams' trams were run through the night to clear the route, and to ensure that ice did not build up on the track or overhead electrical equipment.

What lessons were learned from the snow in February 2009 and what changes were implemented as a result? What further lessons have been learned from the recent disruption to rail services to avoid a similar situation arising again?

We have made a number of improvements to the way in which we respond to bad weather and this is detailed below.

London Overground

Following the adverse weather of February 2009, 'ghost trains' were introduced to reduce the likelihood of ice forming on the third rail. London Overground also planned for sufficient resources and materials to de-ice platforms in the event of such weather.

Following the recent snow in January 2010 some further lessons have been learnt by London Overground which included:

- Ensuring de-icing is carried out by Network Rail on third rail sections of track as soon as low temperatures are forecast. London Overground will continue to work with Network Rail to improve its ability to respond to this demand
- Ensure that all points heaters are monitored and working during the winter period
- Consider deployment of a London Overground specific de-icing train over the entire route where power is supplied through a third rail
- Monitor third rail temperatures as well as ambient air temperatures
- Review how service information is communicated to staff, passengers and third parties when there are high levels of disruption.

DLR

In addition to items noted above (which subsequently worked well in January 2010), the snow of February 2009 highlighted problems with real-time updates of DLR information on the TfL website. Following this ,a project led by our Franchisee, Serco Docklands, has introduced an enhanced customer-friendly information system that links directly into the real-time information.

Tramlink

There was a thorough review of the performance of the tramway in February 2009 and the key recommendations of that review have been implemented. These included procurement of additional gritting and equipment to assist with snow clearance, an overhaul of procedures, equipment, materials, resource levels and night running plans to reduce risk.

Regular on-site meetings were held with the Operator and the Infrastructure Maintainer to review the risks to performance and ensure that our response was well co-ordinated.

I hope the information provided has demonstrated to the Transport Committee that the modes within London Rail have acted upon the lessons learnt from the adverse weather of February 2009 and we will continue to do so in the future

Kind regards

Ian A. Brown