

LONDON ASSEMBLY

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM, Chair of the Transport Committee

London Assembly
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
London, SE1 2AA

7 January 2015

Dave Ward
Route Managing Director, London and the South East
Network Rail
1 Eversholt Street
London NW1 2DN

Dear Mr Ward,

London Bridge improvement works

I am writing, as Chair of the London Assembly Transport Committee, to request an update from Network Rail on the Thameslink programme works at London Bridge, following concerns that have been expressed about the ongoing disruption to passengers using the station while the works are taking place.

While we are fully aware of the complexity of the works being undertaken, the Committee was given assurances by Network Rail that appropriate mitigation is in place to ensure that disruption to services is kept to a minimum, and that the delays and cancellations faced by passengers before Christmas would be resolved once the station blockade concluded on 4 January.

We have received reports on numerous ongoing issues at London Bridge and for services using the station, including:

- Delays due to signalling problems across the region.
- Cancellations and early terminations of trains while en route, with passengers being compelled to disembark and wait for later services.
- Cancellation of scheduled services due to staff shortages.
- Long, unexplained waiting times for trains to enter and leave the station.
- Problems with crowd management and platform access at peak periods.

I would like to request information from Network Rail to help us identify the scale of the problems and understand how they are being addressed. I would therefore be grateful if you could provide the following information and assurance to the Committee, regarding services delivered in the week commencing 4 January:

For queries please contact Richard Berry on 020 7983 4199 or Richard.Berry@london.gov.uk

- The number of unscheduled train cancellations on routes into and out of London Bridge Station from 4 January and the reasons for these cancellations.
- The number of train delays of longer than 30 minutes, for services arriving and departing London Bridge.
- Confirmation of whether the signalling problems experienced in the week commencing 4 January are linked to, or separate from, the Thameslink programme works, and what is being done to resolve these problems.
- Further information on Network Rail's policy for cancellation of trains with passengers on board.

We have noted the statement issued by Network Rail on 6 January regarding concourse management and understand that you will be reviewing the circumstances that led to potentially dangerous overcrowding at the station on 5 January. I would be grateful if you could let us know the outcome of this review and the lessons learned.

We would also welcome any additional information you can provide on action that Network Rail will be taking to reduce avoidable delays across the region while works continue, and what steps will be taken to ensure that up –to-date information about services and disruption is effectively relayed to passengers.

I look forward to hearing from you on these important matters.

Yours sincerely

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM
Chair of the Transport Committee