

Caroline Pidgeon AM, Chair of the Transport Committee

Mr Charles Horton
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Dear Charles

Passenger incident in Bexleyheath

I am writing, on behalf of the London Assembly Transport Committee, about the incident which occurred in Bexleyheath on the evening of 27 June 2011.

We understand a broken down train in Dartford caused significant delays to trains along that route. Passengers in one train, which was stopped just outside Bexleyheath for almost two hours, forced open a set of doors and walked on to the tracks to escape the heat. This led to Network Rail switching off the power to the third rail, increasing the disruption and delay caused by the original breakdown.

We acknowledge the danger that some passengers may have placed themselves in by walking on to the tracks. However, we are concerned about the circumstances under which passengers felt that they had no other option but to take such a drastic step. We have also heard reports that the provision of information to commuters at rail stations, such as Charing Cross, was inadequate. In light of this, we would welcome your response to the following:

- A full explanation of the events surrounding the incident on 27 June 2011, including the causes of the train breakdown;
- The actions of Southeastern staff to deal with the broken down train and keep passengers on other trains and at stations informed of the length and nature of the delay.
- How those affected will be compensated.
- The procedure followed by Southeastern when passengers are stuck for long periods, particularly during periods of warmer weather.
- The process put in place to ensure any lessons are learned as a result of the incident yesterday to prevent further incidents occurring again.

I would be grateful if you could respond to our questions by 13 July.

Yours sincerely

Caroline Pidgeon AM
Chair of the Transport Committee