

Caroline Pidgeon AM

Chair, Transport Committee
London Assembly
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
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Dear Caroline

London Assembly Transport Committee – 16 May 2018

Thank you for inviting us to the Transport Committee meeting on 16 May and for your follow up letter on 24 May. We are glad the committee found the discussion helpful. As requested, we are writing to follow-up with additional information on:

1. Our detailed approach to assessing the impact of the Royal Wedding on central London
2. An update on how well London's transport network coped on the day
3. Actions being undertaken on the District line in advance of the Four Lines Modernisation programme

1. Our approach to assessing the impact of the Royal Wedding on central London

TfL's only planned closures were on the District and Circle lines for essential upgrade work, and on London Overground due to track works being carried out by Network Rail. We scheduled these essential upgrade works during that particular weekend to avoid other events which were expected to generate significant local demand. These include the Wimbledon Tennis Championships, Polo in the Park, the tennis championships at Queen's Club and events taking place at Hyde Park. The works were also scheduled to avoid other key Underground and National Rail closures.

We used gateline data from the only comparable event – the wedding of Prince Charles and Camilla Parker Bowles at Windsor Castle on Saturday 9 April 2005. This approach worked well to allow us to understand travel flows. This enabled us to assess the impact of the closures and be sure that the wider transport network was able to cope. It is worth remembering that the vast majority of Transport for London's services were going to be running as normal over that weekend, to help everyone enjoy the Royal Wedding.

We worked closely with train operating companies and the Metropolitan Police Service in the lead-up to these events. A thorough customer communications plan

was also in place, which included information on our website and social media channels, emails to customers, and station posters.

2. Network Performance on the day

On the day of the Royal Wedding, we had additional staff at key locations and detailed plans in place for Paddington and Waterloo for those travelling to Windsor. All key London Underground lines serving Paddington and Waterloo, where services operate to and from Windsor, operated normally. The performance of both of these locations was overseen from the London Underground Control Centre (LUCC) alongside the mainline stations from the adjacent British Transport Police (BTP) command suite. LU deployed Travel Ambassadors to provide customer travel advice.

As Wembley is served by the Metropolitan and Jubilee lines, we did not expect the FA Cup Final to be affected by the District line closure. On the day, we implemented our regular, well-practised plans for football traffic, and there were no significant issues reported. The regular stadium event plan for Wembley Park station involves a 10-fold increase in station staffing (to circa 40 people), aligned with the stadium event stewarding plan and additional officers provided by the BTP.

Train service performance across the remaining parts of the LU network on 19 May was strong. There was only one incident of note, at 07:19hrs that saw a brief part-suspension of the Piccadilly line between Acton Town and Uxbridge as a result of a small track fire. This was dealt with very quickly and the line recovered to a Good Service by 08:55hrs. All other lines, not impacted by engineering works, operated a Good Service for the entire day. The network was busy over the course of the day but wholly in line with expectations.

3. Actions undertaken on the District line in advance of the Four Lines Modernisation programme

Work to install a new signalling and control system as part of the Four Lines Modernisation programme began in summer 2016. This new technology will enable us to reduce delays and improve reliability. Until then, we are taking steps to ensure good levels of service reliability day in, day out. The work is already underway and progress reviewed by dedicated teams on a daily, weekly and quarterly basis.

This programme includes:

- Replacing 2,300 point indication pins, a key component that can cause point failures. This work, expected to be completed in September 2018, will ensure points are more robust and reliable.
- Replacing 249 point mechanisms. We have carried out additional work as a result of lessons learned from eliminated problems on other lines. This will be complete by January 2019.

- Introducing three dedicated Point Care teams. They are undertaking work over and above the normal maintenance of points, to improve reliability and asset conditions. They are focusing their attention on 55 critical points over the summer period and, once completed, we expect to see a significant reduction of point related issues on the line.
- Replacing 1,322 pneumatic train-stop motors. These are protection systems that operate the emergency brakes on the train if the train goes through a red signal. They are air-operated and can suffer from reliability issues. When they fail it can result in a signal failure being triggered.

In addition to these engineering measures, we are also improving the way we work to further improve reliability. Currently, 37 per cent of our signal failures occur at the beginning of the day in the morning. This is caused by the vast number of people who gain access to our railway every night to carry out essential intrusive maintenance. These people tend to be experts in the system that they are attending the railway to maintain. Sometimes they can inadvertently cause damage to assets they do not understand either on their way to and from their worksite or actually during their work on assets close to where they are working. We are focusing on improving this. Our service controllers across the network are responsible for checking that every single signalling track circuit is operational. If any of them are not functioning, our controllers are able to contact any one of 7,000 staff carrying out engineering work every night on our network, to detect the cause of the failure and resolve the issue in time for start of traffic.

We are also taking the opportunity to clear our railway of scrap material (especially metallic items such as old rail and fastenings), leftover from previous projects at key intersecting junctions. Scrap placed carelessly or not secured properly is known to increase the probability of signal failures and damage to line-side equipment, both of which impact customer service. In certain circumstances, this can also sometimes impede fault finding and repairs and lengthen failures by making access more difficult. In the Acton Town area, for example, we have already removed 260 tonnes of scrap, and are planning to continue this work across our network.

Finally, we are educating our people who are accessing the track about the damage they can cause and the things they need to look out for. We are installing signage and making announcements to remind our staff to take care, report any damage and to not leave equipment lying around.

These short term measures will ensure good levels of service reliability day in, day out, and the Four Lines Modernisation programme will deliver longer term improvements in reliability and capacity. Until the modernisation of the District line is complete, we'll continue to do everything we possibly can to minimise disruption for our customers.

Yours sincerely,

Nigel Holness

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Director of Asset Operations
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