TOC sector reports and responses

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40806 Faults reported in repair books

Maintenance issues raised in National Express East Coast (NXEC) repair books are of concern to a reporter. Responses such as For Home Depot Attention (FHDA) and Next Major Exam (NME) are written next to reported faults in the repair books, which the reporter feels are inappropriate as they do not clarify what attempts are actually being made to fix the problem.

The reporter also points out the disturbing noise levels that result from defective air conditioning units in driving cabs can play on drivers' minds and often be mentally distracting. The failure of replacing LED lights – with explanations such as Not In Stock (NIS) – is also of concern. It is felt that the need for repairs is not being taken seriously.

Repair books, positioned in driving cabs of NXEC trains, have been reported to go missing when they list faults repeatedly. The reporter highlights that the pages are not full before the book is replaced and there is no explanation as to what happens thereafter.

The reporter questions whether it is acceptable for fault repairs to be deferred for reasons such as NIS, and why repair books appear to go missing even though they have not been completed. Please comment.

Response from East Coast Main Line (formerly National Express East Coast)

Following a survey of the repair books the reporter is correct in identifying that some books do have comments such as FHDA and NIS written into them. The responses in the repair book are aimed at confirming that the fault or report has been logged and that the issue will be addressed. The fact that it may not be apparent to the reporter when the vehicle will be returned to the home depot or when the material becomes available, or when the next exam is due makes it difficult to give the reporter positive confirmation that the issue raised is being managed in a timely fashion.

In some repair books repeat faults were identified and indeed some faults have taken a number of attempts to rectify before being successful. It's difficult to confirm or not that repair books go missing but the survey confirmed a cross section of ages ranging from new through to months old which would be typical of the maintenance operation. As part of the 'S' exam the repair books are checked nightly and confirmed as safe for service.

It should also be noted that comments made in any repair book are also logged into *RAVERS* so if a repair book does go missing, or is changed for any reason, the fault is not lost it will be shown on the *RAVERS* record which is reviewed at each exam. In respect to overall issues, the business has been focusing effort on material availability and driving supplier performance. For example, whilst the HST power car refurbishment programme has been completed, suppliers continue to be pressed

through warranty support to address issues such as air conditioning problems and fitment of doors which are generating cab noises. I hope this gives the reporter confidence that the issues raised are being dealt with.

40606 Understaffing at York, Darlington and Edinburgh stations

A reporter is very concerned about understaffing of multi-functional personnel at York, Darlington and Edinburgh stations, especially with the approach of Christmas. According to the reporter, vacancies are not being filled at these stations and the existing staff have to work extra shifts to cover, even on rest days. This has been a problem for at least six months.

It has now been announced that National Express does not intend to bring in agency staff over Christmas to assist with luggage. Instead, staff will be brought in from headquarters to help out, but the reporter is concerned that this will not be sufficient. The reporter and many other members of staff on these stations are very concerned that the lack of extra staff over Christmas will lead to an intolerable workload. The reporter fears that the pressure on staff could lead to mistakes being made in dispatch, through tiredness or being distracted by other duties. Also, the high workload is likely to lead to more staff having to take time off sick, exacerbating the problem.

In the short term, the reporter would like to see agency staff brought in to assist over Christmas. In the longer term, the reporter would like to see the existing vacancies filled to relieve the pressure on existing staff. Also, the reporter feels that National Express could be better at communicating to the staff on the ground how they intend to relieve the work load caused by understaffing. Will National Express consider bringing in agency staff for Christmas at these stations? Will the vacancies at these stations be filled in the foreseeable future?

Response from East Coast Main Line (formerly National Express East Coast)
At the time that the report was submitted some station teams were running slightly short of their full compliment but these were covered by staff working overtime on a voluntary basis. Staff performing safety critical duties work in dedicated dispatch teams and their working hours are strictly rostered and monitored. These roles are always covered as a priority. Station managers were able to utilise a mixture of agency staff and volunteers to help with customer assistance roles on the busy periods leading up to Christmas. The use of volunteers is regarded as particularly useful as customer assistance functions can vary from hour to hour. By looking at the requests for assistance and planning in advance we can make sure key times and days are covered by staff who have valuable working knowledge of the railway.

Since the report was made a full station reorganisation has been completed which was fully consulted with relevant trade unions and all the stations are currently working to their full compliment of staff.

40659 Drivers unaware of possible changes in procedures about HST brake isolations

Concern has been raised about axle isolations on High Speed Trains (HSTs). A reporter believes a new instruction has been issued by National Express East Coast (NXEC) regarding new braking procedures that not all drivers are unaware of.

According to the reporter if any of the brakes are isolated on a HST the whole train should then be treated as if the brakes aren't working. The parts of the *Rule Book* concerning brake isolations are then followed.

The reporter states that NXEC issue a *Form A* if two of four axles are isolated. *Form A* imposes a five mph speed restriction which the reporter believes does not comply with the *Rule Book* which states speed restrictions relating to braking should be ten mph. Concern is raised that *Form A* does not comply with the standards governing the proportion of brakes that can be safely isolated.

The reporter also states that the new instruction allows NXEC to isolate one axle without informing the driver. He believes that if drivers are unaware of axle isolations already on their train then any further isolations they apply could result in defective brake applications and *Rule Book* breaches. The driver is concerned that this introduces a whole new set of rules not covered in the *Rule Book* and is leading to confusion amongst fellow colleagues. There is a suggestion that a lack of train maintenance and inadequate replacement of broken brake discs is resulting in an increase in regular brake isolations. The reporter does not understand why brake isolations are becoming routine. Additional information: The concern only affects old diesel 125's.

For the RSSB:

- could clarification be provided about the isolation procedures for HSTs? and
- what, if any, differences are there in the rules about one, two, three or four axle isolations?

For NXEC:

- What changes have there been to procedures for brake isolations on HSTs? Are the isolations a temporary or longer-term measure?
- The reporter is concerned about the lack of briefings given to drivers about brake isolation changes and believes drivers should be notified of all axle isolations. Can briefings be given to all drivers affected by this change in procedure?
- What measures can be put in place to reduce the frequency of isolations occurring and replace the broken discs?

Response from East Coast Main Line (formerly National Express East Coast)

The amended instructions were a short term measure which were put in place due to a shortage of replacement wheel sets which affected not only ourselves but other operators in the country. Previously, it had been practice to isolate a whole vehicle's

brakes when any defect was found on an individual wheel set and to then take the vehicle out of service. In order to reduce the impact on passengers by taking vehicles out of service and running sets short formed, a process of allowing vehicles to enter service with a limited number of wheel sets isolated was put in place, which was managed and monitored by our maintenance control team. Before the changes were put in place a railway engineering consultant was engaged to do studies of the impact of the proposal on the trains braking performance. Feedback from the study validated the proposals as acceptable in line with the braking parameters shown in *Railway Group Standard GM/RT2041 'Braking System Requirements and Performance for Trailer Coaching Stock'.*

Maintenance control staff use a table to calculate the speed restrictions that are imposed dependant on the number of wheel sets and these instructions were issued in a bulletin issued to all drivers. The frequency that this instruction is implemented is now very rarely applied as the underlying problem has now been resolved.

Response from RSSB
The *Rule Book* contains instructions in *Section 3.4 of module TW3* which allow a locomotive-hauled train or HST to enter service, or continue in service, with the brakes isolated on a proportion of vehicles subject to a 10 mph reduction in speed. *Section 3.2* explains that if a vehicle is equipped with two distributors, and only one of these is isolated, the vehicle must be treated as though the brakes are completely isolated on that vehicle.

However, these instructions are those issued to operations staff to apply nationally, and it is quite possible that an individual operator of HSTs might publish additional instructions directed to fleet staff that do not result in the effectiveness of the brakes being reduced significantly on any individual vehicle. National Express would be able to confirm whether this is the case.

40865 Lack of fire instructions and briefings and access to the railway telephone

A reporter has contacted CIRAS with concerns about the lack of fire instructions and briefings for a particular area of Waterloo station and access to the railway telephone.

Fire instructions and briefings
The area in question is where South West Trains (SWT) installed new ticket barriers, near the subway entrance and exit to the underground part of the station. Since the installation of these barriers the reporter comments that the fire procedures on the 'paid' side of the barriers have changed and as a result new fire instructions and briefings need to be provided. The reporter is aware that management said they would provide this information but have yet to do so. Further to this, there are no signs in the subway area to indicate the nearest emergency exit.

The reporter is concerned that if the fire alarm were to sound staff could direct people incorrectly, possibly back into a fire, as they have received no instructions or briefings as to the evacuation procedures for that area.

- Could South West Trains ensure that staff receive the necessary fire instructions and briefings?
- Could Network Rail ensure that the area has adequate emergency exit signs?

Access to railway telephone
Another issue raised by the reporter is a lack of access to a railway telephone in the subway area. Whilst in this area, staff are unable to use their mobile phones and the signal to their radios is intermittent, making it difficult to contact anyone if an emergency situation were to arise. The reporter comments that there is a railway telephone in the subway area but that it is locked away and no one has a key.

- Could Network Rail explain why this telephone is out of use and comment on the possibility of providing staff with a key?

Response from South West Trains
South West Trains would like to thank the reporter for raising the issue of the fire instructions and briefings for subway barrier staff, including access to the telephones. Members of staff who work on the barriers at Waterloo have been briefed on the station evacuation arrangements applicable to them. This briefing is based upon the station's emergency plan and includes details of the applicable fire arrangements.

Telephones are provided in the staff huts and access is available to staff. The staff huts are locked and keys to the huts have been sourced and are being provided to staff as appropriate to allow them access to the telephones.

Response from Network Rail
Network Rail would like to thank the reporter for raising their concerns regarding fire exit signage and access to railway telephones.

Our senior fire safety engineer has confirmed that emergency signage in the 'paid' side of the milk arch was not required as 'way out' signage is sufficient. In the event of a fire the most appropriate exit would be determined by the location of the fire. Therefore, putting up fire exit signs could be confusing. An inspection of the areas has however bought to our attention that signage on the 'unpaid' side may not be sufficient. A further inspection will be undertaken with the senior fire safety engineer shortly to agree what additional signage is required.

There are two telephones located in the Peak Hour Subway (PHS). They are within the gate line assistant points (staff huts) and therefore access is determined by South West Trains.

40850 Air conditioning not working and not repaired

A driver is concerned about the failure of the air conditioning system in three particular units (158881, 158887 and 159105) operated by South West Trains (SWT). These units have not been repaired for several months, apparently because of a shortage of spares normally shipped over from Switzerland; SWT do not hold spares. Non-functioning air conditioning systems can lead to drowsiness and an inability to concentrate properly. Though it is possible to open the cab window, above 50 mph the rattling and wind noise make this impractical.

According to the driver, these units are being sent back into service when it is a *Rule Book (Module TW5*) requirement that the faults should be repaired before leaving a maintenance depot. The following is an excerpt from *Section 7*:

Cab heating and cooling equipment
7.1 Entering service
You must not allow a train or traction unit to enter service if, in any cab which is required to be used:

- the cab heating or cooling equipment is not working, and
- the temperature could affect the safe operation of the train.

Apart from this practice apparently contravening the *Rule Book*, the trains with faulty air-conditioning are returning to service with documentation to say there are 'no known faults'. This is viewed as misleading. Could SWT please clarify:

- When these particular units will be repaired?
- Why the relevant documentation does not mention the faults?
- Why spares are not carried by SWT when there are known reliability problems?

Response from South West Trains

South West Trains would like to thank the reporter for raising their concerns regarding the air conditioning on class 158/159 units. The South West Trains engineering department have developed a number of strategies for reducing the likelihood of defects and failures occurring with these units. A number of key components are subject to a repair time of three to six weeks. This can occasionally result in the air conditioning being out of use for a period of time, as occurred with the three stated units. However the depots make every effort to ensure that the air conditioning is returned to working condition as soon as practicable, within these constraints.

The *Rule Book* instruction relating to air conditioning, requires units fitted with air conditioning to have working air conditioning when leaving a depot, but only applies when weather conditions are such that the air conditioning is required to keep the cab temperature such that it ensures the safe working of the train. At other times the trains may enter service in accordance with the *Rule Book* instructions. With regard to the train preparation slip that is provided as evidence that the train is ready for service. This document is of an old design and is in need of review and update to

suit changes to the company process and as a result of this report will be reviewed and updated in the new year to bring it up to date.

40846 Failed AC units and new instructions could increase fire risk

A reporter is concerned that instructions issued about the failure of Air Conditioning (AC) units on the class 442 Gatwick Express trains could cause difficulties to staff and passengers in the event of an on-board fire.

AC units have had reliability problems on these trains, even after they have been refurbished. Although the AC works on some of the carriages, every train is said to have a problem with at least one AC unit. Consequently, a notice was issued during the hot weather experienced this summer so that drafts are created in the carriages. After advising the driver that the air conditioning unit(s) are not working, the notice states that staff:

"should then assist the driver in opening the door windows and isolating open the vestibule doors at the ends of each vehicle where is has not been possible to reinstate the air conditioning… Remember: open and isolate internal doors, unlock and open drop light windows, report the defect to the in-service fleet manager."

With windows and doors open, a continuous carriage could be created within the train. The reporters worry is how a fire would be contained when windows and doors are open. The continuous carriage provides more opportunity for a fire to spread and smoke could travel faster, making it difficult to move passengers from one carriage to another. In panic situation, it might be difficult to close doors to try to contain the fire. Additionally, although the internal doors are deemed to be fire doors, the reporter states that some of the rubber around the doors has come off and does not make the carriages air tight.

Could Southern clarify the following:

- How would a fire be contained in a continuous carriage environment or when internal carriage doors and windows are open?
- What procedures should be followed if there was a fire on-board a train in such circumstances?
- What plans are in place to fix the air conditioning units?

Response from Southern

Southern would like to thank the reporter for sharing their concerns regarding the failure of air conditioning units in the class 442 units.

The reporter is correct in saying there were a number of issues over the summer, and during the latter part of the summer the class 442 units had their modules upgraded to the latest standard. We now have in place 'ibutton' technology on every unit to constantly monitor the temperatures within the coaches and the data collected is analysed remotely.

In response to the concerns regarding a fire on-board the train the reporter is quite correct about doors and windows being left open for any reason will not possibly contain a fire at the point of origin. However, it is worthy of note that rolling stock is constructed of materials conforming to specific fire retardant standards and for a fire to reach such a maturity to threaten life it would take a considerable amount of time to reach this point. This would be far in excess of any emergency decision made to safely evacuate the train at the nearest station or if deemed appropriate a trackside evacuation. Even non-fire retardant doors and windows can create an effective barrier against fire spread for a limited period of time.

In the event of an on-board fire the procedures to follow under these circumstances would be the same for any other fire condition on the train regardless of the origin; these are well documented and form part of the training given to train crew. Essentially once the alarm is raised a decision is made by train crew to determine the extent of the problem and assess if an immediate evacuation is required or if the train can continue safely to the nearest station for an evacuation to take place. This can only be determined at the time of the incident and of course based on the circumstances that prevail at the time.

We would also like to assure the reporter that these units are checked on a daily basis to resolve any issues discovered, or reported by staff, and we encourage the reporter to notify any problems found so that they are recorded through the correct process and to enable any issues to be dealt with promptly.

40754 Lack of first aid trained staff at Hull depot

The lack of first aid trained staff at Hull depot is a concern for one reporter. There have been several incidents over the last year where staff have required first aid and there has not been a first aid trained person present to deal with the situation. The reporter is concerned that if there were a major incident and a member of staff required first aid, someone would be needed to assist before the arrival of emergency services.

The reporter believes there is only one first aider at Hull even though there are over 200 members of staff that work from the depot. This is seen to be insufficient. The first aid facilities at this location are also seen to be lacking. The depot is managed by First TransPennine Express and the reporter is unsure who is responsible for providing the first aid trained staff members.

Could clarification be provided on the following points:

- Who is responsible at Hull depot for providing first aid trained members of staff. Is it the sole responsibility of First TransPennine Express who manages the depot? Or are the individual companies responsible for providing first aid trained staff for their own members of staff?
- Due to changes in legislation, should there be one first aider present at all times in the depot?

- Has a risk assessment been carried out on how many first aid trained members of staff are required, taking into account the number of staff working at the depot? If so, could the details be provided?

Ultimately, the reporter would like to see the correct number of first aid trained members of staff at Hull depot, so that sufficient first aid can be given when it is required. Please comment.

Response from First TransPennine Express
First TransPennine Express (FTPE) would like to thank the reporter for raising their concern. FTPE are responsible for providing 'adequate and appropriate' first aid arrangements for their employees. This is determined by carrying out a suitable risk assessment for the location taking into account the number of employees on site at any given time, previous accident history, any local hazards and the type of work activity being undertaken. The risk assessment also took into account the location of the nearest hospital facilities. It was determined that the level of risk required 'appointed persons' rather than fully trained first aiders and so this training is being provided for staff. The risk assessment is held locally at the station and is available to view on request.

Response from Northern Rail
Thank you for the raised concern over the lack of trained first aiders at Hull depot. Hull 'depot' can be split into two areas Hull Botanic Gardens (train maintenance depot) and Hull station (train crew depot).

1) Hull Botanic Gardens is a fuelling point and carries out a train 'A' exam on an evening. The depot is staffed by six level five fitters and three level three maintenance assistants. There are also six cleaners based at the depot, but who predominantly work at Hull Paragon station. At any one time it would be unusual for more than four people to be working at Botanic depot, with the nightshift being the busiest. A risk assessment has been undertaken to determine the levels of first aid which includes trained emergency first aid and first aiders, and the number of trained people allows adequate shift coverage.

2) Hull Paragon station is a First TransPennine Express (FTPE) managed station and there is an agreement for FTPE trained staff to cover Northern staff. This agreement is displayed in the health and safety notice case at Hull. There are also Northern trained staff for other areas, such as the nearby offices, as supported through the 'assessment of need' risk assessment. The risk assessment, along with other factors, takes account of the likely number of staff at any one time and not the establishment for the location. Northern understands that FTPE have adequate numbers of first aid staff available, especially considering the retail and management staff available at the station. Full details of Northern requirements, including 'shared workplaces' can be found in *Safety Procedure SMSP 3.07 'First Aid'*. The concern raised suggests that the arrangements outlined in the notice case may not be sufficiently fulfilling the requirement for Northern to inform all staff of the first aid

arrangements and consequently a short brief summarising the arrangements for managing first aid at the station will be included in the local train crew brief.

The Northern head of risk and safety performance is available to assist further on this matter, if required.

Response from Hull Trains
First Hull Trains have an access agreement with First TransPennine Express to work in Hull Paragon station and Botanic Gardens depot, with all our staff working from Europa House in Hull as our depot. Considering Europa House as a depot, I can provide assurance that all requisite risk assessments and the resultant provision of first aiders has been provided. Europa House is a new depot and these arrangements are subject to a probationary review. I therefore would like to identify if Europa House is the depot being referenced by the reporter, although employing under one hundred staff in total, we fall short of the two hundred staff figure provided in the report.

All our train crew are first aid at work trained and therefore are available to render first aid when working at either Hull Paragon or Botanic Garden depot (the other two potential 'depots' in Hull). We are satisfied that First TransPennine Express are providing sufficient first aid provision at all Hull depots.

40908 Dispatch training for new Javelin service

The dispatch arrangements for the new Javelin service, beginning on December 13 2009 from St. Pancras, are causing concern for several staff at Southeastern.

The main concern is that trainee dispatchers are not thought to be having enough time to practise train dispatch. They are being risk assessed immediately after classroom based training, without having the benefit of doing practice runs over the course of a few shifts. Practice runs are normally an integral part of training for dispatch - these enable learning, feedback and improvement under the guidance of a licensed member of staff.

It is felt that an important learning stage is being left out. As a result, some trainee dispatchers are uncomfortable about their own level of competence. There is an expectation that they will be dispatching trains when the service begins operation in just a few days' time.
Also, a dispatch plan for the station does not appear to be readily available and the safety equipment is difficult to locate.

The reporter believes these issues need to be resolved urgently. Please comment on any further steps Southeastern may be taking to ensure safe dispatch of the Javelin service at launch.

Response from Southeastern

Thank you for this report. It has been fully investigated and discussed with the staff at St. Pancras. We believe that these concerns arose from the fact that a small number of new staff at high speed stations, including St. Pancras, were rostered to be assessed in the week commencing 6 December only a few days after receiving initial training. Rostering of assessments in this way is not the usual practice on Southeastern, but was done in this case so that all relevant staff had the opportunity to be assessed in safety critical duties (including train dispatch and retrieval of items from the track) in time for the service launch on 13 December.

Although in this case assessments were rostered, no attempt would have been or was made to carry out an assessment unless the trainee agreed that they have had sufficient training and practice and feel confident to be assessed. Equally if an assessment did commence but the assessor had concerns, the assessment would be terminated and further practice arranged for the trainee prior to assessment at a later date. Assessors are independent of the line management teams. Dispatch plans are in place and available at St. Pancras. Emergency equipment is also in place and its location has been re-briefed to relevant staff.

40847 Lack of coupling refresher training

A reporter is concerned that train drivers and managers have not received coupling refresher training on the Voyager 220/221 and High Speed Trains (HSTs), or training below the sole bar on HSTs, for over two years.

Staff previously received coupling refresher training so should a train break down or need rescuing, the train driver or manager could attach the emergency coupler to allow the train to be towed. Also, staff have been informed that they only need to know the workings of HSTs above the sole bar. This means that if a train were to break down staff would be very limited in their ability to solve the problem and would have to wait for help to arrive (which could take several hours). The reporter believes that drivers and train managers should have full knowledge of the traction they are working.

The reporter would like to see train drivers and managers receive coupling refresher training for the Voyager 220/221 and HSTs on a regular basis and to be given training below the sole bar on HSTs. Please comment.

Response from CrossCountry

Voyager emergency coupler

The manual handling requirements for the Voyager trains changed after the DMSL vehicle in which the emergency coupling was stored was refurbished to accommodate revised catering storage. When the manual handling was reviewed with the drivers' health and safety representatives it became apparent that releasing the coupling from its storage cupboard posed manual handling tasks that required specific training and additional staffing levels for assistance. The company reviewed the number of occasions where the coupler had been used, and with records

showing that nationally the coupler had not been used over the last four years, the decision was taken that it was not reasonably practicable to maintain competence on this method of emergency recovery using the driver. In the unlikely event that an emergency coupler is required, a TRI can be used to deploy the coupler.

HST emergency coupler
Drivers continue to maintain competence where possible on use of the emergency coupler and should be assisted by another competent person. A competent person would be someone capable of assisting in the manual handling requirements for the component parts of the coupler, should assistance recovery be required due to breakdown. Since HST operation commenced in the new CrossCountry franchise, there has not been occasion to use assistance recovery.

Drivers are competent on all technical aspects of the operation of the train; including items below the sole bar level on the rolling stock, for example isolation of brakes.

40873 Faults on modified class 158 units

CIRAS has received a report about a number of existing faults on the recently modified class 158 units. These units are in the process of being modified for use with the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS). The reporter understands a lot of rewiring to be taking place which they believe is the reason behind these faults.

The majority of the concerns centre around distracting features on the dashboard, particularly at night. These are:

- most of the lights on the dashboard begin to flash every time the power handle is moved or when the guard keys in or out of the control door, diverting attention;
- the red liquid display used for showing the token for each section is mounted in the drivers' direct line of sight, creating a glare in their visual field;
- the headlamp and marker proving lights are also in the drivers' direct line of sight and said to be too bright;
- some of the lights on the dashboard either do not light up or are constantly alight. The reporter gives the example of the wheel slip protection light on one unit constantly glowing. As a consequence drivers' were unaware if the wheel slip protection was working or not;
- the screen for the GSM-R radios also produce a glare, even in the day time; and
- on sunny days the speedometer and brake gauges reflect in to the side window, again producing glare and creating another distraction.

The majority of the above faults have been reported by drivers and logged in the defect books. The reporter questions why these faults have not been rectified.

Another area of concern is the speedometers. The reporter comments that at present the secondary speedometers are in use. The display for this speedometer is

described as very small and cluttered as it displays speed in both miles and kilometres. This accompanied with the bright backing light makes this instrument very hard to read, particularly at night. The reporter adds that having to stare so hard to read the speedometer creates an after effect of blind spots on their vision, making it difficult to then see clearly out of the window. The reporter also believes some units to have defective speedometers. The example was given of a speedometer displaying the speed of the train to be 60mph but in fact it is travelling at 63mph. In some cases the error margin is as big as five or six per cent. The reporter is concerned that drivers could be speeding and not realise.

The above faults have again been reported and logged in the defect book but the train with the defective speedometer is still in service.

Could Arriva Trains Wales:

- comment on the above faults; and
- outline the time period in which a reported fault should be repaired?

Response from Arriva Trains Wales

Arriva Trains Wales thanks the person concerned for their report. Because the fitment of the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) trainborne equipment is at an early stage, and it is a new system to the UK, a number of new cab issues will inevitably come to light as the system is brought into use. This is being managed through a testing programme for train running at each stage and a process for drivers to provide the company and the ERTMS project with feedback on the performance of the equipment etc.

It is felt this process is working well with a number of issues being identified and rectified (or in the process of being rectified). In answer to the specific reports raised by the reporter:

- flashing dashboard lights - the redesign of the driver's desk to install ERTMS included new buttons and indicators, with the latter fitted with LEDs instead of the original incandescent lamps (LEDs require much less energy). The sensitivity of the LEDs has led to them flickering; as soon as this was identified incandescent bulbs were fitted to all subsequent units going through ERTMS modification. For the two units that had already been fitted, one has had the LEDs changed. The other will be dealt with before it returns to passenger service (it is currently being used for training and testing). Please note this response also covers the issue of the wheel-slip protection light constantly glowing mentioned in the report;
- glare from red liquid display - the RETB display unit is fitted with a dimmer switch and thought to be adequately dim not to affect drivers. Further driver feedback has been sought and if required a cover will be provided for the unit. At the time of writing only this one report has been received and no other drivers have raised it as an issue;
- headlamp and marker proving lights too bright - the design of the headlight repeater should have introduced a shaded screen to dramatically reduce the light from the indicator. Unfortunately the parts from the supplier were not

fitted as per the design drawing. Early feedback from drivers indicated this as an issue. The correct shaded panel was then fitted to 158 824, and driver feedback is being sought to ensure that the correct brightness is obtained before other vehicles are retro-fitted;
- glare from the GSM-R screen – we have received no other reports from drivers via our feedback process on this issue. The positioning of this screen was consulted and agreed with driver representatives;
- reflection from secondary speedometer and brake gauges – this has been identified through the feedback process and a brake gauge with anti-reflective glass is now being manufactured to resolve that issue;
- secondary speedometers - the secondary speedometers' use will of course decrease significantly when ERTMS is fully commissioned on these DMUs. Their detailed design and lighting was extensively considered by Arriva Trains Wales, the ERTMS project, independent safety professionals and driver representatives. Part of this process involved viewing in a blacked-out cab, to consider the speedometer's appearance in the dark; and
- there are laid-down tolerances for speedometer error; checks show that all speedometers on ERTMS-fitted DMUs are working within those tolerances.

The feedback of drivers is invaluable in making sure that ERTMS is implemented safely and effectively, and we encourage all drivers to let us know their observations.

40774 Concerns over security checks at York

A reporter is concerned that station staff at York station have been asked to take on additional security duties, without being given the appropriate training. Staff have been asked to take over security duties which used to be the responsibility of actual security staff. This includes carrying out Hidden, Obvious, Typical (HOT) procedures on top of their usual safety critical and customer service duties.

The reporter is concerned that the extra workload will mean that either safety critical tasks or security tasks will eventually suffer, particularly in the busy summer months. Also, the reporter feels that staff have not been given adequate training to carry out security tasks. There is uncertainty over exactly what security checks staff are expected to carry out, and to what extent. The reporter believes that staff will not know the correct procedures to follow if a security inspection uncovers anything of concern.

The reporter would like to see National Express East Coast:
- either provide staff with sufficient training to carry out security duties; or
- employ security personnel to carry out security duties.

Response from East Coast Main Line (formerly National Express East Coast)
National Express East Coast (NXEC) would like to thank the reporter for highlighting their concerns. When new processes are suggested we always involve both the health and safety and local staff representatives to ensure we get as much staff participation and feedback on any proposed changes. This happened before any

changes were made to the security inspection regime and the inspection process, the final version being devised by the health and safety representative.

The health and safety representative also assisted in the briefing process, which involved each member of staff being fully briefed on a face-to-face basis, which provided details of the station zones (which have been aligned to those that they are responsible for evacuation purposes), the zonal checks to be carried out and the check reporting procedure.

Part of the process briefed highlighted that it is acceptable for checks to be missed when disruption or late running trains cause additional heavy workloads, providing the reasons why security checks haven't been made are recorded. This emphasised the fact that safety critical duties will not be jeopardised as employee and passenger safety is paramount in NXEC. It is also important to remember that security awareness is also everyone's responsibility, which is why every member of staff who joins the company receives a security awareness briefing as part of the company induction process. Regarding the specific use of the HOT procedures to ascertain whether objects or persons are possibly suspicious and which potentially pose a threat, members of station staff are assessed in its use during competence assessment. In addition the use of security staff has been retained during periods where staff numbers are minimal (between 22:00 hours and 06:00 hours).

In order to address the concerns raised the station management team will re-examine the quality of the training provided and incorporate any necessary changes required into the security inspection regime. The HOT procedure and changes will be re-visited during the next round of safety update days in order to provide any reassurance which is needed and get any feedback from the staff involved. In the meantime, staff are urged to raise any issues they have with their line manager or are welcome to speak to any other member of the station management team or staff representatives.

40927 Draughty cabs on class 158s causing distraction

CIRAS has received a report about a draught in the driving cab of class 158s causing a distraction for drivers. The reporter comments that drivers are experiencing a loss of concentration due to the severe cold being created by the draught. It is believed that the problem arose when the units were modified for the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) and the old conditioning unit removed, but the cab not sealed properly. Faults have been logged in the repair book but apparently repairs are yet to be carried out.

The reporter adds that this is a problem for a number of the class 158s but that unit 822 has had multiple fault reports logged. Is there anything Arriva Trains Wales could do to alleviate the draught in the cab? And could special attention be paid to unit 822?

Response from Arriva Trains Wales

Arriva Trains Wales (ATW) thanks the reporter for raising their concerns. As part of our ongoing consultations with driver representatives on the introduction of ERTMS, a request was made by them to remove the cab vent that worked via an external air intake. This was agreed and part of the design for this involved blanking-off the external air intake to prevent draughts.

Since the start of the modification programme a subsequent request was made to have the vents reinstated. Before making a decision on this, ATW enquired about the cost with the ERTMS fitment contractor. Unfortunately, the latter wrongly assumed that this meant they should stop fitting the blanking plates to external air intakes of the class 158s and thus some 158s were put into service in that condition. As soon as this was realised an immediate response was implemented by ATW, blanking-off the air ducting behind the driver's desks on the affected units. In total eight class 158 units were affected (including 158 822).

We believe this has now cured the draught problem for these units but continue to welcome driver feedback.

40893 'Rough riding' near Castle Cary station

A reporter is concerned about 'rough riding' on a section of track about a quarter of a mile west of Castle Cary station on the Paddington to Penzance route. This section of track has always had a slight camber but there is a very noticeable jolt at line speed. From the cab, there appears to be a visible distortion in the track where it sinks and then rises up again. The origin of the distortion is not known but the reporter suspects it may have something to do with very heavy freight trains passing over this particular section.

Some drivers slow down when approaching this section of track; however some do not, suggesting that not everyone is aware of the perceived problem. The reporter comments that the jolt has become more noticeable in the last three months. On-board the train, passengers are finding themselves lurching from one side to another with the clear potential for an injury if someone lost their balance and fell.

Could Network Rail:

- investigate this particular section of track? Is there any need for a temporary speed restriction here perhaps?

Could First Great Western:

- ask their drivers for feedback on this section and provide the appropriate advice?

Response from First Great Western

First Great Western (FGW) would like to thank the reporter for bringing their concerns to our attention. Since this report Network Rail have already done a lot of work to enhance the condition of the track. FGW will continue to press Network Rail

to find a permanent solution to the problem. Until then FGW will carry on monitoring the ride quality over this section of track.

The feedback from train crew already acknowledges an improvement. All the work done and the subsequent improvements have been as a result of this report.

40916 Trespassing and anti-social behaviour at Guildford station

A reporter would like to highlight the increase in the number of trespassing incidents, and increased anti-social behaviour, at Guildford station. The situation has apparently got much worse since the introduction of 24 hour station opening hours. A reduction from four security guards to one also makes an effective response more difficult.

Anti-social behaviour occurs when individuals under the influence of alcohol are thrown out of local clubs and pubs, and have nowhere else to go. They then attempt to get on the tracks and start fights in the station, thus becoming too much for a single guard to handle. This tends to happen between one and four am in the morning when the trains aren't running. The reporter believes there may be a discrepancy between the South West Train's incident book and the station log book; it is not clear whether all the incidents are recorded.

The solution is a fairly straightforward one, according to the reporter:

- keep the station closed between the period of the last arrival and first departure; or
- alternatively equip the station with more security guards to reduce trespassing incidents.

Please comment.

Response from South West Trains

South West Trains would like to thank the reporter for raising the issue of anti- social behaviour at Guildford station. We would like to reassure the reporter that we share the concerns expressed with regard to acts of trespass and vandalism.

Twenty-four hour opening of Guildford station is not something that has recently been introduced; a public right of way exists across the station which prevents us from closing the station at night. We sought to change this access arrangement however local resident objections prevented this from happening. Under previous arrangements four security guards were provided on Friday and Saturday nights, which following a review was changed to two for these days and one Sunday to Thursday night. The review determined that this level of resource was adequate given the support available from the local rail community officers based at Guildford station.

In our experience, the quality of the security staff and the recording of incidents by them which has been well received by the local station management team. At this

time, we believe, there is no evidence to support any further changes. The situation is continuously monitored by our security management team to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

40933 Replacing emergency safety equipment in cabs

A reporter is concerned about emergency safety equipment not being replaced promptly enough in the driving cab of class 377s. The equipment being referred to is a set of detonators, a short circuit bar and track circuit clips. The reporter has noted that it is becoming more frequent that cabs have missing equipment and that it is taking longer for such equipment to be replaced, in some instances in excess of 48 hours.

The reporter comments that all driving cabs should have a full set of emergency safety equipment, whether that cab is being used at the time or not. The concern is that in an emergency situation a driver may not have all the equipment they need to hand and may waste valuable time retrieving it from the other end of the train. Does Southern have a timescale whereby such safety equipment should be replaced and could they ensure that all 377 cabs have a full set of equipment?

Response from Southern

We thank the reporter for bringing this matter to our attention. Trains before entering service on any given day must be prepared either by a member of fleet staff (at an engineering depot) or by a train driver (all other locations). This preparation must be carried out at least once in any 24 hour period in which the train is being used for passenger service. Part of the train preparation involves a check of the emergency equipment.

If any missing emergency equipment is discovered during the train preparation at an engineering depot, it would be replaced immediately prior to the train departing. If the train preparation is carried out elsewhere by a driver, and it was noted that equipment was missing (or if equipment was found to be missing at any other time) then the extract from *Module 5.3* of our *Standards and Procedures Manual* would apply.

> *Emergency Equipment. The equipment to be provided is in accordance with the operating instructions for the classes of unit concerned, read in conjunction with the Rule Book. The train may enter service providing there is always the minimum equipment provided for the cab or brake van being used. This may mean transferring equipment from another cab or brake van, in which case the facts must be reported and the units replenished as soon as practicable.*

We would expect the equipment to be replaced:

- by the end of the day (or overnight) if the unit is berthed at a fleet location; and

- for trains berthed at outstations it is expected the train to be allowed to re-enter traffic on the following day providing the minimum equipment was still present.

If it is felt that the above timescales are not being achieved it would be appreciated if the reporter could discuss this with the local manager so that appropriate action can be taken.

40829 Inadequate training on bi-directional line which is due to be implemented

A reporter has expressed concern about the training given to Virgin Pendolino drivers for the new bi-directional line which is becoming operational between Lichfield and Rugby in November 2009. The training programme consists of drivers being shown a DVD one day, and then on another day taken out by an instructor in a service car at 125mph – which is perhaps a little too fast to take everything in. The reporter says that although the DVD is useful the new route, which has signals on a different side, requires first hand driving experience to ensure safe driving when it becomes operational.

Unfortunately drivers will not be receiving first hand driving experience on the new route, largely because of the difficulty in obtaining consent and suitable paths from Network Rail. The reporter suggests that a road learning car - rather than a service car - could be run down the bi-directional line as part of the training programme. This might be possible if train services were temporarily diverted down a line running parallel to the Lichfield and Rugby line, used in the event of a train failure or engineering work.

For Network Rail:
What are the operational constraints preventing the reporter's suggestion of diverting trains along the parallel line to allow for training to be implemented?

For Virgin:
Please comment on the reporter's main point that there is no real substitute for first hand driving experience on a new bi-directional route. In any future reviews of the training for such changes in signalling arrangements, could consideration be given to more learning time for drivers on new routes?

Response from Virgin

As with all the West Coast Mainline upgrades undertaken so far, a need to be ready for the start of operations has meant the use of a mix of actual footage and virtual reality. Prior to the introduction of the bi-direction working, we had successfully trained all of our driving workforce from five depots concerned on the upgrades in advance of their introduction using the mix of actual and virtual footage. During the upgrade, routes changed considerably during the process and yet our operational performance was excellent during this time.

It was always going to be a challenge to introduce the bi-directional element of the upgrade as the route miles involved were quite substantial. We were aware that other bi-directional working had been introduced during the previous phases of the upgrade and that drivers had coped with this type of working extremely well but we were conscious of the challenge for the wider scheme. Therefore one of the considerations at all the planning stages was to keep all signals parallel. To that effect, we took into consideration that all the wrong line working signals would be in place and lit for a considerable amount of time before we started training. That would give all our drivers the opportunity to locate the signals and become familiar with their positions before we gave the instruction on any routing to and from the bi-directional lines.

The training allowance provided for this part of the scheme was longer than any other of the scheme and reflected our consideration for the nature of this part of the scheme. Training was to take place over three days. The first day was in a classroom situation that utilised the mix of actual footage on the plain line moves and the use of virtual reality for moves through the junctions and turnouts. Day two was conducted in the live environment from the cab with the purpose of allowing the instructor to physically locate for the drivers those elements shown on the first day in the classroom.

Day three was back in the classroom allowing the knowledge of both the previous two days to be brought together and the opportunity to fine tune the understanding of our drivers by running through the training materials again and offering the opportunity to raise any points of clarification as deemed necessary by any individual. In effect, the majority of the WCML upgrade was introduced by training using virtual reality and not just the bi-directional element. It is evident so far that this methodology has proved extremely successful and allows the correct balance between driver knowledge, operational readiness and the ability to provide a new railway for our customers.

Response from Network Rail
Network Rail would like to thank the reporter for raising their concern regarding training for the new bi-directional line between Lichfield and Rugby.

Where a company has drivers to train, it is up to that company to decide which training methods it chooses to adopt. However, if any company wishes to consider the option of using route learning trains, then Network Rail would consider any bids for such paths in the normal way. Network Rail would work to identify paths for them in the timetable, with the agreement of all companies affected.

40922 Lack of guard training over new routes

A reporter has contacted CIRAS with concerns about a lack of training for guards following re-signalling, re-modelling and track layout changes in the Trent area.

A document entitled "*Supplementary Notices for Signalling and Permanent Way Alternations*" has been distributed to CrossCountry drivers and guards. It details the new procedures and changes to the routes and junctions including:- name changes, track that has been introduced or changed status, and where goods lines are now passenger lines. Drivers have received more than two days' training to go through the document and familiarise themselves with the new routes. However, guards have only been instructed to read through the document during notice allowance time before their shift, which the reporter feels is inadequate as other notices also have to be read during this time.

The reporter is concerned that in emergency situations, where the driver is unavailable, guards would be unable to contact the signaller since they do not have access to an IVRS radio and do not have the telephone numbers for the new signal boxes in the area. If contact was somehow established, they may be unable to provide accurate location information to the signaller because of the lack of understanding about the track changes. The additional time this may take could potentially increase safety risks posed to passengers and train crew. A suggestion is made for guards to receive one day's training when they aren't working – allowing enough time for someone to go through the document with them and enabling them to familiarise themselves with the new route. Could CrossCountry consider this suggestion and provide training for guards working in the Trent area?

Response from CrossCountry
Re-signalling schemes are advised to all train companies well in advance, and for each scheme we review the briefing documents, and ensure we order copies for the crews that work over the route. The briefing material includes written briefing which explains the changes, and also maps illustrating the changes.

We evaluate what the changes are and how this affects drivers, senior conductors and train managers. Where there are major signalling changes including new signals and lines we provide additional material and training.

Following evaluation of the changes involved in the Trent scheme, the principal change was the change of line names which were shown in the briefing part of the signalling notice. We felt that provision of the signalling notice was sufficient for senior conductors and train managers, a copy was placed at all locations, and the opportunity was given to ask any questions.

With regard to telephone numbers for signal boxes, these are printed in the Weekly Operating Notices (WONs) and Periodical Operating Notices (PONs) which are issued to train crew. The train manager/senior conductor is always able to clarify any instruction or briefing document with their customer service manager who will be happy to explain any issues that the individual may have.

40904 Staffing levels impact on safety at stations

A reporter is concerned about staffing levels at stations on the Southeastern network. The stations of most concern are on the Charing Cross – Sevenoaks and Victoria – Otford routes. The reporter comments that due to redundancies across the company several late and weekend turns have been removed from the rosters, leaving many stations without platform staff for long periods of time.

In some cases a station can be without platform staff from the early afternoon until the next morning and some are not covered at all on the weekends. In addition, when a member of staff is on any kind of leave their turn is not always covered, again leaving the station without platform staff.

Although ticket office staff may be present they may not always be aware of events happening on the platforms and the reporter is concerned about:

- assistance provided in emergencies;
- upkeep of the platforms, for example de-icing;
- a rise in anti-social behaviour; and
- the level of assistance provided for both elderly and disabled passengers.

The reporter believes that the removal of turns from the rosters is compromising both safety and service to passengers. Please comment.

Response from Southeastern

Southeastern understands the reporter's concern regarding changes to staffing levels. Southeastern would like to assure the reporter that all organisational changes, including resource levels, are subject to a comprehensive safety validation process. The purpose of this process is to ensure:

- proposed change is processed in a structured and risk based manner;
- safety responsibilities are identified and correctly allocated;
- change does not lead to any reduction in health and safety performance;
- there are no gaps between current organisation and those proposed; and
- the proper levels of consultation are carried out with LDR, company council, health & safety representatives and any interface parties.

No change is implemented until this process has been completed. Southeastern managers have been made aware of this report. Managers are responsible for implementing, monitoring and reviewing any changes, including briefing employees and meeting training needs.

40924 Gritting of stations on Manchester-Wigan route

A reporter has expressed concerns about the gritting of Greater Manchester stations during adverse weather conditions, especially with the recent snow and ice. The concerns revolve around the response time to grit platforms and the actual platform coverage provided by the gritting.

The reporter states that the contractor has found it difficult to meet the 48 hour response time, and is concerned that the coverage seems to be quite low in comparison to the full length and width of the platform. Gritting coverage is viewed as inadequate because:

- only a 75cm wide strip from the platform edge is gritted, so most of the platform is left untouched; and
- the strip only runs to around 23 metres when the shortest train is actually 46 metres long, hence both passengers and train crew can still slip when boarding or alighting in many places.

The reporter asks whether the contractual arrangements can be reviewed to provide an enhanced level of service. Please comment.

Response from Northern
Northern operates 462 stations across the north of England and has contractual arrangements in place to enable de-icing and gritting of all our stations within 48 hours. Our operations control receives daily weather forecasts looking 72 hours ahead, and where the temperature is forecast to be at or below freezing the station de-icing arrangements are activated. We have a tracking process in place to ensure these arrangements are effective.

Northern primarily uses rock salt and pure salt for winterisation, considering this to be the most effective combined de-icer and ice prevention material available. Prior to winter commencing, Northern had stockpiled around 500 tons of salt, which is in excess of the amount used in a typical winter in recent years. No one can have failed to recognise that since the middle of December the country has been in the midst of the worst winter weather reportedly in the last 20 years, with temperatures repeatedly below freezing and frequent snowfall for a period in excess of four weeks. The weather has been particularly atrocious across much of the Northern network for most of this period, and all parts of our network have been affected simultaneously. This has created an enormous challenge for Northern logistically, to grit every station and to maintain them all clear of snow on a continuous basis.

Anyone living in the UK and especially in the north of England will be well aware that this weather has had a near catastrophic impact on the UK. Most roads have been blocked at least periodically, many secondary and minor roads have been impassable for much of the period, hundreds of schools have been closed, and there has been a national shortage of rock salt and other de-icing chemicals. When the weather first hit in mid December Northern's contractor mobilised additional teams to undertake winterisation duties, but as the weather made access roads impassable, and grit supplies dwindled, it became increasingly difficult to maintain our stations clear of snow and ice.

We are immensely proud of our staff who worked hard to operate our trains and stations during this very difficult time. From 4 January 2010 we instigated daily senior level telephone conferences to manage the emerging crisis. We re-deployed

a number of area based staff to assist with station snow clearance and de-icing, we scoured local DIY providers to purchase any stocks of de-icing chemicals that we could obtain, and we bought shovels for staff to use. From 11 January 2010 we mobilised an additional 20 volunteers from our support offices to assist the area teams. We are extremely grateful to all our staff who made fantastic efforts to keep our stations open and our trains running, and who helped us to maintain an effective service for our customers when the road networks were under immense strain.

By 7 January 2010 Northern had used 570 tons of salt on de-icing our stations, more than would normally be used even in a severe winter, and by this time we had only five tons of salt available across various locations on our network. From early January there was a national shortage of rock salt, and our contractors were getting turned away from the quarries as the Government introduced restrictions to ensure dwindling rock salt supplies were used to maintain key routes on the road network, meaning that we had to use our remaining supplies of salt wisely, to maximise coverage. Our focus was on clearing access routes and platform edges, especially where snow had turned to ice. This enabled our meagre salt reserves, supplemented by small stocks sourced from local shops and welcome assistance from local councils in some areas, to last until salt deliveries re-commenced from 11 January 2010. We tracked staff and customer accidents daily during the poor weather, and although instances of slips and falls increased, this was not a significant increase. Only one major injury had been reported by 13 January 2010, a member of staff breaking their wrist when they fell in an icy car park. Fortunately it seems that most people were quite aware of the risk of slipping, especially considering that stations were in many cases better cleared than neighbouring roads and footpaths.

Northern are always seeking to review the effectiveness of our safety control measures, and we had already drawn up an objective in our 2010 safety plan to review the effectiveness of our winterisation arrangements in the winter of 2009/10. This project has already commenced, much useful data has been collected during the severe weather crisis. This will be evaluated, in light of our experience during the remainder of the winter, to draw any lessons out that can be applied in future winters. There is no doubt at all that the conditions experienced during this four week period were very exceptional, and no amount of winterisation resources or contingency planning would ever cope perfectly with such conditions. In the light of this I believe that Northern, our staff and our contractors did everything possible in the circumstances to maintain our network as safely as possible for our customers.

40896 Trains being started ‘too early’ creating noise at Marylebone station

A reporter is concerned about trains creating a lot of noise whilst awaiting departure at Marylebone station, due to being started ‘early’. The reporter comments that trains started on platforms situated underneath the station roof create the most noise and

as a result announcements made over the Public Announcement (PA) system cannot be heard by either staff or passengers.

Some services awaiting departure at the station are started up to 20 minutes before the departure time. The reporter believes there to be a *TRANSEC guideline* which states that train engines should not be started until 10 minutes before departure for short distances and 15 minutes before for inter-city services. The reporter is concerned that if the automated PA system were to sound due to a fire in the station then this would not be heard, delaying the evacuation process. The reporter suggests that if trains for certain services have to be started up early then could they be moved to a more suburban platform at the station, away from the ticket barriers, where the noise would have less of an impact on the PA system.

Response from Chiltern Railways
There is about one train per day that runs its engine for a maximum of 20 minutes each. An agreement is in place with Wrexham, Shropshire and Marylebone Railway that this will be reduced to 10 minutes where we can.

The PA system at the middle section of platforms one and two is not working. A quote for repair is being prepared and will be actioned. Chiltern will not move trains to platforms five and six due to the close proximity of the residents to these platforms.

40911 Kidwelly station fencing and slip, trip and fall concerns

A reporter is concerned about the risk posed to the travelling public at Kidwelly station in South Wales. The reporter believes the station area has remained largely the same for several decades and is in dire need of modernisation work. The reporter's concerns are as follows:

- the access path - which is owned by Network Rail - leads up to the station and is only partially paved with tarmac, whilst the rest is made up of mud and stones. It poses a slip, trip and fall risk;
- the fencing separating the access path from the track is viewed as inadequate, since there is currently a risk of a child getting through to the track side. The fence is a simple construction of stone posts and just three lines of wiring;
- the platform is only partially paved and there are some large gaps between the slabs. Loose chippings are used in other places along the platform where passengers step; and
- Elderly or partially sighted passengers are thought to be at risk because of a lack of effective platform signage. The end of the platform slopes onto the track, and there are apparently no clear markings to show where the platform limits are.

The reporter suggests that Network Rail and Arriva Trains Wales cooperate to help:

- complete the re-surfacing work on the access path to provide full tarmac coverage;

- modify the fencing arrangements by using a more robust construction;
- modify the platform surfaces to provide even coverage along its full length; and
- provide clear platform signage and markings, especially where the platform slopes.

Response from Arriva Trains Wales
Arriva Trains Wales would like to thank the reporter for bringing their concerns to our attention. We have met with Network Rail and discussed the issues raised regarding Kidwelly station. Works identified for completion in 2010 / 2011 are as follows:-

- Network Rail will lay tarmac footpath from the station access point at the level crossing to the top of the platform ramp;

- the trackside fencing will be replaced by Network Rail with 1.5m high 'Broxap Warrington' type, bow topped fencing;
- the platform coping slabs will be pointed to remove the gaps and platform surfaces will be stone dressed and rolled to remove the unevenness. This is the normal treatment for a station of this type. This will be carried out by Network Rail;
- Network Rail will paint white lines at the top and bottom of the platform access ramp which will allow users to identify the platform and path limits;
- Arriva Trains Wales currently have signage in place informing passengers not to go beyond the platform sloping ends. The signage is located at both ends of both platforms; and
- Arriva Trains Wales will highlight in yellow the edges of the platform paving slabs to clearly demarcate the changes in platform surfaces.

40880 Shunting with one man instead of two on the mainline

A reporter is concerned about shunters running on the mainline without a second person in the cab of shunting pilot units 08's and 09's. There is concern that a change in roster, whereby drivers are booked in to do the work single-manned, is importing a safety risk and there appears to be a loophole in the current arrangements.

The reporter believes that classes 08's and 09's must only be operated on the mainline with a second person in the cab. This is because these units do not have a vigilance device on-board to ensure they are awake and alert (by resetting a button every minute and a half) and therefore the second person effectively acts as the safety device for the main driver. With units that have a vigilance device on-board, if a driver were incapacitated and fell across the dead-man's control, the unit would come to a halt because the vigilance device hadn't been reset. This cannot happen with the 08's and 09's. The reporter states that it is safe to use these units within depots with only one driver. However, when running on the mainline, the units must be double-manned.

The reporter is aware of derogation in the 1970's or 1980's that stated that the class 08's would be double-manned so they didn't need the safety equipment on-board. This does not apply to other units as drivers are not allowed to shunt them off the depot if they do not have a vigilance device on it or if the one on-board isn't working. The situation is compounded by classes 08's and 09's not having a 'black box' on them. In the event of an incident, these train event recorders provide data about the operation of train controls and performance in response to train controls and systems. Additionally, the Train Protection and Warning System (TPWS) is in operation but not all have been fitted and does not work across all areas.

According to the reporter, the *Rule Book* states circumstance in which equipment works and what should happen if something fails, but it does not mention the conditions in which a traction unit is allowed on the mainline when a vigilance device is not on the unit.

- Is it permissible for shunting pilot units of classes 08 and 09 to run on the mainline without a second person in the cab? If so, what are the conditions that must be met?
- Should these units have a 'black box' fitted to them when operating on the mainline?

Response from RSSB
The reporter questions whether class 08 and 09 locomotives are allowed to operate without a second person in the cab when the vehicle is not fitted with a vigilance device and is running on the mainline. There is no restriction of this kind within the *Rule Book*.

It is understood that prior to privatisation of the railway industry, trade union agreements existed regarding the manning of these locomotives and that these agreements transferred to the individual train operating companies and were dealt with locally. It is still the case that manning arrangements are the responsibility of each individual company.

The reporter also asks whether these types of locomotives should be fitted with 'black box' facilities also known as data recorders, The railway group standard that details the requirements is *GM/RT2472 Data Recorders on Trains – Design Requirements*. There is an exclusion clause within this document which states "*The contents of this document do not apply to locomotives exclusively used for shunting purposes where limited operation occurs on Railtrack controlled infrastructure*" (Network Rail).

40885 Transport security officers in need of PTS

A reporter is concerned that transport security officers who work for C.UK Security have not had PTS training and do not hold the appropriate certification. They may be required to go on or near the line in the event of an incident, and the concern is that they will not understand the associated risks.

C.UK employ security officers at stations between Queens Park and Harrow and Wealdstone, where London Underground and Network Rail share infrastructure, and at Watford junction. The reporter is of the opinion that if security officers are left with the sole responsibility for a station late at night, they require PTS certification as stipulated by Network Rail. It is suggested that staff who are required to perform these duties are PTS trained to fill the perceived gap. Please comment.

C.UK Security Services
We would respectfully suggest that your reporter is in error in their assertion that staff who are required to perform their duties in the aforementioned stations should be PTS trained otherwise this would have been a specific requirements of the client.

All the security officers so employed are under strict instructions not to go any where near the track under any circumstances whatsoever. This is an absolute rule and any breach would be construed as gross misconduct with the officer being removed from site immediately. In the many years of providing security we have only had one officer contravene this rule. The said officer was disciplined for gross misconduct and removed from site and subsequently dismissed. Although this may seem harsh treatment it demonstrates the seriousness with which C.UK would deal with any infringement of this rule. This example is given to each and every officer as part of their induction training so as to warn them this is the consequence of going on or near the line.

C.UK has been involved with rail security for several years now and believes that it is one of the most responsible service providers in the industry. It takes its duty of care towards its officers very seriously which is why the rule is so strictly enforced. If there is ever a need for an officer to be deployed near or on the line then we ensure that a PTS officer with the proper training has been employed.

Long Standing Issues

40379 Thirsk de-wiring incident aftermath

A reporter is concerned about the handling of an incident involving a National Express East Coast (NXEC) train where there was a ‘de-wiring’ and overhead power cables got wrapped around a train near Thirsk. The incident happened on Tuesday 12 February 2008. The reporter was aboard the train when the overhead wires came down at approximately 10:10 and was able to view the situation unfolding.

Passengers aboard the train were clearly shaken when the train finally stopped, the reporter says. There were apparently no early announcements from staff at all. A train evacuation was started three hours later, with passengers aboard the NXEC service detrained to a CrossCountry Voyager set which eventually left the incident scene shortly after 14:00. It was only just before the evacuation that communications about the situation were officially made.

The reporter says he witnessed a considerable amount of confusion amongst the staff in terms of what should happen just after the incident. The reporter would like to emphasise that they do not consider the staff to blame for not providing the appropriate guidance and reassurance at the time immediately after the event. It is suggested that their training did not equip them with the knowledge to deal

professionally enough with the situation. In the view of what the reporter witnessed, a request is made for NXEC to review staff training for such safety incidents.

- What are the safety procedures staff should follow and the communications they should make?
- Could such training be monitored to ensure its effectiveness?

The reporter would prefer a response that does not appear to blame the staff involved. Please comment.

Response from East Coast Main Line (formerly National Express East Coast)
National Express East Coast would like to thank the reporter for highlighting their concerns. As the reporter has indicated the incident was caused by a dewirement of the OHL and resulted in the train being stranded for some considerable time. The extent of the damage to the overhead lines in this instance made it very difficult to give passengers any estimation as to the length of the delay and feedback from other customers and staff on-board generally reflected that the incident had been well handled.

Detraining of passengers is covered as part of our company train evacuation training programme, which all our train based staff receive and in addition, train guards are assessed every two years on emergency procedures as part of their overall competence assessment process. That said, this was the first time we had evacuated passengers from a train to another train in the circumstances described, but the scenario will be used in future training sessions. The importance of communications already forms part of the training programme but the reporters comments have been given to our training team who will re-emphasise the importance of communications and the needs to keep passengers updated.

40506 Unsafe Electronic Point of Sale system on class 125 and 225 trains
A reporter has contacted CIRAS with concerns over the Electronic Point of Sale (EPOS) system which was installed on-board class 125 and 225 trains on the National Express East Coast route just over a year ago

On class 125 trains the EPOS is situated next to a window, which means sunlight is reflected off the screen making it hard to read. The unit is not adjustable which means staff have to crane their necks to use it, and the positioning of the keyboard has caused an increase in repetitive strain injuries among staff.

On class 225 trains the unit is mounted on the wall, in a small space between the kitchen and the buffet. This unit has a flip down keyboard, set in a rough metal casing. The edges of this casing are very sharp and the reporter fears that a person will catch a finger in between the edges of the keyboard and the screen casing when the keyboard flips up, potentially severing it. Further, because the unit is situated in a narrow space, staff working at the unit have to squeeze against it if someone wishes to pass this spot. If the train jolts, the person working at the EPOS unit could get thrust against the open keyboard causing injury to the torso. The unit is also poorly lit, which causes headaches.

The reporter is aware that the unit has been risk assessed, but this was done in a non-live environment and the reporter feels this was not sufficient. The reporter would like to see the units be re-sited and for the edges of the units to be padded. Also, the reporter would like a new risk assessment carried out in a live environment.

Please comment.

Response from East Coast Main Line (formerly National Express East Coast)
We would like to thank the reporter for making the report and advise that since the system was installed, following concerns from staff, a number of modifications have been made. Specifically these include:

- the HST fleet has been fitted with an opaque Perspex covering on the window to stop the glare on the screen monitor;
- the position of the seat is restricted to where it can be fitted on the bulkhead but staff have been offered additional seat padding to allow them to work at a more comfortable height;
- edges which were reported to be sharp have been smoothed down by the fleet team and no further problems reported; and
- as part of the current 'Left on-board/Found on-board' processes an additional light is being fitted above the keyboard and monitor on the 225 fleet which will be completed by the end of January 2010.

Risk assessments were carried out on trains in service which identified some of the issues which have since been resolved but the longer term aspiration is to change the monitor and keyboard with a laptop which will remove some of the working restrictions currently in place.

40438 Re-booting of Electronic Point of Sale system on-board trains

CIRAS has received a report expressing concern that staff are having to re-boot the Electronic Point of Sale (EPOS) system on-board moving trains by pushing a button located in a socket near the ground, between two seats in the restaurant carriages. The reporter feels that not only could staff be injured whilst re-booting the EPOS system in this manner but it also causing personal discomfort for passengers, especially women, who are sitting in the seats affected.

The reporter is concerned that staff are re-booting the system by placing their finger in a socket which is surrounded by a black and yellow sign stating that the 240 voltage is dangerous. According to the reporter, an email has been distributed which states that it is safe to re-boot the EPOS system by placing a finger in the socket. If this is the case the reporter asks why there are signs around the socket warning staff of the dangers. Can National Express East Coast (NXEC) state whether the process of re-booting the system in this manner has been risk assessed? Can NXEC look at the possibility of moving the re-booting point to another location, which is not located near to the ground between two seats?

Response from East Coast Main Line (formerly National Express East Coast)
The process to re-boot the Electronic Point of Sale (EPOS) server on-board trains was risk assessed by a member of the safety and environment team and the on-board health and safety representative based at Newcastle. The assessment findings were that there was no significant risk in terms of an injury occurring to a member of staff. The requirement to reset the server occurs on average once a day across the entire fleet, and to do so requires staff to lift a small flap at the front of the unit and press an 'on/off' button which looks similar to that found on a personal computer.

The electrical warning sticker on the front is there for awareness purposes only to remind maintenance staff, or others such as fire fighters who need to be aware that the server is connected to a 240v supply, and signage of this nature is used throughout the train on other electrical equipment. There are no terminals or wires that can be accessed even if the complete front of the surrounding cabinet is removed. With regard the personal discomfort of female passengers, this was not considered to be a safety risk during the assessment but no members of the EPOS team are aware that this has become any sort of issue.

We will revisit the risk assessment in light of the comments made and provide any staff updates or changes which are deemed necessary.

40412 Nowhere to eat on-board Newcastle to London train and insufficient Personal Needs Breaks (PNB)

A reporter has contacted CIRAS concerned that staff working on the Newcastle to London trains are not receiving sufficient Personal Needs Breaks (PNBs) during the turnaround process at Kings Cross and are therefore unable to eat in the cabins provided at platform one, nor do they have an adequate area to eat when they board the train.

The reporter explains that the short 45 minute turnaround at King Cross is due to delays taken place throughout the journey, resulting in staff having to get off one train at Kings Cross and almost immediately board another. As a result there is not enough time for staff to eat in Kings Cross platform one cabins (the area provided for them to eat) or take a break. The concern is that staff do not have a designated area where they can eat aboard the Newcastle to King Cross trains and do not have time to eat at Kings Cross in the provided place, consequently staff are working 8 – 13 hour shifts without eating anything. Consequences of this safety concern as pointed out by the reporter include dizziness and fatigue, which may in turn affect staff performance at work, if appropriate food breaks and places to eat are not provided.

The reporter states that (within the kitchen), there is a small windowless room with a chair provided for staff but the reporter feels that it is unacceptable to eat in. Additionally the reporter believes that it is against various health and safety regulations to eat in the kitchen, however on a number of occasion's staff have been asked to move from the food cart area, into the kitchen because they are not allowed to eat in front of the public. Can National Express clarify where and when staff are able to eat on-board the trains if they do not have enough time to reach the cabins on platform one during the turnaround process at Kings Cross?

Response from East Coast Main Line (formerly National Express East Coast)

The arrangements that cover staff eating on-board date back to 1995. East Coast catering crews are paid on a continuous duty basis and do not have dedicated times for the consumption of food. This was agreed in negotiation with staff representatives in 1995. There are no dedicated areas for staff to sit in whilst they eat as all seats need to be available for customers' use. There is the area mentioned by the reporter which, whilst small, does at least afford some privacy.

Since this report was submitted there has been a significant improvement in facilities for crews at Kings Cross station with the opening of the eastern range of accommodation. If catering crews do not have sufficient time during their turn rounds at Kings Cross to make use of these facilities, then they may sit down in the public area to eat their food on-board their train once the full customer service has been provided in line with the current specification.

Most catering crews appear to manage this flexible approach without incident and without any detrimental effect on customer service. If the reporter has particular issues their crew manager will be happy to discuss them.

TOC sector