

From: XXX
Sent: 13 September 2004 14:09
To: Rail Planning; Regional Planning; XXX; XXX; XXX; XXX; XXX
Cc: Franchise Sponsorship
Subject: Consultation on Franchise Specification

DfT have confirmed to us that they do not wish us to consult formally on franchise specifications this autumn - effectively delaying this activity the specification is approved for ITT next spring. This has a number of implications.

Specification Work

The specification development work can continue regardless, to conclude a preferred specification by Feb 05. (Indeed, this means that the consultation, when it occurs, will be able to be more definitive on the preferred option, although with the downside that it will be more difficult, although not impossible, to change.)

Programme

The programme issues are important and need to be worked through with the Project Managers, in particular how a 12 week consultation process can be included during Spring / Summer 05. In addition, there are risks around potential election purdah which will need to be considered.

Stakeholder Management in the meantime

We need to maintain dialogue with stakeholders over the autumn, but will not be able to share with them the detail that we would otherwise have done. For most stakeholders (local authorities etc) we will need to limit discussion to a fairly general level, sharing the objectives and the type of areas and options we are assessing. For 'senior' stakeholders such as RPC and TfL we will need to maintain a more detailed dialogue, although there will still be some options that are sensitive and that we are not able to share in full until the specification is approved. This can build on the dialogue that has already commenced.

I recognise that colleagues in the Regional Planning team in particular have been fielding many questions and meetings relating to franchise specification from regional stakeholders. We will continue to support with information / attendance where possible in support of this. There is also merit in agreeing some lines to take for possible questions that may arise, and XXX is putting some thought into drafting some of these this week for review.

RUS Interface

This will now mean that the consultations on West Mids and GW RUSs are likely to go out in advance of those for the relevant franchise specifications.

Please come back to me, or any member of the team if you have any further questions, now or over the autumn,

Thanks

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