

WEST COAST MAIN LINE STRATEGY - DRAFT TIMETABLES FOR DECEMBER 2008

Briefing for stakeholders and invitation for comments

Introduction and Service Overview

Modernisation of the West Coast Main Line continues with the objective of completing and implementing the present project by the end of 2008. At that point new timetables are due to be implemented, incorporating, for example, a significant increase in the frequencies of many intercity services, along with reduced journey times.

The specifications of these have already been the subject of consultation as part of the development of the West Coast Route Modernisation Project or in connection with the recent passenger rail franchising programme. The Progress Report on the Project, published in May 2006, set out the proposed specification for key services. The train operators are, in many cases, in dialogue with stakeholders, over the emerging detail of these service changes.

However, as part of the delivery programme of West Coast Route Modernisation, the Department is co-ordinating an exercise to brief and invite comments on the actual timetables to be operated from the end of 2008.

This exercise is scheduled at a point where, although development work is advancing, there is now an opportunity to share with stakeholders the latest version of the timetables. The basic specification is fixed, but thoughts and comments, along with practical proposals, will be welcomed and considered. The key objective of the timetables is to deliver the outputs of the modernisation project - including an increase in the number of long distance passenger trains, capacity for regional and local services, improved performance and greater capacity for freight traffic.

This exercise covers the particular services of three train operators, Virgin West Coast, TPE and Govia (the new operators of the West Midlands franchise), operating along the West Coast Main Line. They are in the process of communicating with interested parties over all their services. It is important that stakeholders liaise with such operators and others, to get the wider picture.

Draft timetables for Monday- Friday services are enclosed with this pack of information.

Weekend services are still in the course of development. These will be based on Monday - Friday timetables so as to offer, as far as practicable, a consistent seven day a week service. This has been one of the objectives of the West Coast Route Modernisation Project.

Much routine, but essential engineering maintenance work is being planned to take place over Saturday evening and early Sunday morning. Sunday morning services may, as a result, involve some additional journey times. Details will be provided by the operators in the near future.

Please treat the draft timetables as work in progress and should not be published at this stage. By all means share the detail with colleagues and let us have your thoughts at any time, but no later than 1700 on Friday 16 November 2007. Don't wait until that date!

Please use the email address to forward any comments:

WCRMtimetables@dft.gsi.gov.uk

or use the Postal address:

West Coast Timetable Consultation (2008)
DfT Rail Projects
Zone 5/23
Great Minster House
76 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DR

The comments will be shared with the train operators. They have the responsibility for the delivery of these timetables and will, in future, lead on consultation over future changes.