

**A new approach to rail passenger services in London and the South-East:**  
**Comments of [REDACTED]**

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] Our response to the 6 questions in the DfT/TfL document is as follows:

**Question 1**

**Do you agree with the principle of a partnership to better integrate the specification of rail passenger services across London and the South East?**

We fully support the principle of better integration of train service specification. In practice, the effectiveness of the partnership will depend upon a number of factors:

1. how it prioritises limited resources, and in particular how it resolves conflicts between the competing demands of inner suburban rail users and longer distance passengers;
2. the relationship with Network Rail (see answer to Q3), who will continue to provide and maintain the infrastructure and the train paths;
3. whether harmonisation of the fare structure within London, even if it benefits most passengers, can be achieved so that any increases in costs to some groups are kept to an absolute minimum; and
4. how it would improve integration with other TfL services, including buses and the DLR as well as the underground.

**Question 2 Do you agree with the principles that the partnership will work to? Are there any specific issues that have not been captured**

We fully support the three stated principles, namely:

1. more frequent services, better interchange and increased capacity
2. greater reliability for all passengers
3. high standards of customer service.

However, in relation to the first of these, please see answer to Q3.

As a further principle, we would suggest “good communication”. As well as extending information available on mobile devices (as discussed on p28), this must also include network-wide improvements to “old-fashioned” on-station information. This should include clear and easy to find directions about how to connect to other services (buses etc.) and ensuring that service screens provide the best possible information about any delays, diversions and disruptions. [As an appalling example of current practice, on weekend days when there is no service, the service screens on South-Eastern stations simply state “Welcome to South-Eastern”!!]

**Question 3**

**Do you agree with the proposed governance arrangements?**

The concession arrangement adopted by TfL for the Overground (and to be adopted for Crossrail) has resulted in an improved level of passenger service. It is also important for TfL to continue to be able to use revenue from the operation for future investment.

However, we note that the operator of inner suburban services only has to “take into account” local views, and that the partnership can only “recommend” service specification. Thus Network Rail, who allocate the train paths, will continue to have the final say. What is needed for the partnership to bring real benefits to passengers, is some provision for challenging decisions where local views are disregarded or where a recommended service specification is not accepted.

#### **Question 4**

**What form do you propose the input from local authorities and LEPs could take?**

The question is too narrow, since it is also crucial to have direct input from users, through representatives of User Groups, and from local communities, through local civic societies [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Such representatives will bring more direct experience of the full range of users (and potential users) of services as well as a different perspective and thus, in combination with local authorities and LEP's, provide a more complete consideration of the issues. This could perhaps take place through periodic (bi-annual?) "stakeholder" meetings in each of 5 or 6 areas within London.

#### **Question 5**

**Do you agree with the safeguards for transfer of inner suburban services to TfL, as set out here?**

No. Whilst we welcome the aspirations concerning frequency of services, we are very concerned that, whilst there is a commitment to ensuring "no adverse impacts on the frequency, journey times or stopping patterns of longer distance services", there is no corresponding commitment for Metro services. Thus we are concerned that improvements to some services (whether Metro or longer distance) might be at the expense of other Metro services.

#### **Question 6**

**Are there other outcomes you might expect to see achieved?**

Improved evening services, with increased frequencies (more closely matching daytime off-peak), and later closure of stations. Whilst night time services (as discussed on p28) would also be welcome, we would regard improved evening services a greater priority.

[REDACTED]

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