



Department
for Transport

Mr Michael Evans
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Department for Transport
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Web Site: www.gov.uk/dft

Our Ref: F0016061

18 June 2018

Mr Peter Watson

[By email: request-486133-951c1c3d@whatdotheyknow.com]

Dear Mr Watson,

Freedom of Information Act Request – F0016061

Thank you for your information request of 18 May 2018. Your request has been considered under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000. I am writing to confirm that the Department for Transport (DfT) has now completed its search for the information. Replies are provided under each of your requests below.

I commute from Hitchin to London and use the Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) Great Northern route to travel each day.

As you're aware, a new timetable comes into operation this weekend and, despite promises of increased capacity and more frequent services during the consultation phase, travel from my station will be worse come next week.

I believe that the GN franchise is effectively run on behalf of the DfT by GTR and you benefit from the revenue generated. As a result, I assume that you have evaluated these changes as you are jointly responsible for the service. I'd therefore ask for answers to these specific questions:

1. Was a Social Impact assessment carried out to understand the effects of this new timetable for the passengers on this line? If so, please provide a copy.

The DfT does not hold the information that you have requested. Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR), who operate Great Northern as part of the Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern franchise, are responsible for carrying out any impact assessments.

You may wish to contact Great Northern for this information, bearing in mind that they are not subject to the FOI Act and so any information would be disclosed on a voluntary basis. Great Northern can be contacted via the link below:

<https://www.greatnorthernrail.com/help-and-support/contact-us>

2. Was an Equality Impact assessment carried out to understand the effects of this new timetable for the passengers on this line? Specifically, were the needs of this with childcare responsibilities assessed during the compilation of the new train times? If so, please provide a copy.

The DfT does not hold the information you have requested. GTR are responsible for carrying out any impact assessments.

You may wish to contact Great Northern for this information, bearing in mind that they are not subject to the FOI Act and so any information would be disclosed on a voluntary basis. Great Northern can be contacted via the link below:

<https://www.greatnorthernrail.com/help-and-support/contact-us>

Many of the new services will now traverse the so called Thameslink core and pass through St Pancras rather than terminating at Kings Cross. I have some specific concerns related to this new routing, especially as St Pancras has one northbound and one southbound platform:

3. What are the extra expected increase of passenger numbers alighting/joining services at St Pancras? Should you claim that these numbers are commercially sensitive then percentage increases will be sufficient.

The DfT does not hold the information you have requested. However, you may wish to contact Network Rail for this information as they are the owners of St Pancras station. Network Rail can be contacted via the link below:

<https://www.networkrail.co.uk/communities/contact-us/>

You may also wish to contact Great Northern for this information, bearing in mind that they are not subject to the FOI Act and so any information would be disclosed on a voluntary basis. Great Northern can be contacted via the link below:

<https://www.greatnorthernrail.com/help-and-support/contact-us>

4. Please provide a copy of the risk assessment for the operation of platforms A and B in light of the increase in numbers and the elevated risk of disruption caused by more services passing through the core.

The DfT does not hold the information you have requested. However you may wish to contact Network Rail as they are the owners of St Pancras station. Network Rail can be contacted via the link below:

<https://www.networkrail.co.uk/communities/contact-us/>

5. Please confirm that the DfT are aware of the anomaly that 'London Terminals' tickets on the Thameslink route allow travel beyond St Pancras (to Farringdon, Blackfriars, City Thameslink and London Bridge) yet tickets issued on the GN route do not. What is the timescale for addressing this?

There are no tickets with a destination of 'London Terminals' from the St Albans route; All tickets on this route have a destination of 'London Thameslink' which are valid to all Thameslink stations between St Pancras and London Bridge or Elephant and Castle.

Tickets to 'London Terminals' from the Great Northern route are valid to Moorgate, Kings Cross and St Pancras (no change). Tickets on this route with a destination of London Thameslink have replaced tickets to a named station, such as Farringdon or London Blackfriars; this provides additional flexibility for customers who previously purchased these tickets, with no change in price.

If you are unhappy with the way the DfT has handled your request or with the decisions made in relation to your request you may complain within two calendar months of the date of this letter by writing to the DfT's FOI Advice Team at:

Zone D/04
Ashdown House
Sedlescombe Road North
Hastings
East Sussex TN37 7GA
E-mail: FOI-Advice-Team-DFT@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Please send or copy any follow-up correspondence relating to this request to the FOI Advice Team to help ensure that it receives prompt attention. Please also remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Please see attached details of the DfT's complaints procedure and your right to complain to the Information Commissioner.

Yours sincerely

Michael Evans

Senior Correspondence Manager- Passenger Services

Your right to complain to DfT and the Information Commissioner

You have the right to complain within two calendar months of the date of this letter about the way in which your request for information was handled and/or about the decision not to disclose all or part of the information requested. In addition a complaint can be made that DfT has not complied with its FOI publication scheme.

Your complaint will be acknowledged and you will be advised of a target date by which to expect a response. Initially your complaint will be re-considered by the official who dealt with your request for information. If, after careful consideration, that official decides that his/her decision was correct, your complaint will automatically be referred to a senior independent official who will conduct a further review. You will be advised of the outcome of your complaint and if a decision is taken to disclose information originally withheld this will be done as soon as possible.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF