



**TRAFNIDIAETH  
CYMRU  
TRANSPORT  
FOR WALES**

Llawr 5, Tŷ South Gate,  
Stryd Wood,  
Caerdydd CF10 1EW  
029 2167 3434  
[james.price@trc.cymru](mailto:james.price@trc.cymru)  
[trc.llyw.cymru](http://trc.llyw.cymru)

5<sup>th</sup> Floor, South Gate House  
Wood Street  
Cardiff CF10 1EW  
029 2167 3434  
[james.price@tfw.wales](mailto:james.price@tfw.wales)  
[tfw.gov.wales](http://tfw.gov.wales)

Russell George AM  
Chair Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Ty Hywel  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

28 October 2019

Dear Mr George

During the Committees visit to the Canton depot on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September, you and other Members of the EIS Committee raised some questions that I promised to get back to you on. I hope my response goes some way in answering your questions.

### **1) Question of how many trains will be fitted with WSP this autumn.**

During my appearance at Committee on the 9<sup>th</sup> January 2019, I quoted that I believed there were six units inherited from ATW that were not going to be fitted with WSP. However, I wish to inform Members of the committee that there were actually eight units. Please accept my apologies for any inaccuracy, this was not intentional.

As per our original plan, of the post-2019 TfW rolling stock fleet, only the eight Class 153 single-carriage units were scheduled to not be fitted with Wheel Slide Protection (WSP). This is because these units are not planned to be with TfW long-term and it is not considered cost-effective to fit them with the system.

Since January 2019, we have made a number of changes to our rolling stock plan, which means the planned percentage of trains in service from January 2020 without WSP has increased. We have gone beyond our original rolling stock commitments by introducing five additional Class 153 units, acquired from Great Western Railway. These will not be fitted with WSP. Similarly, the Class 37 locos hired from Colas Rail to haul carriages on the Rhymney Line are also not fitted with WSP. As a result of this, around two thirds of the revised, more diverse fleet, will now be fitted with WSP.

Last month we formally submit an application to seek dispensation to run non PRM compliant units into 2020. As such, a formal request has been submitted and consultation is currently taking place with industry stakeholders to enable a decision to be made by the Secretary of State for Transport regarding this dispensation.

Subject to securing a PRM dispensation, we will then look to temporarily retain some of the trains we originally planned to withdraw prior to 2020 in order to provide more capacity for our customers. These trains will be kept in service for a period into 2020 due to delays to our Class 230 and 769 trains, which were originally scheduled to have been in service in time for December 2019.

We are also examining other options for bringing in further rolling stock from other operators

As more older trains are withdrawn over the course of 2020 and we introduce Class 230s and 769s, this percentage will decrease and by autumn 2020 nearly all of the trains in service with TfW will be fitted with WSP, with the exception of the Class 153s

## **2) Details on the Ebbw Vale feasibility study**

Transport for Wales is committed to running rail services between Ebbw Vale and Newport. However, installing this link requires infrastructure improvements to allow more trains to travel in both directions on the line.

TfW have been commissioned by Welsh Government to produce an Outline Business Case that looks at the feasibility of achieving up to four trains per hour from Ebbw Vale Town, running to Cardiff and Newport, and considers different running patterns.

The Outline Business Case was submitted in October, following a delay caused by the December 2019 timetable changes for UK franchises, which changes the provision and availability of train paths on the South Wales Mainline.

Your constituents should start to see a transformation soon with the introduction of the Class 170s from December this year. They will offer a significant comfort improvement to passengers and feature power sockets, electronic passenger information, air conditioning and their wider doors make them better suited to suburban operation than the trains currently used on peak hour services

### **3) Shorter journeys in West Wales and more detail.**

There will be new two and three-car DMUs on the Milford Haven to Manchester service by 2023, with a first-class service from Swansea to Manchester from 2024.

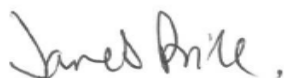
The Pembroke Dock and Fishguard services will be operated with Class 170s, which will offer a significant improvement compared to the trains that currently serve the routes.

From December, a timetable change will see an additional train every day to Fishguard. The Sunday service to Pembroke Dock will increase on Sundays from 5 to 6 trains per day from 2023

We plan to invest in Carmarthen station in 2021 and Llanelli Station in 2025.

We're going to recruit a new Community and Stakeholder Manager within the next few months and six new Community Ambassadors and Apprentices next year. This team will work with the community to identify further improvements that can be made to the service and to transform sites across the region into community facilities.

Yours sincerely,



James Price  
Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive