



Our ref
Your ref

2 October 2008

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cc. Adrian Thear, Train Planning Manager, NR

Dear Brian

EAST COAST MAINLINE CAPACITY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Thank you very much for the sending us a copy of Network Rail's report entitles "East Coast Mainline - Capacity Assessment Report". Freightliner has some comments with regard to the report, which we outline below.

We e-mailed Network Rail with some queries on the report on 24th September 2008, a copy of this e-mail is attached for completeness.

Introduction

The report produced by Network Rail is based on a single option specification. As we do not agree with the specification assumed by Network Rail, it is rather difficult to comment in detail about the report as it simply does not model the volume of paths that are required for freight services in the future. However we include our comments on the route specification and some detailed comments below.

In our letter of 26th August to Network Rail we laid out our view of the freight requirements for various sections of the East Coast Main Line (ECML), including north of Doncaster. We are concerned that the report does not address in any detail the impact of a changed pattern of services on freight services north of Doncaster.

Report Specification

Network Rail state in paragraph 2.2 of the Executive Summary "ORR requested that Network Rail develop this work on the basis that there should be 6 x long distance, high speed passenger trains and 1 x long distance freight train...". We note that this was not the case. We understand that the "6+1 specification" came from the DfT, however this was not consulted with the rest of the rail industry and does not reflect our view of the required capacity. The reasons for this were laid out in our letter to Paul Stanford of Network Rail dated 26th August 2008.

In this letter we laid out our understanding of the freight requirements on the different sections of the East Coast Main Line and suggested some other options of timetable specification that could be considered, particularly before funding and timescales and specification are agreed for the upgrade of the "Joint Line". We are disappointed that Network Rail has not undertaken any

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modelling on these other suggested options, in particular the 5.5 + 1.5 option on some sections, which offers a compromise position. We also remain unclear what has been assumed north of Doncaster where there are already 2 freight services an hour in many hours, the loaded trains with a circa 2200 tonne payload.

We are frustrated that only a single option has been developed by Network Rail. This single option does not take into account the requirements for growth stated by freight operators, which was laid out in both the Freight RUS and the East Coast Main Line (ECML) RUS, both of which have been developed and supported by Network Rail. Figure 43 of the ECML RUS shows the anticipated demand for 15 or more trains per direction per day between Peterborough and Doncaster from the base in 2004/5 until 2014/15.

We also stated in our letter of 26th August 2008 that the assumed timing loads of 1200t for a class 4 and 1600t for a class 6 were unacceptable and loads of up to 1600t for class 4 and circa 3000t for a class 6 were required. Freightliner is investing in a fleet of 30 new, more powerful locomotives and intends to use these to enable longer trains, that will both make better use of Network capacity and enable us to compete more effectively with road hauliers. This is in line with the development of the Strategic Freight Network, which has set aside £40 million to invest in network enhancements to allow freight train lengthening during CP4.

Freightliner Limited has existing Firm Contractual Rights for the following daytime services with a timing load of 75C66S14 (1400t):

4L85 SX Leeds to Felixstowe
 4L63 SX Leeds to Tilbury (evening)
 4E50 SX Felixstowe to Leeds (evening) - timing load of 75C66S16 (1600t)
 4E62 SX Ipswich to Leeds
 4E60 SX Felixstowe to Wilton (evening) - timing load of 75C66S16 (1600t)

Freightliner Heavy Haul Limited has many existing Firm Contractual Rights for coal services mainly with the timing load of 66H66S20 which allows trains up to 2200t. These services are north of Doncaster but it is unclear what has been assumed for class 6 paths on this section of the East Coast main Line.

We note that the single option developed by Network Rail has been based on class 4 1200t and class 6 1600t. An overlay of 2400t tonne class 6 trains has been reviewed via Newark and Gainsborough, which is a considerably longer journey; this will increase our costs and therefore the commercial viability of our business competing with road.

Responses to questions/issues

Network Rail have commented on some of the comments that we have previously raised. These appeared to have been approached as an over lay to the single option developed in the report rather than as separate options.

Paragraph 6.14 and Appendix G deals with fitting in existing services into the standard hour path during off peak hours. We note that 4E62 Ipswich to Leeds is missing from the list. The freight trains that have been reviewed are between Peterborough and Doncaster only and exclude the current trains that run during the peak hours and after the evening peak (and at night). We also would like to see timings for other services (except overnight which we assume will be unchanged) to ensure they still can be accommodated.

We would also like to see a similar exercise for all freight services on other parts of the ECML. We are particularly concerned regarding services between Tursdale Jct and Northallerton where flighting of passenger services has a considerable impact on freight services. We also seek confirmation of what timing loads Network Rail have used in their matching exercise: the "standard" timing load or the actual timing load currently used for existing services.

Freightliner would like to see timings for any trains that are retimed on the ECML throughout their journey so we can understand the effect on overall journey time/terminal slots/drivers diagrams.

We note that on several sections of the route the report states that freight services would require retiming (e.g. between Doncaster and Brocklesbury). We would like to understand in more detail what the required retimings are and what are the effects on the whole journey time.

Evening

We note the study looks at off peak only which appears to be between the 2 peaks only not in the evening. We are unclear what is being proposed after the evening peak and seek clarification. This is very important as we have many existing services during this period.

Liverpool to Norwich services

What is the assumption with regard to Norwich to Liverpool services, they are not mentioned in the report apart from in the context of "7+1". We would be concerned about any assumption to route these via Melton Mowbray as this may eat up the capacity required for the strategic freight route from Felixstowe to Nuneaton, which is currently being developed.

Class 4

Freightliner acknowledges that the journey time for class 4 1200t services has improved from earlier versions of the timetable, but we need to understand what is possible for a 1600t service.

Please feel free to contact me if you would like to discuss any of the issues further.

Yours sincerely

Lindsay Durham
Head of Rail Strategy
Freightliner Group Limited