



Michael Dawson
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Dear Mr. Dawson

Model Freight Track Access Contract – July 2003: Consultation Response

As the statutory representatives of National Rail passengers in and around London, LTUC's concern regarding rail freight is focussed on its interaction with passenger services.

It would not be appropriate for us to engage in detailed discussion of freight track access contracts. Rather we would simply say that the Regulator should ensure that access rights and contracts are framed in such a way as to take account of our policy on freight. This is, as outlined in our response to the SRA's consultation on capacity utilisation, as follows:

Although LTUC is primarily concerned with passenger services and related infrastructure, we recognise that efficient movement of freight by road and rail is vital to the economy of the London area. Accommodating freight on the capital's busy road network is becoming increasingly difficult and the switch of more such traffic from road to rail must be critically addressed.

The conflict of running more freight trains on already saturated passenger routes is understood, but any reduction of passenger services to enable freight capacity to be increased could not be supported. Nevertheless in the context of the Capacity Utilisation Policy, the desirability of expanding rail freight services by improved signalling, crossovers, relief routes and terminal availability should be taken into account. A higher share of carriage of freight by rail would contribute to easing London's transport problems and measures for more rail freight capacity would be supported by LTUC.

Translating this into practical terms on the operating railway, and taking account of our overall objective of passenger services being developed to provide 6 trains per hour (tph) "turn up and go" metro frequencies within the travelcard zonal area, we would expect freight operations in the London area to meet the following criteria:

- a) Comply with existing restrictions on peak period access (e.g. Tilbury line to North London line via Forest Gate not permitted).
- b) Be increased at other times only if track capacity is available for 6 tph passenger services (or higher if already provided) AND for the additional freight.

If it is believed that additional freight traffic is justified but that the above criteria cannot be met, the Regulator should consult LTUC before deciding whether any new access rights should be granted.

Yours sincerely

Rufus Barnes
Director - LTUC