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Dear Brian

**Hull Trains Company Ltd: Application for a Track Access Contract.**

This letter forms the National Express East Coast response to your letter of 28 May 2008.

National Express has a Franchise Obligation to deliver the SLC 2 timetable by December 2010. In order to achieve this National Express East Coast has now submitted to ORR its own Section 22A and Section 17 applications for the necessary access rights.

The SLC 2 timetable provides 5 trains in each off peak hour on the East Coast Main line. The National Express Franchise, based on the delivery of the SLC 2 timetable, is expected to pay a substantial premium to Government, reducing the level of taxpayer support needed for the railway as a whole. The SLC 2 timetable is also required to deliver the HLOS passenger growth metric.

The SLC 2 timetable, together with existing Open Access trains implies a requirement for 6 trains in each off peak hour. We have noted the assessment in the ECML RUS, "Timetable analysis has shown that there is insufficient capacity on the main line between Peterborough and Doncaster to increase the level of off-peak LDHS service to 6tph and accommodate 1tph for today's level of freight services without worsening freight and passenger journey times and performance." (ECML RUS 6.7.4).

National Express wishes to object to the granting of any access rights which would prevent delivery of the SLC 2 timetable by December 2010.

Yours sincerely

Adrian Caltieri  
Head of Operations Development