

TRANSPORT FOR LONDON

RAIL AND UNDERGROUND PANEL

SUBJECT: PERFORMANCE OF THE EXTENDED CIRCLE LINE

DATE: 12 MAY 2010

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to summarise operational performance of the extended Circle line service introduced on Sunday 13 December 2009.
- 1.2 The Rail and Underground Panel is asked to note this report.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The extended Circle line was introduced to provide a more stable and recoverable service pattern prior to the introduction of S7 stock, due in to customer service in early 2012.

3 SERVICE PERFORMANCE

- 3.1 Service performance has been measured by capturing train intervals past a measuring point. This allows excess platform waiting time (a measure of service disruption, expressed in terms of the extra time this causes customers to wait for a train) to be calculated on a daily basis. The combined Circle and Hammersmith (C&H) services are measured at Great Portland Street eastbound and westbound, and Circle line only trips are measured at Aldgate outer and inner rail.
- 3.2 Circle line performance has improved significantly, by 40 per cent over the period immediately prior to the introduction of the new service. The improvement compared with the equivalent weeks in December 2008 – April 2009 has been 13 per cent.
- 3.3 The H&C combined excess platform waiting time measure was introduced in period 3 2009/10 and has precluded a year on year comparison. Based upon current performance, there is a 15 per cent reduction in this measure when compared to the four week period immediately prior to the introduction of the new service.
- 3.4 District and Metropolitan lines have seen a 40 per cent and 21 per cent improvement in excess platform waiting times compared with the equivalent periods in the previous year.
- 3.5 The new timetable has had to cope with some challenging circumstances since its introduction, initially with severe winter weather, rolling stock (cracked drawbar brackets), and train operator availability, and subsequently with a number of major signal failures on the north side of the Circle.

4 ASSET PERFORMANCE

- 4.1 Signals asset performance since 28 March has been severely affected by a number of signalling problems, including a defective cable between Baker Street and Edgware Road, and faulty relays / relay contacts at Barbican, Edgware Road, Farringdon and Bayswater.
- 4.2 The most significant failure occurred on 6 April at Aldgate due to damaged signalling computer interface cards. This was associated with the Easter weekend engineering works and is the subject of a technical review.
- 4.3 Actions to improve reliability include review of relay failure, reassessment of spares requirements and weekly thermal imaging checks in six central area relay rooms to detect early signs of high resistance contacts. The interface between project work and maintenance will also be reviewed to increase protection for ageing and delicate assets. In addition, there will be a focus on best practice regarding trackside equipment housekeeping and maintenance on the north side of the Circle.

5 OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

- 5.1 In the absence of major disruption the service runs to time, with layovers absorbing any late running. Off peak meshing of services at junctions has been considerably improved. Congestion management introduced at Paddington (suburban) has worked well, despite National Rail's initial concerns.
- 5.2 Train operator availability and performance is closely monitored, with regular updates and reviews, led by the Performance Manager (Trains). This is being reinforced by the Line General Manager, who is developing proposals for a holistic review of train operator availability and performance.
- 5.3 In addition, the Line General Manager chairs a weekly performance tracker meeting, and there is a daily conference call to review and follow up all recorded delays from the previous day. The Line General Manager also attends a weekly performance review meeting with the North Area Signals and Track maintenance managers to ensure the engineering and operational teams are working together on reliability issues.
- 5.4 Further post implementation reviews of the new service pattern will take place in June and September 2010.

6 RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 The Rail and Underground Panel is asked to note this report.

7 CONTACT

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