

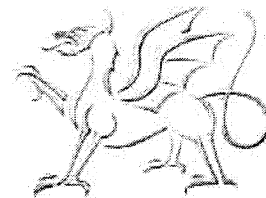
30 JUNE 2004

Andrew Davies AM/AC

Minister for Economic Development & Transport

Gweinidog dros Ddatblygu Economaidd a Thrafnidiaeth

DP 719/03 - 07



Our ref/Ein cyf: AD/00856/04
Your ref/Eich cyf:

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13 July 2004

Dear Eleanor,

Thank you for your letter of 23 June 2004, concerning North-South rail travel.

I have noted your concerns, and my officials have been in touch with Arriva Trains Wales about the matters you have raised.

Taking your points in turn, this is the company's response:

Rolling Stock

Arriva's fleet dates from 1986 to 1992, considered within the industry to be modern in an age when trains are constructed to last 30 years and more. The majority of the class 158 fleet that operates on the North-South route has been refurbished with new seating, tables and toilets in the last three years. I am advised that Arriva's customer satisfaction surveys overall demonstrate that their customers are content with the standard of comfort and cleanliness of trains.

No new rolling stock has been provided under the terms of the franchise agreement with the Strategic Rail Authority. However, from December 2005, the class 175 trains that currently operate along the North Wales coast to Manchester, will also operate to Cardiff and West Wales. These were built between 1999 and 2001 and will provide Arriva with the opportunity of operating trains with three carriages on the North-South route. They also have slightly more capacity than the class 158 train therefore passengers will benefit.

Malfunctioning Carriage and Lavatory Doors

Arriva are addressing this problem, and their maintenance engineers have introduced a programme of preventative maintenance which should help reduce instances of failure whilst in service.



BUDDSODDWR Mewn Pobl
INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Malfunctioning Air-Conditioning

During June, and in particular during the periods of exceptionally warm weather, Arriva's fleet experienced technical difficulties with overheating radiators. They have now identified where technical improvements can be made, and early indications confirm that, supported by a robust monitoring regime, reliability in this area can be sustained.

I know that Arriva is committed to raising reliability standards of its services during the course of the fifteen year franchise, and I shall keep these points in mind during my future discussions with the operators in due course.

Yours,

Andrew