



Russell George AM  
National Assembly for Wales

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30 January 2020

Dear Russell,

Further to your Written Assembly questions dated 22 January, I am responding as promised.

Taking each question in turn;

*Will the Minister make an assessment of Transport for Wales's staff availability and rostering as a factor which impacts upon its performance? WAQ79350*

Workforce matters are operational matters for Transport for Wales (TfW).

TfW experienced issues throughout the December period related to timetable implementation and shortages of available staff. Whilst the recruitment of 200 additional drivers and conductors has helped mitigate the impact somewhat, sickness, training and rest days all had an impact over the festive period.

*Will the Minister make a statement on the number of cancellations and delays to Transport for Wales services which can be directly attributed to staff resource availability? WAQ79351*

I have asked TfW to write directly to you on the number of cancellations and delays to TfW services which can be directly attributed to staff resource availability.

*Will the Minister make a statement on Transport for Wales's workforce planning on weekends and public holidays? WAQ79352*

I have made it very clear to TfW and KeolisAmey that performance has to improve. In the latest period, punctuality and reliability have improved by 6%, but this must go further. I expect to see the very best standard of service for passengers in Wales. Action has been taken on poor performance with £3.4m of penalty notices issued to KeolisAmey. This money will be reinvested in rail services.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

*What discussions has the Welsh Government had with Transport for Wales, the RMT Union and Network Rail on improving workforce planning and resolving staff availability issues which contribute to the disruption of rail services on weekends and public holidays? WAQ79353*

I meet regularly with the rail unions. At the last meeting on 16 of January I specifically challenged the unions to work with TfW, the Operator and I to come up with a plan to for improving reliability, reflecting that the railway is now a 7 day public service. I am keen to explore how working practices can be adapted to reflect this.

Network Rail meet regularly with TfW and with the Welsh Government to discuss performance – the senior forum for that is the independently chaired Wales Route Supervisory Board. TfW lead on operational matters with Network Rail.

Despite Network Rail's Wales route having 11% of the route length, 11% of the stations and 20% of the level crossings across England and Wales, only an average of around 2% of money spent on network enhancements across England and Wales since 2011 has been spent in Wales. We estimate Wales should have been allocated well over £1 billion in the last five year period alone.

I will continue to press for devolution of powers over rail infrastructure and for a fair funding settlement commensurate with levels of investment in England. Only Wales can determine where and how investment is needed to achieve an integrated and accessible transport system for all in Wales.

Yours sincerely,



**Ken Skates AC/AM**  
Gweinidog yr Economi a Thrafnidiaeth  
Minister for Economy and Transport