



Department  
for Transport



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Kevin Hollinrake MP  
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17 SEP 2018

Dear Kevin

Thank you for your letter of 3 July to Chris Grayling, about improving TransPennine Express (TPE) services and the compensation scheme for passengers in the North East. I am replying as Minister responsible for rail.

Please accept my apologies for the delay in replying to your letter which is due to the high volume of correspondence the Department has received recently.

TPE are aware that performance of services between York and Scarborough has not been where they would want it to be since the May 2018 timetable was introduced. They have, therefore, implemented the following outputs to improve performance:

- Changing the diagrams of their drivers in response to the delays being experienced to reduce the circumstances where trains need to be terminated prior to Scarborough;
- If a train does need to be terminated at Malton, they will ensure, wherever possible, that customers are advised prior to the departure of the train from York in order that they can choose to alight for the next service and use the facilities that York station provides;
- Where a train has been turned back prior to Scarborough, TPE have revised their control procedures to avoid the following service also being cancelled;
- TPE are working with London North Eastern Railway to ensure that communication at York for their passengers during disruption is improved, providing clear advice, guidance and information; and
- As announced by Transport for the North (TfN), season ticket holders on this route will be able to claim compensation from 23 July.



Right now the Department's overriding priority is to restore the reliability of service across the network. We are taking action to resolve the problems as quickly as possible, to compensate passengers appropriately, and to learn the lessons that will prevent this happening again in the future.

The Secretary of State wrote to Train Operating Companies on 14 June reminding them to take steps to ensure that clear and accurate information is given to passengers regarding their compensation rights and that all eligible claimants receive the compensation to which they are entitled.

All affected passengers are able to claim Delay Repay for delays of 30 minutes or more. In addition to this, the rail industry announced, on 11 July, a special compensation scheme for Northern passengers, funded by the industry. The rail industry set out details of the eligibility requirements and how season ticket holders can claim.

Northern compensation entitlements are being paid on the basis of the emergency amended timetable that was introduced on 4 June 2018. Industry announced on 7 June that there will be a special compensation scheme for both TPE and Northern passengers, agreed by TfN.

TfN agreed that the special compensation should cover weekly, monthly and annual season ticket holders on the worst affected routes for those passengers who experienced severe disruption before and after the May timetable change. Eligible passengers will receive a cash payment equivalent to up to one month's travel, which is in addition to the standard existing Delay Repay compensation mechanism for affected journeys.

Season ticket holders in other parts of the north that have been badly affected since the introduction of the May timetable will be eligible to receive a cash payment equivalent to 1 week's travel, which is in addition to the standard existing Delay Repay compensation passengers are entitled to.

Season-ticket holders on routes in Yorkshire and the North-east that were heavily impacted by the introduction of the May timetable during the period 20 May to 30 June may be entitled to claim for 1 week's cash refund from the cost of season tickets (including multi-modal tickets). The minimum travel requirement is 1 weeks travel.

The Secretary of State has commissioned an independent inquiry<sup>1</sup> by Stephen Glaister of the Office of Rail and Road, the independent regulator, to examine why we are in this situation and to reduce the chances of it ever happening again. An interim report is expected to be published in September ahead of a final report by the end of the year.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://orr.gov.uk/news-and-media/press-releases/2018/orr-launches-independent-inquiry-into-may-timetable-disruption>

I am pleased to say that Northern's implementation of an interim timetable has helped to bring some stability. However, I know that many passengers remain – understandably – frustrated with the continuing disruption on some parts of the network and that there is still a long way to go until performance is good enough.

We acknowledge that this is small comfort to passengers when things are not working as they should, once we are through this difficult and challenging period, I am confident that we will have a better railway, fit for the future which includes a contracted requirement for more frequent services between Scarborough and York service and new trains for many TPE services.

In the meantime, please be assured that I will continue to do everything possible to ensure passengers get the service they rightly expect and deserve.

Thank you again for your letter. I hope this reply is helpful.

*Yours,  
Jo*

**JO JOHNSON**