



Department
for Transport

From the Secretary of State
The Rt. Hon. Chris Grayling

Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

Web site: www.gov.uk/dft

13 July, 2017

Dear Colleague,

As you will be aware, in recognition of poor performance on Southern, I have informed GTR that they are required to fund a package of performance and passenger improvements worth £13.4 million.

Although the recent Gibb report found the primary cause of disruption on Southern was industrial action, which started in April 2016, my Department has determined that this does not fully explain the poor service passengers received.

GTR have accepted the need to improve performance and are working with my Department to make sure their proposals see real change and benefits for Southern passengers.

My department is working with GTR to invest:

- £7m will be put into a fund for DfT to allocate to projects and improvements that will directly benefit passengers
- £4m will fund 50 on-board supervisors over the next two years (from January 2018) to improve access to staff for passengers on trains
- The remaining £2.4m will target performance improvements. GTR is now required to submit a remedial plan under the franchise agreement.

Performance on Southern has improved dramatically since Christmas, as the disruption from union activity has decreased. But GTR have accepted that performance is still not good enough and I am pleased that they are working under the direction of my Department to further improve services for passengers.

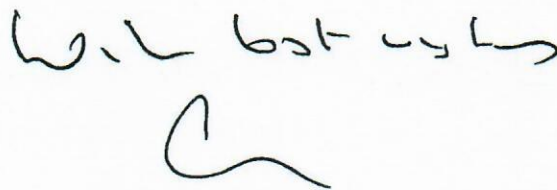
Today also saw ASLEF, the drivers' union, vote to strike over pay.

I remind you that the union executive turned down a 23.8% pay increase for Southern and Gatwick Express drivers, without even putting the offer to their driver members. The very same offer that they accepted for their Thameslink drivers. This would have seen driver pay go up by almost 24% over four years, to a basic salary of £60,683 for a four-day, 35-hour week.

The strike action ASLEF have called in early August is simply not fair on passengers. I can only imagine how disappointed they must be at the prospect of more industrial action, and I share their disappointment. Only the unions can call off industrial action and I urge them to do so.

Performance has been significantly better since the new year. We want and expect performance to improve further, but that can only happen if industrial action by the trade unions stops.

I am calling on ASLEF to work with Southern to help deliver the high quality rail services that passengers deserve. It must be a priority for passengers to have a reliable and efficient service.

Handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W.L. Best" followed by a flourish.

Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT