



Department
for Transport

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

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9 November, 2017

Dear Colleague,

As you will be aware, ASLEF drivers on Southern and Gatwick Express have voted to end their dispute with GTR on Driver Controlled Operation. The turnout from the ballot was 87%, with 79% voting in favour. I am sure you will join me in welcoming this news as it is an important step in securing passengers the efficient and reliable rail service they deserve on Southern.

Drivers have been safely operating the doors on GTR trains for years. The expansion of Driver Controlled Operation on Southern trains in January this year allowed Southern's new On-Board Supervisors to provide a more customer focused role, instead of operating the doors.

No drivers or conductors lost their job or any pay during the expansion of Driver Controlled Operation of the doors – in fact there are now more people working aboard Southern trains than before the unions started their action. This dispute has never been about safety, as the independent rail regulator has ruled that driver-controlled trains which have been used in this country for thirty years, are safe.

In light of this agreement between ASLEF and GTR, it is high time for the RMT to call off their dispute. The RMT's industrial action yesterday and today on Southern marks days 37 and 38 of strikes on Southern. The operator, GTR, however ran more than 90 percent of services, so passengers are not suffering significant disruption – however performance can only improve if industrial action by the trade union stops.

Performance has been significantly better on Southern since the New Year with the Public Performance Measure – which measures performance across train operators - currently at 80% on Southern, compared to 62% in early December 2016.

Please do pass on the good news about the ASLEF agreement with GTR to your constituents.

W.L. best wishes
C

Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT