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Llyr Gruffydd MS
Chair of the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee

22 May 2024

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

In advance of us providing our full response to your recommendations, I wanted to write to in the interim in regard to **Recommendation 14**; TfW must improve its service provision around major events. It should report back to the Committee within the next six months on the steps it has taken in this regard from the Committee's report on rail services and Transport for Wales' performance 2023-24.

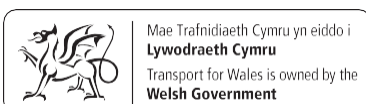
I would like to assure you that we will be responding in full to each of the recommendations, but as we are in the Summer concert season I thought helpful to invite you and the Committee Members to come to Cardiff Central Station to see firsthand all the hard work, and months of planning that goes into delivering rail transport for a major event at the Principality Stadium.

If you or any of the Committee Members would like to take us up on this offer, we would be delighted to host you and the Committee at one of the upcoming major events at the Principality Stadium which are;

- Tuesday 11th June - Pink
- Tuesday 18th June - Taylor Swift
- Saturday 25th June - Foo Fighters
- Friday 9th August - Billy Joel

This opportunity will give you the chance to see the control room, gate lines, crowd management systems and how we move people around the station to quickly and safely get them home. It will also provide an opportunity to ask direct questions to our senior team and see our front-line colleagues and planners in action.

I am sure you recognise that major events at a 74,000 capacity stadium in the heart of the city centre are a significant challenge for all public transport and public service providers but, along with our rail industry partners, an incredible amount of planning and hard work goes in to making sure we get tens of thousands of people in and out of Cardiff during each event. Events are planned and are worked through months in advance, and we work closely with all partners, from industry, Local Authorities, emergency services and Stadium staff to ensure safe travel for people who want to enjoy the event.



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Whilst we believe that there will always be room for improvement, we believe that recent criticism of rail transport for major events is not reflective of the significant improvements which have been made in the last 12 months. As more and more of our brand new £800m fleet of trains have come into service we have been able to add more capacity and additional services for events and rail services. This includes for this year's Six Nations fixtures, Euro 2024 qualifiers and this month's Bruce Springsteen concert, which have all been successfully delivered.

Bruce Springsteen performed to a 60,000 crowd in which I can confirm we provided very significant capacity in and out of Cardiff Central Station alone. We ran 11 additional services pre-event, 15 additional services ran post event and we strengthened 19 existing services, with a further support of 10 standby coaches. We also strengthened key services to North Wales the following morning (Monday 6th May) for any concert goers who stayed overnight.

We recognise that there is still more improvement needed in terms of overall capacity, which will be delivered in line with our existing plans, but we are keen to highlight that with all major events across the world, public transport will always be busy and all responsible public transport providers rely on crowd management to help the safe movement of people.

We want Wales to continue to be a global success when it comes to hosting major events and we recognise not just its importance to the economy but also its social value. We know lots of people save and spend their hard earned money on events, and eagerly await seeing their favourite artists and sports teams at their nation's Capital. We are keenly aware of our role in making this a success and always endeavour to make their experience as comfortable and as safe as possible. Although we are employees, we know that the passengers we carry are our friends, our family, our communities. As a result, our colleagues are committed to working diligently to making major events happen seamlessly. As part of these events and as part of their every day work, our colleagues often have to deal with threatening, aggressive and anti-social behaviours from individuals and groups, but always remain committed to supporting our passengers to and from home safely. We are keen to ensure the people of Wales are as proud as our colleagues in the services we provide and this is one area we are keen to show the progress we have made, to ensure there is full consideration of the story that is told around this area of our operation.

If you would like to take us up, we will be happy to arrange such a visit.

Yours sincerely,

James Price
Chief Executive, Transport for Wales.