



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-833
Ein cyf/Our ref KS/03569/18

David John Rowlands AM
Chair - Petitions committee

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5 February 2019

Dear David,

Thank you for your letter of 7 December regarding Petition P-05-833 - Improve rail services for Chepstow, requesting more detail on the availability of rolling stock, and seeking an assurance that Transport for Wales (TfW) and the Welsh Government are utilising all possible approaches to secure additional rolling stock.

Fleet availability will remain a challenge for the fleet team throughout the coming year. As was seen during the autumn, damage caused by poor wheel-rail adhesion created a bottleneck in the short term and availability has now recovered. Next autumn, modifications such as wheel slide protection should help prevent this damage from occurring.

Day-to-day fleet availability is a balance between scheduled maintenance (inspection and preventative component changes), units undergoing the required PRM accessibility works (mandatory before December), and the unpredictable nature of faults on trains built in the 1980s. TfW are investing £40 million in our current fleet, including fitting Wheel Slide Protection to make our trains more resilient to extreme weather conditions

TfW will be introducing 84 carriages over the coming year, including 5 additional Class 153 units, 5 Class 769 units and 5 Class 230 units, which are all due to enter service in April/May, as well as 12 Class 170 units and 12 Mark IV carriages which will enter service by the end of the year. Many operators across the country are currently waiting for newly built trains and are therefore hesitant to release their existing units in case of delays, but to further bolster availability before the new fleet arrives, TfW are currently negotiating commercial arrangements for up to 32 additional carriages (on top of the 84) and hope to be able to announce the result of the negotiations soon.

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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.

The rail services contract we have let is designed to be able to change to reflect a growth in services over time. Welsh Government and TfW officials are working with their colleagues in local authorities to identify where these growth opportunities are and how they can be delivered in combination with local and regional transport investments.

Yours ever,



Ken Skates AC/AM

Gweinidog yr Economi a Thrafnidiaeth
Minister for Economy and Transport