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| **12 October 2018** Dear Sir Oliver We are writing to provide you with an update regarding this week’s service and key issues brought to our attention. **Interim timetable**We currently have 3400 trains in the timetable which is 200 more trains in the schedule than we did pre-May. We also added further services during September and plan to add a further 200 services in December.  This creates space for 50,000 more commuters into and out of London each day.   **Performance** Period 7 will finish tomorrow (13th October) and will show an improvement over the same period last year. Whilst reliability on Thameslink and Great Northern has improved steadily under the interim timetable this has been  difficult week with a number of issues causing problems for passengers.  As a result we thought it would be useful to provide some more information than usual about   the incidents to help you answer any queries. |

**Infrastructure and other issues affecting performance this week**

**08/10**

A passenger on the 1703 Brighton to Victoria service fell ill and required medical attention on this train’s journey, the train was therefore held in the Hassocks area, and the 1708 Brighton to Cambridge service was held behind it.

Emergency services were contacted and an off duty medical professional was also nearby to assist.  The passenger was assisted off the train by emergency services, and trains were then able to move again.

Some reactionary delays and alterations took place as services were held to avoid also being blocked by the affected train.

We ensured that passengers were informed about the incident on the information screens, announcements, the website and encouraged to see updates on social media as well as speak to members of staff. Passengers were encouraged to claim for delay repay.

 **09/10**
1. We received reports of a fire underneath a Freight train on platform 0 at Redhill on Tuesday morning. This meant that the electrical current to all lines had to be switched off until a Network Rail engineer  had an opportunity to investigate. Once they had extinguished the fire, Network Rail then deemed it safe to allow trains to run again on platforms 2&3.

Passengers were advised to allow extra time for their journey this morning and to check journey planners for up to date information. They were also informed that some services between Gatwick Airport and East Croydon were being diverted down alternative lines and did not call at all their usual stations:

We also informed passengers that ticket acceptance was put in place on:

• Metrobus between Redhill and Gatwick Airport
• Mutual ticket acceptance between Southern and Thameslink

**2.** Shortly after 18:00 on Tuesday evening we received reports of a possible broken rail in the Ravensbourne area which caused some delays and cancellations for passengers. An engineering team arrived on site at 20:15, and then began the process of examining the affected section of line. While this was on-going, some services needed to be diverted in order to allow the work to take place. A preliminary investigation took place, and trains were then able to run over the affected section at a reduced speed of 20mph.

Train services running through these stations were cancelled, delayed or diverted between Elephant & Castle and Shortlands.

Passengers were advised that trains from London towards Orpington and Sevenoaks were unable to run through Ravensbourne, and could be diverted between Elephant and Castle and Shortlands, running via an alternative route.

We also advised passengers to allow extra time for their journey and that tickets were being accepted on the following alternative routes:

• Mutual ticket acceptance between Thameslink and Southeastern
• TfL buses
• London Underground via reasonable routes.

**3.** We received reports that the 1954 Cambridge to Brighton service developed a fault at Three Bridges, causing severe delays for passengers. This meant that this service was blocking the Brighton bound fast line. Normally we would have been able to work around this by using the alternative slow line but this was closed due to planned engineering works.

This meant that no trains were able to run towards Brighton, unfortunately causing severe disruption to passengers South bound services.

When a train fault occurs, the driver will contact our train technicians and will be guided through a repair process. If they are unable to fix the fault, the train will be terminated and taken out of passenger service and returned to the depot for full safety investigation and repairs.

On this occasion they were unsuccessful in repairing the fault and a rescue train was required. This then joined up to the faulty unit and moved the train into Three Bridges depot, clearing the line enabling trains to run again.

We did our best to make sure that passengers were strongly advised to allow extra time and use alternative routes where possible for their journey this evening. They were also advised to check journey planners, speak with station staff and listen to announcements.

We ensured that ticket acceptance was in place on the following:

• Metrobus between Redhill and Three Bridges
• Brighton and Hove buses between Brighton, Hove, Shoreham by Sea and Preston Park
• Souteastern services via reasonable routes
• South Western Railway services via reasonable routes

Rail replacement buses were also provided for passengers until the network was clear and able to run again.

**10/10**
**1.** We received reports early on this morning of a fault with the signalling equipment at Peckham Rye. Technicians from Network Rail were called out to the site and worked to fix the fault as quickly as possible. To enable them to carry out the necessary repairs, power to the lines needed to be switched off for safety reasons.

We ensured that passengers were advised to allow extra time for their journey and to check journey planners for up to date live information.

Passengers were also informed that we had arranged that their tickets were being accepted on the following via reasonable routes to help you complete their journey:

• London buses between West Croydon and London Bridge
• London Underground services
• Mutual ticket acceptance between Southern and Thameslink

They were also informed that London Overground services were also affected by this incident.

**11/10**

Early on Thursday morning we were informed that damage to the overhead electric wires between Bletchley and Leighton Buzzard meant that less lines were available for use in this area. This was affecting passenger's services travelling from Milton Keynes towards London, and as trains awaited an alternative line to run on congestion and delays built up. Southern services avoided this area by either being cancelled or terminated at Watford Junction.

Network Rail engineers were called onto the site to assess the damage and to make the necessary repairs to reopen the lines.

We advised passengers to check prior to travelling where possible and to allow extra time to complete their journey.

We also advised them that their tickets would be accepted on the following alternative services:
- London Underground between London Victoria and London Euston,
- London Overground between London, Clapham Junction, Willesden Junction and Watford Junction,
- London Northwestern between London and Milton Keynes Central.