

Notes and Actions from 26 September 2018 NTF meeting

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| 1809_01 | <p>Chair's remarks</p> <p>MH thanked Nick Brown for his contribution to NTF in this and in previous stints and welcomed Steve White as the new GTR representative.</p> <p>Alternates: Warrick Dent (for David Horne, LNER), Gus Dunster (for Peter Broadley, Virgin), Nigel Burrows (for Paul McMahon, NR) and John Edgley (for Jon Shaw, NR).</p> <p>NR RMDs: Becky Lumlock (Wessex).</p> <p>Guests: Andy Mellors (SWR).</p> <p>Apologies: Joel Mitchell (Trenitalia), Richard Clarke (DB), John Halsall (NR).</p> <p>PDG: MG reported that the PDG meeting on 10 September had been very short as the Minister had been called away. Discussion focused on the timetable situation and on management of Autumn, covering the performance and safety aspects of vegetation management, and the AWG's assurance of Autumn preparation. The Minister asked for an Autumn briefing session to be arranged by NTF from MPs at the House of Commons. It was agreed that AT and JE (as Chair of AWG) should be involved.</p> | MG | 5 October |
| | <p>Coordinate briefing material and plan for the MPs Autumn briefing.</p> | | |
| | <p>RDG Board: GC reported that RDG Board had focused on performance, covering the outcome of the Steer Review of Performance Strategies, emerging feedback from the Biennial review of NTF and the importance of visible leadership prioritising performance improvement. There was strong support for making NTF work effectively, and it was acknowledged that, while the local plans were critical, there remained a need for NTF to tackle systemic national issues, but NTF has to work better. A cascade brief from the RDG meeting was included in the Biennial Review paper later in this meeting.</p> | | |

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| | MH and GC are required to return to RDG Board with proposals – see also actions 11&12 to this NTF meeting. | | |
| | <p>P6 Performance Report</p> <p>DM summarised P6 performance, noting that while it was 1.2 PPM points behind plan overall, there was a significant improvement from the previous periods. 8 operators met plan in the period, including TfL Rail (+3.2 PPM points) and GTR (+2.1 PPM points). Northern and TPE continued to be well behind plan as a result of the May timetable issues, and track and train crew issues showed the biggest overall variances to plan. Recent GTR and Southeastern performance was better than it had been before the May timetable change.</p> <p>MH asked when an improvement in Northern and TPE performance could be anticipated. RW responded that structural change would be required. A significant improvement was expected for TPE through planned service changes in the December timetable, but, while Northern were working on improvements to diagrams, there was no likelihood of a step change improvement before the May '19 timetable. The current timetable had put too many trains onto a congested two track railway. Stakeholders expected the delivery of previous promises to run more trains, but the infrastructure was not ready to handle this reliably.</p> <p>MH questioned the knock-on impact on the long-distance operators. GD replied that VTWC were not materially affected by the timetable issues and that their major performance concern was axle counters on the southern end of the route. In contrast, WD said that LNER were suffering a large increase in TOC-on-TOC delays following the timetable change, with particular issues at Leeds and York that they were trying to address in the December timetable. RW added that TPE had concerns with train regulation leading to late presentation on key sections of route, and that the Leeds platform working issues had been serious. CR responded that the Leeds plan should be addressed in the December timetable, but that issues with the specification of TPE and LNER services at York would not be solved then.</p> <p>PW said that Northern was unlikely to recover for some time, and that with lots of new trains arriving on the network and ongoing projects, he felt an overall improvement in PPM was unlikely to happen</p> | | |

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| <p>1809_02</p> | <p>soon. He added that more parts of the network were effectively a mass transit system with high frequencies and that PPM was not necessarily the best measure.</p> <p><i>Post-meeting note: The CP6 metrics work, sponsored and endorsed by NTF, and developed over 15 months with all relevant organisations represented, identified a basket of performance measures and recommended to NTF agreement that different measures could be selected for different types of service. A Metro measure has been defined in this process and a short list of sections of the network where it is considered to be applicable (mainly certain London commuter routes) has been identified. A copy of the previous paper will be circulated with these notes and members are invited to propose additional services where the Metro measure is considered suitable.</i></p> <p>NB noted that GTR were now demonstrating much better service recovery during the day. BL asked how this had been achieved. NB said that the improved resilience in the recast Southern timetable was a key factor.</p> <p>SW to bring a paper to NTF with insight from the service recovery improvement to share lessons learned with industry - at a date to be agreed.</p> <p>AT noted that an updated view of the likely CP5 out-turn level of performance was being completed, drawing on the inputs to the discussion of CP6 performance trajectories. GR asked how performance in the coming Autumn and Winter periods would be forecast. DM responded that this would take account of recent history, but also allow for the current plans.</p> | <p>SW</p> | <p>TBC - when ready</p> |
| <p>1809_03</p> | <p>Latest consolidated forecasts for end-CP5 performance to be circulated.</p> | <p>MG</p> | <p>24 Oct NTF</p> |
| | <p>SWR/Wessex – Holden Review</p> <p>Andy Mellors set out the background to the Holden Review, with a nearly 10% drop in PPM since 2011 and more significant drops on longer distance services. He summarised the key root causes of the decline, including the progressive loss of timetable resilience and the capability for service recovery. Since August 2017, further deterioration in operability has resulted from the works at Waterloo and the lack of sufficient infrastructure to reliably accommodate 10-car train operation, and to stable the new</p> | | |

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| | <p>fleet. People factors included the transfer of control from Waterloo to Basingstoke, ongoing industrial action and the effectiveness of alliancing behaviours. The Holden review had made 28 recommendations and prioritised action plans were being put in place. The review can be downloaded here:</p> <p>https://www.southwesternrailway.com/other/about-us/independent-performance-review</p> <p>Lessons learned relevant to other parts of the industry include the need for holistic planning of major service changes - allowing for factors such as the impact of longer trains on TPRs, the updating of contingency plans for rolling stock and infrastructure changes, the operability of the network in perturbation, and the performance impact of capacity improvement schemes.</p> <p>BL added that reviewing delay attribution processes was important with so much unexplained delay, the resources for this having been doubled. The route was planning to spend 20% more on M&R in CP6 to address the ageing infrastructure. They were starting to implement new processes for faster and safer isolations to enable more efficient use of possession time that should improve the quality of work and resulting reliability of assets.</p> <p>BL said a further focus area is creating longer engineering access periods by looking at changes to the first and/or last trains on some days of the week, requiring joint work with DfT where this conflicted with the service specification. PW said he strongly supported this approach and would get personally involved if required.</p> <p>Post-Meeting Note: <i>This is an application of an approach trialled by SE Route and Southeastern some years ago as part of the cross-industry Industry Access Programme (Phase 1), with the removal of last trains on Monday – Wednesday evenings enabling longer possessions, while trains ran later on Thursday and Friday. The cross industry activity delivered process, guidance and toolkits to NR Route ownership to enable collaborative decision-making on optimising access with Railway Undertakings. All members are encouraged to review whether and how effectively they have used / currently use the guidance and tools.</i></p> <p>AP asked whether there would be more ‘boots on the ground’ in response to the challenges on service recovery. BL said that analysis was being carried looking at the speed of response and the location of</p> | | |

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| <p>1809_04</p> | <p>response teams, which suggested some scope for optimisation of existing resources, but added that there were some resource gaps.</p> <p>TS said the Holden review was useful but he was not sure about the causation. It was important to understand what went wrong with the Waterloo design, as, for example, detailed simulation work on platform occupation had been undertaken but reality differs. GR noted that Wessex were one of only two routes forecasting continued performance deterioration in CP6.</p> <p>MG asked that the National Performance Analysis Team be provided with regular access to data on train crewing levels and fleet availability in order to inform analysis for the industry on the possible impact of these on overall performance. It was agreed that he should provide a written specification of what NPAT felt was required, and how it could be used for industry benefit, to RDG to facilitate.</p> <p>It was noted that a number of performance reviews during CP5 have common themes and agreed that there was value in pulling together information on lessons learned and making it more readily available to the industry. This is linked to proposed activity from the NTF Biennial review to collate key good practice guides and propose what should be considered mandatory. Later in the meeting AH referred to a similar proposal for a ‘review of reviews’.</p> | <p>MG</p> | <p>5 October</p> |
| <p>1809_05</p> | <p>NTF Secretariat to develop a plan for taking this forward and bring a paper to the October meeting setting out progress and next steps, taking account of the proposal referred to by AH.</p> | <p>GC/DJ/ DB</p> | <p>24 Oct NTF</p> |
| | <p>CP6 Performance trajectories progress report</p> <p>GR summarised ORR’s thinking for the Final Determination, picking out the importance of monitoring reactionary delay and proposing that this should be monitored regularly at NTF. He said that ORR is looking closely at the proposals for re-openers on Schedule 8 during CP6, but the issues were not as simple as some had suggested.</p> | | |
| | <p>Autumn readiness</p> | | |

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| 1809_06 | <p>JE reported that overall readiness for Autumn appeared to be good based on self-reporting. Information provided to AWG suggested that there was a better level of collaboration this year, but there remains much to be done. AT challenged whether there was sufficient evidence of readiness, as only 11 operators had provided their Stage Gate 3 assessments to AWG, and only 7 TOC MDs had responded to the NTF request for a statement on overall comfort with Autumn preparations. PW added that DfT were taking a close look at the Autumn plans and that they had not received a number of plans that they had specifically requested. It was agreed that a complete set of responses was required and that anyone who had not responded should explain themselves to NTF.</p> <p>AWG to chase and collate further MD responses, and a conference call on Monday 1 October to be arranged for NTF representatives of any Routes and operators who have not provided the requested responses to AWG. Post-meeting note: <i>Joint sign-off of plans is now complete and provision of MD statements is now complete – a general conference call was not needed.</i></p> | JE/DB | Completed |
| | <p>Timetables: Industry Assurance</p> <p>Nigel Burrows summarised assurance of the December '18 timetable, noting that there was a risk around the volume of spot bids being submitted. He clarified that these were related to operationally necessary changes to make the timetable work, and that operators were not making opportunistic bids.</p> <p>GR questioned the NTF's role in relation to the PMO assurance activity and decision-making and why the paper was being discussed, and asked what the 'point of no return' was in relation to timetable change decisions.</p> <p>AP reiterated the role of the cross industry PMO Steering Group in reviewing readiness, assessing the industry risks, prioritising where necessary and making recommendations. CR stressed that it was not an NR System Operator group and that all the Owing Groups were represented. It had been proposed that key timetable change decisions, following Steering Group agreement, were brought to NTF for endorsement, as was the case for the December 2018 timetable changes.</p> <p>PW said that DfT were clear that the System Operator was the final arbiter on timetable changes, and that it was important not to allow continued iteration and to make firm decisions.</p> | | |

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| <p>1809_07</p> | <p>GR noted the Thameslink Readiness Board had now asked GTR for an alternative timetable plan for May '19 as other operators may object to the current plan.</p> <p>CR said that the intention was to offer the May '19 timetable at D-26 but that the possibility of a later offer for GTR only was being looked at. SW explained that GTR were keen not to import performance risk onto other TOCs and were looking at the option of rolling forward the December '18 timetable. The decision would be made in discussion with the System Operator, the Route and the DfT by the end of the week.</p> <p>CR briefly summarised initial thinking from the PMO and OPSG on reviewing the timetabling process, with a focus on increased collaboration to reduce wasted effort. Some pilot projects to test the ideas were being planned.</p> <p>It was agreed that an update paper from the PMO should be provided to the 24 October NTF, as a paper for noting unless substantive issues required discussion.</p> <p>CR said that the 'point of no return' for the May timetable process had already passed, and that any proposed changes needed to be assessed as to whether they mitigated or imported risk.</p> <p>AH stressed that earlier and better-quality forecasts of the performance impact of alternative service options was needed in future. He questioned whether anybody was able to set out the current end-to-end processes around the granting of access rights and completion of the timetable.</p> | <p>PMc/CR</p> | <p>17 October</p> |
| <p>1809_08</p> | <p>Clarify the current end-to-end process for decisions on timetable change, covering franchise specification, sale and approval of access rights and timetable publication – being clear on the 'point of no return' and who makes the final decision. This can then inform redesign of the processes if necessary.</p> <p>Post meeting note: <i>This activity reports to the RDG Planning and Production Board (P&PB) with an agenda slot on 13 November – paper required by 2 November.</i></p> | <p>PMc/CR</p> | <p>13 November P&PB</p> |
| | <p>Performance Strategy Review</p> | | |

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| | <p>Mike Goggin from Steer set out the key findings from their Performance Strategy review, concluding that the current process is not fit for purpose. Key weaknesses included the lack of rolling 5-year plans, insufficient assessment of risk, and no understanding of the resources required to deliver the strategy. As a result, the Strategies are not driving actions now or influencing future decisions to drive performance improvement. The report set out a number of recommendations to address the identified weaknesses.</p> <p>ST commented that the introduction of Performance Strategies in CP5 had been no more than a name change from previous performance planning processes and had not produced the step change in approach that was intended. AH said previous processes had appeared effective because performance improvement post-Hatfield was easier, with plenty of low-hanging fruit. The current improvement challenge was much greater and required development and delivery of meaningful Performance Strategies as part of a comprehensive performance management system. The capability to deliver this needed to be developed. OB commented that the industry was still using the same performance data as in 2001 although much had changed. AH agreed, noting that for some TOCs only 10% of total delay was primary.</p> | | |
| 1809_09 | AH to bring a paper to NTF on positioning performance strategies within an overall performance management system. | AH | 21 Nov NTF |
| 1809_10 | Steer to complete individual strategy reports and sent to relevant TOC, Route and Owning Group. | MGo | 5 October |
| 1809_11 | NTF Secretariat to develop a plan for implementing the Steer review recommendations, connected to the Biennial review outcomes and RDG Board direction. After NTF comment the Chair and RDG Director are required to present to RSG Board. (See also action 12). | DB/DJ | 21 Nov NTF |

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| | <p>Biennial Review</p> <p>DB explained that the Biennial Review process was based on interviews with members and summarised the key themes from the interviews to date. There was a unanimous view that NTF (or a national performance forum) was necessary, but that it was not currently effective. The need for honesty from all parties was highlighted, and there was a common view that there was too much on the agenda with the result that issues were not properly resolved. Part of the solution to this is to reinvigorate the practitioner sub-groups, ensuring they are resourced and focused on specific deliverables. Improving the communication of NTF's activity to all parts of the industry was also seen as important.</p> <p>Emerging recommendations included responding to the challenges from the Steer Review of performance strategies, and developing clear definition of good performance practices that NTF expects all parties to adhere to, with associated assurance processes to ensure that any non-compliance is explicitly justified.</p> <p>Feedback from members pointed to the key priorities for NTF being: making Performance Strategies fit for purpose, improving the alignment of objectives, producing resilient timetables with an understanding of capacity / performance trade-offs, and improving analysis of root causes of delays.</p> <p>DB concluded that a critical area for agreement was on the level of assurance for NTF to apply to delivery of good practice, as there had previously been resistance to the need for this. Options ranged from self assurance to routine independent reviews.</p> <p>Members accepted the challenge from RDG Board on the role of NTF and supported further development of the emerging recommendations and a focus on the proposed priorities.</p> | | |
| 1809_12 | Meeting to be arranged for AH, MH, GC and Chris Burchell to discuss taking forward the issues raised in the biennial review and by RDG Board. | DJ | By 19 October |
| 1809_13 | DB/DJ to complete the review as proposed, with additional interviews and development of proposals for the future operation of NTF, with a substantive update for the 24 October meeting. | DB/DJ | 24 October |

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| | <p>AOB</p> <p>Better Ops Board: TS raised some points from BOPB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CP6 metrics – some issues with the implications of the new CP6 performance metrics for train regulation policies; • Emergency Special Working: TS appealed for all members to support the implementation of the new Emergency Special Working procedures which were now live, as they could have significant performance benefits; • TS to meet David Waboso at Digital Railway in relation to the Crew and Stock system development. | | |
| | <p>1809_14 DJ to review forward agenda for bringing these Better Ops issues to NTF.</p> | DJ | 5 October |
| | <p>1809_15 DJ to circulate all the slides presented on the day plus Emergency Special Working material.</p> | DJ | Completed |

Next meeting: Wednesday 24th October