

## Report to Partnership Meeting 4 September 2015

### RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

#### Points North

##### Purpose of Report

This report provides Members with information on Points North-North Highland Lines performance and progress following the seminar HITRANS hosted in March.

##### Current position

Network Rail has all disciplines working on ways to decrease NHL journey time and improve performance. A list of 28 projects has been drawn up, with short, medium and longterm timescales.

To date only a speed increase at Nigg has been implemented, resulting in a 10 second saving in the northbound direction and 5 seconds in the southbound. Chapelton Level Crossing near Muir of Ord regrettably remains a critical Temporary Speed Restriction, despite the installation of new equipment.

Recent performance and reliability has been poor, largely but not wholly due to driver shortages. A snapshot from early July bears this out:

*01 July 2H62 1234 Wck- Inv cancelled \* 2H65 1828 Inv-Wck terminated at Lairg*

*02 July 2H62 1234 Wck-Inv cancelled 2H65 1828 Inv-Wck skipped Thurso*

*03 July 2H58 0628 Lrg-Inv cancelled*

*04 July 2H60 0618 Wck-Inv cancelled. Started from Lairg 2H61 0702 Inv-Wck terminated at Lairg*

*05 July 2H62 1158 Wck-Inv cancelled (no bus repl?) 2H95 2H92 2H63 2H60 2H93 2H90 Invernets all replaced by buses 2H65 1754 Inv-Wck terminated at Lairg*

*08 July 2H54 0616 Ard-Inv cancelled 2H71 2H70 1142 Inv-Din and return cancelled*

*08 July 2H65 1828 Inv-Wck terminated Lairg no crew*

*09 July 2H60 0618 Wck-Inv started Lairg 'animals on line' using up bandwidth no doubt*

*For your info here are the details of a colleague's return journey from Lairg 1512 to Inverness Wednesday 01 July 15*

*Driver of Coach in Scotrail livery came into HITRANS office to check if route and email sent through to him was correct*

- *Coach dep 1512 then visited every station to Invergordon including Culrain and Fearn where driver had a problem getting coach turned near station then had to run down lane to check if any passengers.*
- *No passengers at any station after initial 3 got on with myself at Lairg. Presume as bus replacement was running late to scheduled rail service that passengers had made alternative arrangements..*
- *Arrived INV 1725 where driver dropped passengers off on Academy St (two blocks away from station for no apparent reason)*

Footfall figures to March 2015 indicate patronage falling on average 11%, with Dingwall at 15% as passengers switch to more reliable modes. Conon Bridge and Beaully are sometimes missed to enable trains to regain time.

### **Action Plan**

We have taken this up to the highest level and have an agreement from Phil Verster MD Network Rail/Abellio ScotRail Alliance to travel with us to Wick in November to see the problems at first hand and to meet stakeholders affected.

We will then run a repeat of the Points North seminar later this year to ensure wide dissemination of problems and progress.

### **Recommendation**

1. Members are asked to note the report.

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Comment</b>
RTS delivery	√	This project fits well with a number of RTS Horizontal themes.
Policy	√	This project has integration and environmental benefits.
Financial	√	This project is fully funded
Equality	-	No impact on equalities issues.

**Report by:** Frank Roach  
**Designation:** Partnership Manager  
**Date:** 25<sup>th</sup> August 2015