

Spring Meeting & Branch AGM

Sat 27th March at 14:00

Jury's Inn, Jeffrey St., Edinburgh

Topic : ""
X (Y)

Programme:

- Talk
- Questions to the speaker
- Coffee/Tea break
- Branch AGM - a chance for members to vote for office-bearers, ask questions, and to provide guidance to the Committee for policy and activity for the future

AGM:

- We need a new treasurer - duties are not very onerous. Could you volunteer? An indication prior to the meeting would be helpful.
- Other volunteers for the Committee or to do active campaigning are also sought.

Update on West Coast Main Line RUS

The West Coast RUS Stakeholder Management Group agreed that the route be split to consider Long Distance, Freight, West Mids Commuters, NW and Scotland commuters and LSE commuters. Sub-groups have been established for these along with a demand forecasting sub-group which is looking at growth projections and future potential pax demand and freight demand from 2019-2030.

Andy Bliss has pulled together a draft list of potential gaps for consideration by the SMG, which has been gleaned from stakeholders including LAs, RUGs, CCs etc. and covers connectivity at various locations, capacity and overcrowding.

Passenger Focus has undertaken research with over 4,000 passengers along the route and will present the findings to NR RUS management group on 10th. Mar and SMG on 17th. Mar. Results of the research will be available for you to access on our website. Hard copies will be available in April. Please let John Sears know if you want a hard copy posting to you.

Other areas for consideration have been raised such as engineering possessions (e.g. 15:00 Sat-Sun afternoon which wipe out many local services where Saturday is the busiest day for shoppers esp round Merseyside and Manchester); peak crowding on TPE Manchester/Preston services and XC Bham to Manchester services. Passenger Focus has also requested that the RUS considers earlier/later trains, car parking and stations.

What next?

NR will write a paper for SMG outlining what all the sub groups have considered, where the info came from and what should be taken forward, plus dates of future SMGs.

Between the end of Mar and the end of Summer option appraisals and benefit to cost ratios will be considered with SMG agreeing which options stand and fall. Sub groups will be required for this optioneering work. There is a need to consider IEP, Manchester Hub and electrification alongside this RUS. The Draft Strategy needs to be ready for end of November and circulated with a 12 week consultation period. NR say nothing is appearing that was unexpected or new or radically different from what stakeholders say.

Andy Bliss is happy to update RUGs at a meeting in late Summer.

ScotRail investment

In December 1 ScotRail announced an investment programme mainly affecting the west of Scotland of £1.15 million to be completed by March this year. a range of measures which include additional shelters, information screens, toilets, public telephones and clocks at station entrances. one project which will be appreciated by many is a modification of the ticket gates line at Glasgow Queen Street high-level. This will provide three additional standard gates, I'd also three additional wide-aisle gates to help those with cycles, prams, wheelchairs and bulky luggage.

GARL

The GARL saga has continued, with Railfuture getting press coverage on several issues, in particular pointing out that the figures of "savings" presented are misleading. Referring to a letter in the Herald by Brian Donohoe,, Ken Sutherland replied

The cancelled Glasgow Airport Rail Link did not save £395m as was (mistakenly / carelessly) reported in The Herald of 24 December 2009. As you may know, over half of this £395m is accounted for GARL related works being undertaken/spent by Network Rail to upgrade signalling and provide an additional track capacity on the main Glasgow - Paisley Line and additional tracks/platforms at Glasgow Central Station.

The net saving to the Scottish Government by scrapping GARL (the 1.2 mile spur line into the Airport) according to Finance Secretary, John Swinney, was £170m - but less a deductible allowance for past expenditure not now recoverable from the aborted GARL project.

It is also believed that this Transport Scotland quoted £170m (for the Airport spur) is an exaggerated and inflated 'estimate', and that there is now reason to believe that this short construction could be achieved at a significantly lower capital cost.

NEWGARL

Following on from the persistent rejection of GARL by the government, Bill Forbes, a Glasgow engineer who has been campaigning for a rail link to the airport for 20 years, has come up with an alternative modification of the proposal which he claims would not only be cheaper but more efficient in implementation. He says "NEWGARL can be completed for around £120 million and will offer greater modal change for passengers calling at the airport using public transport; a more direct impact on M8 congestion; enhanced environmental benefits and it will support and complement the substantial investment planned by BAA for Glasgow in the medium term."

How hard is it to get to the airport?

It's not only Glasgow and Edinburgh airports which have poor public transport links. Railfuture has produced a report looking at the whole of the UK. Trevor Garrod who helped compile it says: "In some cases, simple actions such as reorganising bus routes so that buses call at the airport and the railway station could bring huge improvements. No one seems to have taken responsibility for this on a national level. There's a piecemeal approach, and some joined-up thinking is really needed. It's not just the passengers who benefit from decent public transport links. We have to remember the thousands of people who work in UK airports who can also benefit, as well as the general population through reduced pollution and congestion."

The report can be viewed online at:

http://www.railfuture.org.uk/tiki-download_file.php?fileId=169

PAPER COPY?

If you received this as a paper copy, in the post, it means that we do not have an email address for you. You could save the Society money, and the Secretary a lot of work, if you provided an email address if you have one. It would be used only to deliver an electronic copy of Branch Notes, and occasionally notify you of events or campaign actions.

Please send an email to Secretary@RailfutureScotland.org.uk

ECML Consultation

Big changes to the East Coast Main Line train timetable are planned for May 2011. Passenger Focus is encouraging passengers to feed in their views about the new timetables by visiting www.eastcoast.co.uk/Eureka and to also let PF know what they are thinking.

As with most timetable changes there are winners and losers. To help passengers respond PF has summarised the principal positives and negatives by station. Ones affecting Scotland are listed below. The Department for Transport consultation on the franchise specification runs until 19 April 2010 and is available from their website www.dft.gov.uk or by emailing ICECConsultation@dft.gsi.gov.uk Headlines

East Coast's principal objectives in making timetable changes in May 2011 are to:

- Increase the number of seats available to and from London Kings Cross, primarily in the off-peak
- Reduce journey times between London and a number of destinations, principally Leeds, York, Newcastle and Edinburgh
- Introduce a new direct service from Lincoln to London
- Introduce a "clock-face" timetable in which trains depart at the same minutes past each hour

London

- + For journeys to a number of stations, including Leeds, York, Darlington, Newcastle and Edinburgh, trains will depart at the same minutes past each hour through most of the day.
- + For off-peak travel to a number of stations, including Leeds, York, Darlington, Newcastle and Edinburgh, journey times are reduced. For example, London to Leeds becomes two hours 10 minutes through most of the day, generally between five and 15 minutes faster than at present. Departures from London to Edinburgh on the hour become four hours 20 minutes throughout the day, a timing which is achieved by some trains already but is between five and 15 minutes faster than most existing services.
- + A through train every two hours to Lincoln via Newark
- Only one train from London Kings Cross to Motherwell and Glasgow (currently six trains)

Stevenage

- No trains to Scotland (currently two trains)
- Two Friday evening through trains to Edinburgh are withdrawn

Peterborough

- Only six trains each day from Peterborough to Edinburgh (currently 11 trains) and only seven trains each day from Edinburgh to Peterborough (currently 14 trains)
- A four hour gap in Peterborough to Edinburgh trains and a three hour gap in Edinburgh to Peterborough trains (currently the maximum interval between Peterborough to Edinburgh trains is 1 hour until 1346 and between Edinburgh and Peterborough is one hour until 1300)
- Slower journeys to York, Newcastle and Edinburgh, e.g. 3 hours 57 minutes to Edinburgh (current fastest is 3 hours 33 minutes, mostly around 3 hours 45 minutes)
- No trains to Aberdeen or Inverness, and only one to Glasgow

Grantham

- No trains to Scotland (currently one train)

Newark

- + Five trains per day to Edinburgh (one at present)

Doncaster

- Three Friday evening through trains to Edinburgh are withdrawn
- Only one Doncaster to Glasgow train (currently four trains)

Morpeth

- + An extra train to Glasgow via Edinburgh at 0743
- + More through trains to Glasgow

Dunbar

- + Later last train from Edinburgh at 2140 (currently 2100, Mondays to Thursdays – it is later on Fridays)
- A gap from 1830 to 2005 in trains from Edinburgh to Dunbar
- Lack of clarity about the first train to Edinburgh (currently 0639) and the Fridays only train from Edinburgh to Dunbar at 2317

Edinburgh

- + A train on the hour from Edinburgh to London Kings Cross in 4 hours 20 minutes, and a train on the hour from London to Edinburgh, again with a journey time of 4 hours 20 minutes.
- + Journey time Edinburgh to London is between 5 and 20 minutes faster than many current off-peak trains
- An earlier last train to London Kings Cross at 1830 (currently 1900)
- No through trains to Grantham
- No through trains to Stevenage except at 1731 and 1800

Motherwell

- + Five through trains to Leeds, Sheffield, Derby and Birmingham (currently two trains)
- Potential gap in trains between Motherwell to Edinburgh at around 0805
- Only one through train from Motherwell to Peterborough (currently seven trains)

Glasgow

- + Five through trains to Leeds, Sheffield, Derby and Birmingham (currently two trains)
- Only one through train from Glasgow to Peterborough (currently seven trains)

Dundee

- + One extra Dundee to London Kings Cross train at 0632
- The 0632 train from Dundee to Plymouth via Leeds, Sheffield, Derby and Birmingham will no longer run
- The 0632 train from Dundee would no longer call at some smaller stations en route to Edinburgh because the train will be too long for the platforms

Other changes

- + Five through trains from the Midlands, Sheffield and Leeds to Motherwell and Glasgow (currently two)
- + Liverpool-Manchester-Sheffield-Nottingham-Peterborough-Norwich trains have a slightly faster journey time between Peterborough and Norwich
- A number of "last train" connective opportunities are poorer in the southbound direction than at present
- Journey time between Norwich and Newcastle or Scotland worsens in both directions (passengers will in future wait 54 minutes at Peterborough if making a Scotland or Newcastle to Norwich journey)
- Journey time from Ipswich to Newcastle or Scotland worsens because passengers will in future wait 40 minutes at Peterborough (a current journey time of around 4 hours Ipswich to Newcastle becomes 4 hours 40 minutes).

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