

# Rail Deliver

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## National Rail

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### **Announcement from the RDG: Rail industry focuses on reliability for December's new timetable**

**The Rail Delivery Group (RDG) has today made the following announcement regarding the December 2018 timetable change.**

The rail industry has reviewed its plans for the winter timetable following disruption in parts of the country after the May timetable change and will make fewer changes to ensure people get a more reliable service.

Every year, the national timetable is routinely changed twice – for the summer (in May) and for the winter (in December) to allow services to adapt for seasonal variations and to enable new services to be introduced as a result of investment in the infrastructure and in new trains.

The timetable change in May 2018 was the largest in recent railway history. As a result of today's announcement, the December 2018 timetable change will be of a similar scale to the smaller changes of recent years.

Customers in many parts of the country will still see changes to their timetables this winter, while elsewhere a more cautious approach will be taken with some planned improvements being introduced more gradually.

This approach – supported by Network Rail and train operating companies – has been adopted following the difficulties encountered with the May timetable. The rail industry has reviewed its plans for December and is acting now to make sure that changes can be introduced smoothly, and that passengers can plan their journeys with confidence.

The government has accepted the rail industry's recommended approach.

The majority of operators will introduce a new December timetable. Others will continue with their May timetable, which will still require additional work to be done. Where this is the case, minor adjustments and small locally-based changes that have limited wider impact may be made if possible.

**Sir Peter Hendy, Chair, Network Rail, said:**

"The railway industry has taken a long hard look at its plans for the next timetable change in December and, taking into account recent painful lessons, the industry has scaled back its ambition and tempered it with a more cautious, phased approach to introducing the new timetable.

"While there will still be new services introduced this December, other new services will now be introduced more gradually over the next few timetable changes to help smooth their introduction and maintain a reliable service for passengers and businesses alike.

"The railway is too vital for the health and wealth of our country to risk a

repeat of the mistakes of May and this more balanced approach of ambition and caution is absolutely the right thing to do for the millions who rely on our railway everyday."

**Paul Plummer, chief executive of the Rail Delivery Group, said:**

"In parts of the country, many people have suffered unacceptable disruption following the introduction of the new timetable in May for which we are sincerely sorry. The industry is determined to learn the lessons from what went wrong. After careful consideration, Network Rail and train operators are acting now to make sure people get a reliable service when the December timetable is introduced, which means some improvements will be delivered more slowly than originally planned.

"As part of our long-term plan to change and improve, we will still be introducing thousands of new carriages and delivering a 10 per cent increase in the number of trains running. Our ambition to deliver a once-in-a-generation step change in the quality of rail services is right but reliability for customers must come first and that's what today's announcement aims to ensure."

| Operators introducing a new December TT  | Operators continuing with the planned May TT   |
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| Arriva Trains Wales <sup>1</sup><br>c2c<br>Caledonian Sleeper <sup>1</sup><br>Chiltern Railways<br>East Midlands Trains<br>Grand Central <sup>2</sup><br>Greater Anglia<br>Heathrow Express <sup>2</sup><br>Hull Trains <sup>2</sup><br>London North Eastern Railway<br>Merseyrail <sup>1</sup><br>Scotrail <sup>1</sup><br>South Eastern<br>TfL Rail <sup>1</sup><br>Virgin Trains West Coast | CrossCountry<br>Govia Thameslink Railway<br>Great Western Railway<br>London Overground <sup>1</sup><br>Northern<br>South Western Railway<br>TransPennine Express<br>West Midlands Trains |

**Table Notes:**

Not all national rail network train operators are engaged through Department

for Transport rail franchise contracts. The table also includes the expected position, for:

<sup>1</sup> services provided under contract to devolved authorities; and

<sup>2</sup> services provided through Open Access contracts independent of public authority.

### **Notes to editors**

- The Secretary of State for Transport and the Chair of Network Rail asked Andrew Haines, Chief Executive Designate of Network Rail, to review the industry's plans for the new winter timetable due to be brought into operation on 9 December. Mr Haines considered the plans for the new timetable, especially in light of recent disruption following the May timetable change, and to better balance ambition and caution for December.
- Mr Haines consulted with Network Rail and operators up and down the country, and made a series of recommendations that maximise the benefits of new services for December and also gives industry and passengers a very high degree of confidence in delivering any change smoothly and without the major disruption seen with the summer timetable.
- The government has accepted these recommendations, which will see some operators move forward with a change of service in December while others will continue with May's full planned timetable that will in effect, last 12 months rather than six.
- Mr Haines also recommended that where possible, planners should try and make small adjustments to the summer timetable planned for Northern and GTR to reflect passenger and stakeholder feedback to improve service patterns and frequencies.
- Freight operators are liaising directly with Network Rail over decisions about their timetables.
- This announcement means that returning to a position of confirming timetables to customers 12 weeks ahead where these are altered at weekends, known as informed traveller, will take longer than previously planned. The industry will be working hard to return to the full 12 weeks ahead confirmation window as quickly as possible and hopes to do so by May 2019.

**For more information on this release, please contact the Rail Delivery Group press office:**

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## **About West Midlands Trains**

West Midlands Trains Ltd. will be running the West Midlands rail franchise from 10 December 2017 until 2025/6. Abellio has a 70.1% share of the company, East Japan Railway Company (JRE) and Mitsui & Co., Ltd. (Mitsui) own the remaining 29.9% in a 50:50 split.

## **About Abellio**

Abellio is the international passenger transport subsidiary of the Dutch national railway company, Nederlandse Spoorwegen. Every day our people provide rail, bus and tram services to 1.7m customers across the UK, Germany and in the Netherlands. In the UK we operate buses through Abellio London, as well as ScotRail and Greater Anglia train services, and Merseyrail in a joint venture with Serco. In Germany we operate Abellio Deutschland, serving communities in North Rhine Westfalia, Saxony, Lower Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, Hesse and Thuringia. Our role in transport extends beyond the journey from a-to-b. With our international heritage and our policy of sharing best practice, not just amongst ourselves, but across the wider transport industry, we provide thought leadership and truly innovative ideas which make a positive contribution to the communities we serve. For more information on Abellio visit [www.abellio.com](http://www.abellio.com)

## **About Mitsui**

Mitsui is one of the most diversified and comprehensive trading, investment and service enterprises in the world with 139 offices in 66 countries as of March, 2017. Utilising our global operating locations, network and information resources, we are multilaterally pursuing business that ranges from product sales, worldwide logistics and financing, through to the development of major international infrastructure and other projects in the following fields: Iron & Steel Products, Mineral & Metal Resources, Infrastructure Projects, Integrated Transportation Systems, Chemicals, Energy, Food Resources, Food Products & Services, Consumer Services, IT & Communication, and Corporate Development Business. Mitsui is actively

taking on challenges for global business innovation around the world. For more information, visit [www.mitsui.com](http://www.mitsui.com).

### **About JR East**

East Japan Railway Company (JR East) was established in 1987, when Japanese National Railways was divided as part of a package of railway reforms. JR East's railway business covers a 7,500 km (approx. 4,660 miles) network in the eastern part of the Japanese main island, including Tokyo Metropolitan area, and provides transportation services, comprising urban, suburban and high speed operations, for 17 million passengers on a daily basis. JR East also undertakes non-transport commercial activities, which account for more than 30% of the total revenue of JR East Group. JR East contributes to passengers and communities it serves by delivering high degrees of punctuality, reliability and comfort and also continues to pursue higher levels of safety and service quality through technical innovation. For more information, visit [www.jreast.co.jp/e](http://www.jreast.co.jp/e).

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