

# Mid-year update: Safely improving performance - part two



everyone  
home safe  
every day

Dear all

In my message on Monday, I reflected on the positive steps we've taken so far to address the significant train performance shortfalls that faced us at the start of the year. In this message, I will talk about where we are today and the opportunities ahead.

Thanks to a huge amount of hard work across the region, we are turning a corner. However, it's slow and hard work – and the efforts invested by our teams should not be underestimated. I often reflect on how quickly we criticise our frontline teams for shortcomings in response and recovery activity. But so rarely do we reach out and give them credit and recognition for events that, whilst undesirable, have been effectively managed and caused less disruption than if they had been managed poorly.

This is a sticking point for me, and I've spoken with my exec members about the need for change in this area. Frankly, if I have team members - whether in control, signalling centres or DUs - who feel they are damned if they do and damned if they don't, then I'm not doing my job properly and I want to make good on that.

Our performance is showing positive signs of recovery – in fact we were the only region to hit 'on-time' in Period 5, a feat that would have seemed so far away from us not that long ago. A few statistics that illustrate this improvement:

- Wales & Borders route's on-time was ahead of target in periods 1, 2, 3 and 4, and the moving annual average (MAA) currently stands at 54.1 % against a target of 53 %.
- Western route's on-time performance is 61.4 % (MAA) against a target of 61.6 %. In Thames Valley, the Project Brunel plan is showing encouraging results, with performance stabilising



**Rob Cairns,**  
**Regional Managing Director**

This progress is in line with our very detailed performance improvement plan, which has been approved by the regulator, and focuses on delivering the service that passengers and freight users expect. I am very mindful that none of these things happen by chance – it is the product of considerable planning and hard work, and I am grateful for the huge amount of effort that has gone into this so far this year. But one of my concerns remains that we rely too heavily on significant and sustained discretionary effort of certain individuals, rather than bullet proof process and systems. Again, I will be blind to that at my own peril.

So – we’ve achieved a huge amount, and there is of course still a huge amount to be done. Delivering our performance plan means focusing relentlessly on safely achieving our on-time target for CP7. In my next message, on Friday, I will talk about the opportunities ahead as we come into the second half of the year.

Stay safe

Rob

This update is provided by the Wales and Western Communications team. For any queries, please contact [walesandwesterncomms@networkrail.co.uk](mailto:walesandwesterncomms@networkrail.co.uk)



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