

**Evidence from
Arriva Trains Wales / Trenau Arriva Cymru Limited
to National Assembly for Wales
Economic Development and Transport Committee
And House of Commons Welsh Affairs Select Affairs
Committee
On Draft Transport (Wales) Bill**

Monday, 21st June 2004

Introduction

Arriva Trains Wales/Trenau Arriva Cymru Ltd welcomes this draft Bill as underlining the focus on the importance of public transport, including railways, to the economic prosperity of Wales. We look forward to it being the basis of a continued good working relationship with both the Welsh Assembly Government and the Strategic Rail Authority.

Wales Transport Strategy

Arriva Trains Wales/Trenau Arriva Cymru Ltd sees this proposal as a valuable support to the work already underway in Wales in bringing the advantages of joined-up government to the specific policy of integrated transport delivery. We look forward to a statutory Wales Transport Strategy that can incorporate connections between the policy areas of transport, economic development, planning, environment and social inclusion as well as facilitating the integration of modes of transport operation.

Joint Regional Working

Arriva Trains Wales/Trenau Arriva Cymru Ltd has found the system of local authorities working together on transport issues very helpful and welcomes the proposal to give more resources to regional groupings. It is rare that strategic railway routes are only within one local authority area, so it is helpful to us to be able to deal with partnerships of local authorities rather than individual ones. In the process of building a strategic national railway network in Wales, geographical cooperation obviously makes sense.

The existing regional local government consortia in Wales, for instance, have greatly facilitated the current complex consultation exercise on our new proposed Standard Pattern Timetable. Without their share in the process, it

would have been harder to focus on specific improvements that could still be made within the innovative concept of a Standard Pattern, as well as with specific timings of particular services. If the proposals in the draft Bill give additional support to the role of these consortia then Arriva Trains Wales/Trenau Arriva Cymru Ltd looks forward to continuing effective working relationships with local government in Wales for the further development of a strategic national rail network.

The franchise operated by Arriva Trains Wales/Trenau Arriva Cymru Ltd covers local government areas in England as well as the whole of Wales. We would hope that the provisions of this part of the draft Bill may also allow for some parallel arrangements to be made with these English local authorities.

Assembly Power to Secure Provision of Public Passenger Transport Services

Arriva Trains Wales/Trenau Arriva Cymru Ltd understands the advantage of services being delivered by the most appropriate level of government and with access to the appropriate powers and financial resources. Effective policy delivery often requires a combination of proximity to customers to appreciate their needs, with access to sufficient strategic resources to meet those needs. In Wales these means proximity to the communities represented by the National Assembly and Welsh Assembly Government and served by Arriva Trains Wales/Trenau Arriva Cymru Ltd.

Assembly Powers of Direction and Guidance over SRA

This is a model that works effectively elsewhere and Arriva Trains Wales/Trenau Arriva Cymru Ltd looks forward to the opportunities that it is likely to bring to the governance of railways in Wales.

The proposals in the draft Bill appear to be almost exactly the same as those operating in Scotland, which we believe to be proven and effective working arrangements. While we do not think the role of Passenger Transport Executives are specifically relevant to operation in Wales, we believe there are some useful lessons to be learnt from the transport powers of the major conurbations in England.

Arriva plc also has considerable experience on the continent of Europe. For instance, in the Netherlands the company operates three concessions. One is contracted with the national government and the other two with the regional governments of Friesland and Groningen. We find this dual mode of governance in different parts of a single country also works well when it meets the regional requirements.

Assembly power to fund air services

While this may not directly affect Arriva Trains Wales/Trenau Arriva Cymru Ltd, we would hope that this provision will facilitate integration of strategic air services with other modes of passenger transport in Wales and so support the development of a Welsh national integrated passenger transport network.

We look forward to the opening of the Vale of Glamorgan line in 2005 to improve access to Cardiff International Airport and would also be pleased if this provision would facilitate direct rail access to Cardiff International Airport at some stage in the future.

Infrastructure Development

Arriva Trains Wales/Trenau Arriva Cymru Ltd would also hope that under the provisions of this draft Bill the Welsh Assembly Government would be able to assist in achieving greater contiguity between the current Network Rail organisation and the boundaries of the all-Wales franchise,

Conclusion

Arriva Trains Wales/Trenau Arriva Cymru Ltd welcomes this draft Transport (Wales) Bill. Our fifteen-year franchise enables us to plan for the long term and to develop and deliver a vision for an integrated national rail network for Wales. We hope this Bill will facilitate the endeavours of the Welsh Assembly Government and the National Assembly for Wales also to develop their vision for the overall passenger transport network in Wales.

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