



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Claire Perry MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London SW1P 4DR

25th May 2016

Dear Claire

Re: Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) Franchise

As I know you are acutely aware, GTR and in particular Southern Rail has been one of the biggest problems facing my constituents for some time now. The constant delays, overcrowding and cancelled trains have blighted commuters and leisure travellers for some years now.

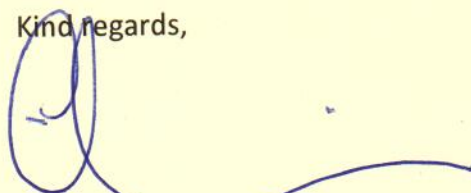
GTR's performance is still abysmal – the worst of any of the 21 Franchises in the country. The performance has been continuing to decline, despite promises about a turnaround. I attach some charts on this, which I am sure you have seen already. The latest performance data showed 17.3% of services were at least 5 minutes late, over double the national average. 5.4% of trains were also either cancelled or over 30 minutes late, which is also double the national average. On Monday 23rd May, 997 Southern trains (31% of the total) were late of which 322 (10% of the total) were over 30 minutes late or entirely cancelled. 45% of all very late and cancelled trains in the whole UK that day were Southern trains. The delays are concentrated on the rush hour, so the percentages of late and very late/cancelled trains will be much higher for rush hour commuters than the figures above suggest.

The improvements we have been promised time and again have not materialised, and in fact the situation continues to get worse. When Southern joined with Thameslink and Great Northern under the umbrella of Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR), it became the largest rail franchise to ever exist in the UK, covering 23% of all UK journeys. As demonstrated by the continual decline in performance measures, this franchise is being very badly managed and may well be unmanageable. Given this, and the continuing decline in performance, I believe that the franchise should be immediately removed from GTR and broken up in to smaller franchises.

The suburban commuter lines, which broadly speaking start and finish inside the M25, are due to be moved under the jurisdiction of TfL by 2021. I believe that this needs to be done immediately. TfL has a far better track record than GTR and can be trusted to run the services more effectively.

I would be grateful for your thoughts on this. I know that other colleagues have been in touch with you about this issue, and I believe that another meeting with affected MPs would be helpful.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'C' followed by a horizontal line that tapers to the right.

Chris Philp MP