

## REGIONAL REVIEW

### SOUTHEASTERN NATIONALISED

The Government has terminated the Southeastern franchise and the service has been operated by the Department for Transport's own company, SE Trains Limited, since 02:00 on 17 October. The franchise had been held by Govia, a joint venture by Go-Ahead and Keolis. An investigation conducted by the Department for Transport identified evidence that since October 2014 the franchisee had not declared over £25 million of historic taxpayer funding which should have been returned. This relates to the funding of track access charges to use HS1 and may have been a genuine error by Southeastern. The Department says that "on the basis of the available evidence, we consider this to be a significant breach of the good faith obligation within the franchise agreement." The £25 million has been recovered and further investigations into the franchise are under way. Go-Ahead's chief financial officer, who was previously the finance and contracts director at Southeastern, has resigned. There may be an investigation by the Serious Fraud Office. Termination of the franchise and transfer to SE Trains Limited does not affect the operation of trains, validity of tickets or the employment of the vast majority of Southeastern's staff. The trading name, corporate image and train liveries are unchanged. Steve White has taken over as Managing Director of Southeastern. He was previously Deputy Chief Executive of Govia Thameslink Railway.

### STOCK NOTES

**Carriage numbering:** It appears that the six-figure carriage numbers applied to recently-built vehicles are part of the UIC (Union Internationale des Chemins de fer) number. So, for example, the full UIC number of class 700 driving motor 401001 is 94 70 0401001-5, where 94 = electric multiple-unit vehicle, 70 = UK registered and 5 is the check digit (using the Luhn algorithm). Rail Industry Standard RIS-2453-RST *Vehicle Registration, Marking and Numbering*, introduced UIC numbering in Great Britain in December 2017. Prior to that the only British vehicles allocated UIC numbers were those working international services, mostly freight wagons.

**Class 442:** All of the vehicles at Eastleigh have been cut up, except for the trailer and driving trailer coaches of unit 442412 and officially preserved driving trailer 77382 from 442401. Some new future may await the vehicles from 442412.

**Classes 455 and 456:** SWR has withdrawn units 5704/35/36 and 5855. Units 5717/38/50, 5905/07 and 456001 are stored.

**Class 465:** Further moves to store at Worksop were 465241+244 on 27 September, 465250 on 30 September, 465247 (previously stored at Beckenham Junction) on 4 October and 465242+248 on 11 October. The remaining class 465/2 units went off lease when SE Trains Limited took over the Southeastern operation and it seems most unlikely that they will be used in service again. All were out of use by the end of traffic on 15 October, with units 465235/37/39/40/43 at Grove Park and 465238/249 at Gillingham. Further moves to Worksop following this were 465238+249 on 18 October, 465240 on 21 October and 465239+243 on 25 October. Units 465010+019 were hauled back to Gillingham from Worksop on 12 October and it is expected that 465004+017 will follow. Units 465913 and 466006, which were stored for a short while at Beckenham Junction, are back in service.

**Class 701:** Unit 701030 was delivered from Derby to Wimbledon Depot on 29 September. Unit 701505 was moved back to Derby from Worksop on 15 October. 701034 was delivered from Derby to Eastleigh on 19 October, followed by 701035 on 25 October.

**Class 707:** Further transfers from SWR to Southeastern are 707001/11/12/25-29. Southeastern is branding class 707 as City Beam.

## TIMETABLES AND DIAGRAMS

**Class 707:** Units 707009+010 worked a special service for the media on Friday 24 September, 11:44 Cannon Street to Sevenoaks and 12:24 return. Passenger use of the units by Southeastern started on Monday 27 September, with 707009+010 working the following diagram.

05:31 Crayford to Cannon Street  
06:20, 11:20, 16:20, 21:20 Cannon Street to Orpington  
07:11, 12:11, 17:11, 22:11 Orpington to Cannon Street  
07:57, 12:57, 17:57, 22:57 Cannon Street to Hayes  
08:45, 13:45, 18:45, Hayes to Cannon Street  
09:38, 14:38, 19:38 Cannon Street to Cannon Street via Sidcup and Woolwich  
23:45 Hayes to Lewisham

707011+707012 were noted on the 15:17 Cannon Street to Cannon Street via Woolwich and Sidcup, having arrived empty from Gillingham Depot, and appear to have continued on the 17:15 and 19:15 Cannon Street loop services, before running to Slade Green Depot.

With numbers reducing on services from Waterloo, class 707 is found mainly on Shepperton workings. By early October there was just one Windsor diagram and one Chertsey loop diagram worked by class 707.

**London Marathon:** It was a sign of a degree of normality returning that the London Marathon took place on 3 October. Southeastern ran its customary enhanced service to Blackheath and the Greenwich line, from the start of service until early afternoon. As usual, Southeastern trains to Greenwich ran only from Cannon Street. Extra trains to Blackheath ran from Charing Cross. Many of the Greenwich trains terminated at Plumstead and Blackheath trains mostly continued to Dartford or Slade Green via Bexleyheath. Thameslink operated its normal half-hourly service via Greenwich. Competitors had free travel by Southeastern services from London termini to the station nearest to their start point.

**East Grinstead:** Having withdrawn all services to East Grinstead, Thameslink reinstated one evening peak train from 11 October, 17:15 from Legrave and 19:07 to West Hampstead Thameslink.

**Covid Cuts:** Although trains have been added to the timetable, the service still falls short of what was included in the December 2019 timetable. The following notes refer to the off-peak weekday timetable in October and in most cases Saturday is the same. Some hourly services revert to half-hourly in the middle of the afternoon, to accommodate school traffic.

The stopping service from Victoria to Orpington via Herne Hill remains half-hourly, but the short workings to Bromley South are withdrawn. The Thameslink service between Kentish Town and Orpington via Catford also does not run. The roundabout service from Cannon Street via Bexleyheath and Woolwich is withdrawn, so there are no off-peak trains between Barnehurst and Slade Green. On the Sidcup line the Charing Cross trains terminating and starting at Dartford do not run, but those to and from Gravesend continue. The Victoria to Gravesend service is cut back to Dartford. The Bromley North branch was the only Southern Electric service to operate every 20 minutes, but is now half-hourly.

Main line services in Kent remain significantly altered. High speed services, hourly from St Pancras, are to Dover via Ashford, Margate via Canterbury West and Ramsgate via Faversham. Instead of the high speed trains, the Deal line is served by trains from Charing Cross to Dover being extended to Ramsgate. The service from Charing Cross to Ramsgate via Canterbury West is cut back to Ashford, being replaced by extension of the Victoria to Canterbury West trains to Ramsgate. The service from Victoria to Ramsgate via Chatham is cut back to hourly, as is the Sheerness branch service. The Charing Cross trains terminating and starting at Tunbridge Wells do not run. The Medway Valley has an hourly service to Tonbridge.

The trains between Victoria and London Bridge via Crystal Palace do not operate, nor do those from Victoria via Selhurst terminating at Sutton. The service between London Bridge and Coulsdon Town via Sydenham is cut back to East

Croydon. Milton Keynes trains run to and from Clapham Junction, instead of East Croydon. Trains between London Bridge and Beckenham Junction via Tulse Hill and Crystal Palace run every 90 minutes, instead of half-hourly.

The service to Uckfield is reduced to every two hours during the middle of the day, with East Grinstead having trains hourly. No Gatwick Express services operate.

Coastway services from Brighton remain significantly cut back. Alternate Hastings and Ore trains operated hourly, but now just the Hastings trains remain. The shuttles to Lewes and to Hove do not run and nor does the stopping service to West Worthing. Portsmouth and Southampton trains make additional stops to compensate for loss of the West Worthing service. Some Victoria trains starting and terminating at Eastbourne do not run off-peak.

Suburban services from Waterloo run normally, except that the Hounslow loop service is withdrawn and trains to Dorking and Guildford via Bookham run hourly, instead of half-hourly. Hounslow is served only by trains to Weybridge via Chertsey. On the Portsmouth Direct line one of the semi-fast trains terminates at Haslemere and the stopping trains that did so are withdrawn. That leaves Portsmouth with one semi-fast and one stopping train each hour, plus the train via Winchester. There is a revised service on the Bournemouth line. Weymouth had two trains each hour, but one is cut back to Poole. The Waterloo to Poole stopping trains are replaced by ones between Winchester and Bournemouth.

Stopping services via Andover terminate and start at Basingstoke instead of Waterloo. Southampton Central to Portsmouth Harbour trains are cut back to Portsmouth & Southsea. The CrossCountry service between Bournemouth and Manchester is every two hours, instead of hourly, and there are no trains between Southampton Central and Newcastle.

Two lines which had a vestigial passenger service still have none. The west curve off the Sheerness branch at Sittingbourne was used by peak services between Sheerness and Victoria until Friday 20 March 2020. Some trains ran from 7 September until 13 November 2020, but not since. Also on 20 March 2020 the 16:17 Streatham Hill to London Bridge via Tulse Hill ran for the last time, this being the only passenger train scheduled to use the Leigham spur. During the following week a short-notice 23:56 London Bridge to Streatham Hill passenger train operated Monday to Thursday, so made the last passenger use of the spur early on Friday.

**West London Line:** London Overground plans to operate additional trains between Clapham Junction and Shepherd's Bush from May 2022. However, this depends on paths being granted on what is already a busy line.

## INTERESTING WORKINGS

**Class 153:** 153385 is being used for track recording and made a trip from Derby to Eastleigh on 19 October.

**Class 313:** Network Rail's test unit, 313121, was hauled from Old Dalby to Eastleigh Works via Kew East and Chertsey on 25 October.

**Class 444:** There was an unusual working on 16 October when the 21:18 Basingstoke to Weymouth was formed of two class 444 units, 444021+444033, throughout. Normally class 444 units may only work singly west of Poole. However, a dispensation could be given, because late at night only one other train, the 23:10 Weymouth to Bournemouth, would be drawing power beyond Poole. The ten-coach working was to position stock for the morning, following the cancellation of another train.

**Class 769:** Unit 769928 ran from Oxford to Eastleigh on 29 September and 769930 returned from Eastleigh to Reading. There were similar moves on 15 October when 769946 ran from Oxford and 769959 returned to Reading.

**Excursions:** 66749 hauled an Eastleigh to Kingswear excursion as far as Gloucester on 25 September.

**Freight:** GBRf worked an aviation fuel train from Grain to Prestwick on 13 October, with a second scheduled for 27 October. Grain normally just supplies Colnbrook, for Heathrow, but there was exceptional demand at Prestwick in connection with COP26.

## RAILWAY BUSINESS

**Eurostar:** Following the planned merger of Eurostar with Thalys, which operates from Paris to Bruxelles, Amsterdam and Köln, it is intended that Eurostar's head office will move from London to Bruxelles. However, operations will continue to be controlled from London and Thalys will be rebranded as Eurostar. SNCF is the majority shareholder in both Thalys and Eurostar.

## PERFORMANCE and INCIDENTS

Figures show the percentage of trains arriving within 59 seconds of scheduled time, at all monitored stations. The ranking of the companies within the 23 passenger train operators is shown. Eurostar is not included, but open access operators are. MAA = moving annual average.

	22 August to 18 Sept	MAA to 18 Sept
All TOCs	74.1%	76.9%
SWR	75.0% (8 <sup>th</sup> )	78.6% (7 <sup>th</sup> )
GTR	74.8% (9 <sup>th</sup> )	77.0% (10 <sup>th</sup> )
SE	75.7% (7 <sup>th</sup> )	74.8% (14 <sup>th</sup> )

**Thursday 23 Sept:** The 19:33 Guildford to Waterloo was involved in a fatality at a foot crossing near Oxshott. The line was closed until 22:15, with trains diverted via Woking.

**Friday 24 Sept:** The 06:31 Selhurst to Victoria became stranded at Balham because of a damaged conductor rail. The up slow line was closed for repairs until early afternoon. Some trains were cancelled or diverted to London Bridge.

**Saturday 25 Sept:** A tamper failed on the up line between Guildford and Worplesdon about 06:00. A second tamper was summoned from Woking Yard to haul it clear. Up trains were diverted via Cobham until 10:20.

**Monday 27 Sept:** A short circuit at Seasalter caused severe arcing, resulting in one of the rails on the down line being partly melted. The down line was closed between Faversham and Margate from late afternoon and there were many cancellations on the up line because rolling stock was out of place. Some trains were diverted via Canterbury East, Dover and Deal.

**Tuesday 28 Sept:** A traction power failure at Bournemouth for about two hours during the early afternoon caused trains to be cancelled or severely delayed.

**Wednesday 29 Sept:** A cable fire shortly before 08:00 resulted in no power to the up and down slow lines through Waterloo East and platforms 1 to 3 at Charing Cross. The 07:07 from Orpington was stranded approaching Waterloo East. There were extensive delays and cancellations, with some trains diverted to Cannon Street or Victoria. Normal working resumed about midday. A signal failure at Brockenhurst caused significant delays from 09:00 until early afternoon.

**Thursday 30 Sept:** A signalling failure at Penge caused all trains to be diverted via Catford from 05:30 until 07:00. Trains terminating and starting at Bromley South were cancelled. An axle counter failure at Kempton Park resulted in some morning peak trains terminating and starting at Fulwell. The 07:12 Ore to Victoria failed with a doors defect at Hampden Park, causing long delays to other services. The line between Leatherhead and Dorking was closed during the evening peak while a damaged conductor rail was repaired. The evening peak was also disrupted by a tree on the line between Woking and Guildford. Trains were diverted via Cobham. The 18:53 Waterloo to Alton was involved in a fatality between New Malden and Berrylands, resulting in very considerable disruption for the rest of the day.

**Friday 1 October:** The line was blocked until after 10:00 following the 07:27 from Bognor Regis hitting a tree south of Pulborough. All up trains had to use the fast lines through Gatwick Airport for about six hours from 09:30 after a points

failure prevented access to the south end of platforms 1 and 2. This caused significant congestion and delays, and meant that only down trains could call at Earlswood and Salfords.

**Saturday 2 October:** A railhead treatment train operated by 73961 and 73963 failed on the up line near Paddock Wood about midday and required assistance back to Tonbridge. Following it was the 12:02 Ashford to Charing Cross, which was delayed by half an hour; the 12:00 Dover Priory to Charing Cross was diverted via Maidstone East. The 17:50 from Hastings hit a tree near Frant. Trees also fell onto the line near Appledore and Woldingham during the evening. A power failure at Walton-on-Thames about 21:00 resulted in loss of signalling on all lines. A limited service was possible after 1½ hours.

**Sunday 3 October:** A power failure resulted in the line between Sevenoaks and Tonbridge being closed until early afternoon. Some Dover trains were diverted via Maidstone East and some Hastings trains via Godstone, but others started and terminated at Tonbridge.

**Monday 4 October:** There were no trains between Paddock Wood and Maidstone West for over two hours from 14:00, because of a cable fire between Paddock Wood and Beltring.

**Tuesday 5 October:** A tree fell onto the line between Ramsgate and Dumpton Park about 07:00, resulting in there being no trains between Margate and Ramsgate for three hours. The 07:35 from Gravesend failed near Bexley, resulting in following trains being diverted via Bexleyheath. Morning peak services were delayed or cancelled because of a signalling failure at Hilsea. The 16:20 from Weymouth terminated at Brockenhurst, having struck a tree between Hinton Admiral and New Milton.

**Wednesday 6 October:** There were no trains to Hayes throughout the afternoon and the evening peak, because of a signalling failure between Ladywell and Lower Sydenham. The 20:40 Victoria to Ramsgate was involved in a fatality at Herne Bay, resulting in the line being closed until after midnight.

**Friday 8 October:** A signalling fault meant that there were no trains between Crowborough and Uckfield until after 10:00, other than the 05:31 Uckfield to London Bridge. The system failed again in the afternoon. A signalling fault at Selhurst resulted in all up trains having to use the up slow line during the afternoon and evening.

**Monday 11 October:** The 05:41 Gatwick to Victoria was involved in a fatality north of East Croydon, following which only the slow lines were open until mid-morning. The 17:50 Waterloo to Woking suffered a brake fault at Hersham and was immobile until after 20:00. Meantime all down trains had to use the fast line, so were unable to call at Esher, Hersham or Walton-on-Thames.

**Wednesday 13 October:** There were no trains between Effingham Junction and Guildford for most of the morning, because of a track circuit failure at Guildford. Some trains were diverted via Woking. A points failure at Brockenhurst prevented main line trains running through the station for about 1½ hours from 16:15.

**Thursday 14 October:** Loss of power caused numerous track circuits at Brookwood to fail, leading to delays throughout the morning. A points failure at Willingdon Junction caused cancellation of many trains via Eastbourne during the afternoon, and significant delays to other. A points failure at Winchester prevented use of the down line for about an hour late in the afternoon. A limited service operated using the bidirectional signalling on the up line.

**Friday 15 October:** A complete failure of the signalling on the Chatham lines at Victoria meant that no Southeastern trains could run to or from the station until after 06:00. The 05:45 from Gillingham hit an obstruction on the line at Denmark Hill and was unable to proceed until 08:45. Following trains were diverted via Herne Hill. A signalling failure at Lewisham shortly before 08:00 prevented trains running to and from Blackheath. Services were diverted or cancelled until 09:00. A track circuit failure on the up fast line at Penge West about 08:30 required all trains to use the up slow. Some trains were diverted to Victoria, with Gatwick to Bedford trains diverted via Tulse Hill. In order to ease congestion, up stopping trains did not call at Anerley or Penge West. Normal working resumed about 10:30.

**Sunday 17 October:** The 12:59 from Windsor was involved in a fatality at Datchet, resulting in there being no further trains until the 15:25 from Waterloo. There was a two hour gap in the service to Hayes during the afternoon, because of emergency track repairs.

**Monday 18 October:** A points failure resulted in most trains from Bognor Regis before 07:30 being cancelled and those that did run being badly delayed. Services between Ascot and Aldershot were suspended during the afternoon to allow urgent track repairs between Camberley and Frimley.

**Tuesday 19 October:** A serious fracture in a set of points at New Cross severely limited the number of trains that could run to and from Charing Cross throughout the day. Main line trains via Paddock Wood were diverted to Victoria and Hastings trains to Cannon Street. Trains between Charing Cross and the Bexleyheath line were cancelled and there were

many other cancellations at peak times. Signalling problems at Hilsea resulted in Southern services to Portsmouth being cut back to Havant or Chichester, or diverted to Bognor, for most of the morning.

**Wednesday 20 October:** The 04:50 Fratton to Gloucester hit a tree near Bursledon. Trains were cancelled or diverted via Eastleigh, though a few trains towards Fareham were able to run after 07:00. The 18:42 to Shepperton, units 707017+002 failed on departure from Waterloo, blocking access to platforms 1 to 6. It was able to return to the station after about 40 minutes. 20:15 Victoria to Littlehampton hit a tree near Balcombe, but was able to continue to Haywards Heath, where it terminated. Soon after that there was flooding in Balcombe Tunnel, resulting in the line being closed. Trains were cancelled or curtailed, but those between Victoria and Littlehampton were diverted via Horsham.

**Thursday 21 October:** There were no trains between Crowborough and Uckfield, initially because of a landslide overnight. That was cleared by late morning, but then a signalling failure prevented any trains running. The first train to Uckfield was the 17:07 from London Bridge. An empty train leaving Grove Park depot early in the morning suffered damage to its shoe gear on a defective conductor rail and became stranded. Some other trains were blocked within the depot, resulting in cancellations on suburban routes. A landslide at Greenhithe caused the line between Dartford and Springhead Junction to be closed from 08:30 for the rest of the day. Unit 700154, working the 11:54 Cambridge to Brighton, stalled on the gradient from City Thameslink and returned to the station, where it terminated.

**Friday 22 October:** A signalling problem at Petts Wood Junction put the down slow line out of use, causing numerous delays and cancellations during the morning peak. The bridge carrying the railway over the Horsham bypass between Horsham and Christ's Hospital was hit by a lorry late afternoon, causing significant damage. The line was closed throughout the evening.

**Saturday 23 October:** A signalling failure between Wandsworth Road and Brixton early in the afternoon resulted London Overground services being suspended until late evening. Most Southeastern trains were cancelled or diverted to Cannon Street or Blackfriars. The 13:03 from Guildford terminated at Clapham Junction, because of a brake problem on unit 5908.

**Sunday 24 October:** Evening services were disrupted by a points failure that allowed only platforms 1 and 3 at Portsmouth Harbour to be used. Many trains were cut back to Southsea, Fratton or Chichester, or cancelled entirely.

**Monday 25 October:** A defective signal cable at Tulse Hill prevented trains running to and from West Norwood during the morning. Trains between London Bridge and Beckenham Junction were cancelled. A points failure at Redhill, restricting access to platforms 0 and 1, badly disrupted morning services. The 09:34 Bedford to Gatwick Airport, unit 700127, failed at Sydenham with a brake fault. After about an hour it was able to continue to Norwood Junction, where it terminated. The 15:45 Epsom to London Bridge was involved in a fatality at Sutton.

## AROUND THE REGION

**Level Crossings:** Network Rail plans to replace the manually-operated, gated level crossings at Chartham, Wye and Grain with automatic, barrier crossings within the next year. There is a listed crossing box at Grain and the equipment to release the gates at Wye is within the station booking office. The former signal box at Chartham, which is not listed, acts as the crossing box and there is a local campaign for it to be preserved.

**Abbey Wood:** The connection between Crossrail and the North Kent line at Alsike Road Junction has been commissioned, with interface between East Kent and Romford signalling centres. The connection is not electrified and will normally be used only by engineering trains. Trains carrying passengers are not permitted to use the line.

**Surbiton:** Network Rail is tackling passenger congestion at Surbiton station by building new staircases, a footbridge extension and ticket gates for platforms 3 and 4.

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