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Dear Ms Licata

ORR Periodic review 2013: Draft determination of Network Rail's outputs and funding for 2014-19

I am writing in response to the ORR's Periodic Review (June 2013) with respect to issues affecting rail services to and within Scotland. In particular I would like to draw attention to the following issues:

Carstairs Junction

Your conclusion that work at Carstairs Junction should not form part of CP5 is not acceptable. As we have already indicated to you, work on this particular junction is long overdue. The current layout at Carstairs Junction does not provide a firm basis for planning and enhancing Anglo-Scottish services.

The junction at Carstairs has suffered from severe speed restrictions for more than a generation. This is a key inter-city route on the Anglo-Scottish network and in need of urgent improvement. In our view, trains from Edinburgh to Birmingham and Manchester suffer a 5 minute time penalty through the 15 mph speed restriction at the junction, while Edinburgh to Glasgow trains suffer in a similar manner.

This should be a top priority project and must not be deferred by any plans for a new higher speed line between Edinburgh and Glasgow (such as those proposed by the Scottish Government in late 2012) which are merely at a proposal stage and will take more than 10 years to come to fruition.

Edinburgh South Suburban line

We are also disappointed at the failure to include take this forward as part of CP5.

It is our belief that electrification of this route is essential as a diversionary route for freight and passenger services and as an avoiding route for the congested Waverley-Haymarket corridor. Additionally this route could serve tram-trains on the Edinburgh tram network and we note that Network Rail's 'Alternative Solutions' consultation has explored opportunities for tram-train operation.

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Transform Scotland is the national alliance for sustainable transport, bringing together the public, private and voluntary sectors.

Transform Scotland is a member of the European Federation for Transport and Environment.

Waverley Station

Significant improvements have been undertaken in recent years to the infrastructure serving the station and the fabric of the building. However, the passenger facilities leave much to be desired especially as it is the gateway station to Scotland for many visitors and lies at the northern end of the East Coast Main Line. The King's Cross refurbishment sets a standard that should be repeated at Waverley if rail is to seriously compete with air on this key Anglo-Scottish route.

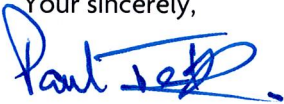
Scottish Inter-City routes

We note that limited improvements are proposed for the Highland Main Line and Aberdeen-Inverness routes. Routes from the Central Belt to Inverness and Aberdeen are long overdue for upgrading as journey times by rail are no longer able to compete with those by road. To aggravate this situation the Scottish Government has plans for large scale expenditure on the A9 road which will further improve journey times by road.

The present plans for upgrades on the Inter-City routes to Aberdeen and Inverness and between the two cities do not, in our view, go far enough or fast enough.

We see enhanced expenditure in this area during CP5 as a high priority.

Your sincerely,



Paul Tetlaw
Board member, Transform Scotland
On behalf of Transform Scotland