

Swallowfield
Slade Lane
Mobberley
Knutsford
WA16 7QN

12 December 2011

Ms A Walker
Chair
Office of Rail Regulation
One Kemble Street
London
WC2B 4AN

Dear Ms Walker,

TOCs informing passengers and potential passengers of planned replacement buses

We understand you are taking a particular interest in information provided to passengers and potential passengers.

Over the years, MCRUA has put a lot of effort into working with our Mid Cheshire Line TOC (First North Western, and more recently Northern) to have the replacement bus services that run replacing train services on the line improved. We started from a very poor position in around the year 2000; in the last few years planned and emergency bus replacement services have been very much better, verging on the good!

One area that continues to cause us difficulty is that of passengers and intending passengers being aware in advance when train services are planned to be replaced by buses. Our Blog item - <http://www.mcrua.org.uk/chairmansblog/2010/07/07/replacement-buses-but-the-passengers-wait-on-the-platforms-for-a-train/> - refers. On our line most stations are unstaffed for most or all of the time.

Northern are sympathetic to our views on this. We take the view that if ATOC guidelines on this matter were clearly set out and seen to be effective, Northern (and other TOCs) would more likely follow these.

As this is an issue affecting the whole of railways in Britain, at our last Committee meeting we wondered whether this matter should be approached on a national basis, and therefore through yourself.

We are interested to hear your views on this matter.

Yours sincerely,

John Oates