

News story: Rail passengers in the north to start being compensated in early July

Rail passengers in the north of England affected by the recent rail disruption will benefit from a comprehensive compensation package agreed at a Transport for the North board meeting in Manchester today (28 June 2018), following a recommendation from the Department for Transport.

The package will see:

- season ticket holders on the worst affected Northern services in Lancashire, Cumbria and Greater Manchester, who experienced disruption before and after the May timetable change, will be eligible to receive a cash payment equivalent to up to 1 month's travel – this will be in addition to the standard existing compensation passengers are entitled to
- season ticket holders in other parts of the north that have been badly affected since the introduction of the May timetable will be eligible to receive a cash payment equivalent to 1 week's travel – this will also be in addition to the standard existing compensation passengers are entitled to
- marketing campaigns for the tourist areas affected by the disruption, such as Blackpool and the Lake District, will be funded as part of the package

Further measures are expected to be agreed shortly.

Rail Minister Jo Johnson said:

Rail passengers have experienced unacceptable disruption and, while we have started to see some improvements, many people are still not getting the service they expect. We are doing everything we can alongside Transport for the North and Northern to improve the service, but it is absolutely right that passengers should be compensated for the disruption they have suffered.

This comprehensive package, together with the steps we are taking to get services running and the independent inquiry we announced earlier in the month, should go some way towards putting right the problems we've seen.

The costs of the package will be met in full by the industry, and passengers will start receiving payments from early July.

A temporary timetable is in operation on parts of Northern's network until 29 July, with the full timetable introduced following that. This temporary

timetable has brought more stability, helping passengers to plan ahead. The Lakes Line is also due to start running Northern services again from Monday.

Earlier this month, the government announced an [independent inquiry into what went wrong](#), in order to ensure these problems do not happen again. If Northern is found to have been negligent, the government will not hesitate to take tough action.

Further details will be announced by [Transport for the North](#) shortly.

Press release: Biometrics **Commissioner's response to the Home** **Office Biometrics Strategy**

The long awaited Home Office Biometrics Strategy published today is to be welcomed as the basis for a more informed public debate on the future use of biometrics by the Home Office and its partners.

The strategy lays out the current uses of biometric data and the development of new multi-user data platforms. Unfortunately the strategy says little about what future plans the Home Office has for the use of biometrics and the sharing of biometric data. A debate is needed given the rapid improvements in biometric matching technologies and the increasing ability to hold and analyse large biometric databases.

While the use of biometric data may well be in the public interest for law enforcement purposes and to support other government functions the public benefit must be balanced against loss of privacy. Biometric data is especially sensitive because it is most intrusive of our individual privacy and for that reason who decides the balance is as important as what is decided. Legislation carries the legitimacy that Parliament decides that crucial question.

It is disappointing that the Home Office document is not forward looking as one would expect from a strategy. In particular it does not propose legislation to provide rules for the use and oversight of new biometrics, including facial images.

This is in contrast to Scotland where such legislation has been proposed. Given that new biometrics are being rapidly deployed or trialled this failure to set out more definitively what the future landscape will look like in terms of the use and governance of biometrics appears short sighted at best.

What the strategy does propose is an oversight and advisory board to make recommendations about governance just short of legislation. If that results

in the development of a set of principles to inform future legislation then it is also welcome. However, the advisory board is mainly described as concerned with the use of facial images by the police.

What is actually required is a governance framework that will cover all future biometrics rather than a series of ad hoc responses to problems as they emerge. I hope that the Home Office will re-consider and clearly extend the advisory board's remit to properly consider all future biometrics and will name the board accordingly.

Press release: Biometrics **Commissioner's response to the Home** **Office Biometrics Strategy**

The long awaited Home Office Biometrics Strategy published today is to be welcomed as the basis for a more informed public debate on the future use of biometrics by the Home Office and its partners.

The strategy lays out the current uses of biometric data and the development of new multi-user data platforms. Unfortunately the strategy says little about what future plans the Home Office has for the use of biometrics and the sharing of biometric data. A debate is needed given the rapid improvements in biometric matching technologies and the increasing ability to hold and analyse large biometric databases.

While the use of biometric data may well be in the public interest for law enforcement purposes and to support other government functions the public benefit must be balanced against loss of privacy. Biometric data is especially sensitive because it is most intrusive of our individual privacy and for that reason who decides the balance is as important as what is decided. Legislation carries the legitimacy that Parliament decides that crucial question.

It is disappointing that the Home Office document is not forward looking as one would expect from a strategy. In particular it does not propose legislation to provide rules for the use and oversight of new biometrics, including facial images. This is in contrast to Scotland where such legislation has been proposed. Given that new biometrics are being rapidly deployed or trialled this failure to set out more definitively what the future landscape will look like in terms of the use and governance of biometrics appears short sighted at best.

What the strategy does propose is an oversight and advisory board to make recommendations about governance just short of legislation. If that results in the development of a set of principles to inform future legislation then

it is also welcome. However, the advisory board is mainly described as concerned with the use of facial images by the police.

What is actually required is a governance framework that will cover all future biometrics rather than a series of ad hoc responses to problems as they emerge. I hope that the Home Office will re-consider and clearly extend the advisory board's remit to properly consider all future biometrics and will name the board accordingly.

[News story: Over 10,000 troops from nine nations ready to meet global challenges](#)

The agreement marks the end of the establishment of the JEF framework and is a key milestone in preparing the force for action. With the UK at the forefront as the framework nation, the JEF can now deploy over 10,000 personnel from across the nine nations.

Speaking at the event at Lancaster House today Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

Our commitment today sends a clear message to our allies and adversaries alike – our nations will stand together to meet new and conventional challenges and keep our countries and our citizens safe and secure in an uncertain world.

We are judged by the company we keep, and while the Kremlin seeks to drive a wedge between allies old and new alike, we stand with the international community united in support of international rules.

Launched in 2015, the joint force has continued to develop so that it's able to respond rapidly, anywhere in the world, to meet global challenges and threats ranging from humanitarian assistance to conducting high intensity combat operations.

The JEF, made up of nine northern European allies Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, The Netherlands, Norway and Sweden, is more than a simple grouping of military capabilities. It represents the unbreakable partnership between UK and our like-minded northern European allies, born from shared operational experiences and an understanding of the threats and challenges we face today.

In May this year, the JEF demonstrated its readiness with a live capability demonstration on Salisbury Plain. It featured troops from the nine JEF nations, including troops from the UK Parachute Regiment, the Danish Jutland Dragoon Regiment, the Lithuanian "Iron Wolf" Brigade and the Latvian Mechanised Infantry Brigade, which conducted urban combat operations with air support provided by Apaches, Chinooks, Wildcats and Tornados.

[News story: Over 10,000 troops from nine nations ready to meet global challenges](#)

The agreement marks the end of the establishment of the JEF framework and is a key milestone in preparing the force for action. With the UK at the forefront as the framework nation, the JEF can now deploy over 10,000 personnel from across the nine nations.

Speaking at the event at Lancaster House today Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

Our commitment today sends a clear message to our allies and adversaries alike – our nations will stand together to meet new and conventional challenges and keep our countries and our citizens safe and secure in an uncertain world.

We are judged by the company we keep, and while the Kremlin seeks to drive a wedge between allies old and new alike, we stand with the international community united in support of international rules.

Launched in 2015, the joint force has continued to develop so that it's able to respond rapidly, anywhere in the world, to meet global challenges and threats ranging from humanitarian assistance to conducting high intensity combat operations.

The JEF, made up of nine northern European allies Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, The Netherlands, Norway and Sweden, is more than a simple grouping of military capabilities. It represents the unbreakable partnership between UK and our like-minded northern European allies, born from shared operational experiences and an understanding of the threats and challenges we face today.

In May this year, the JEF demonstrated its readiness with a live capability

demonstration on Salisbury Plain. It featured troops from the nine JEF nations, including troops from the UK Parachute Regiment, the Danish Jutland Dragoon Regiment, the Lithuanian "Iron Wolf" Brigade and the Latvian Mechanised Infantry Brigade, which conducted urban combat operations with air support provided by Apaches, Chinooks, Wildcats and Tornados.