

Transport Secretary, Grant Shapps speaking ahead of Wednesday's rail strikes

News story

The Secretary of State for Transport speaks ahead of rail strikes planned for today.



Transport Secretary, Grant Shapps said:

Today (27 July 2022), union bosses are once again trying to cause as much disruption as possible to the day-to-day lives of millions of hardworking people around the country. What's more, it has been cynically timed to disrupt the start of the Commonwealth Games and crucial Euro 2022 semi-finals, in a deliberate bid to impact the travel of thousands trying to attend events the whole country is looking forward to.

Sadly, this is nothing new. In fact, in my 3 years as Transport Secretary, there has not been a single day when unions have not been in dispute with the rail industry by either threatening or taking industrial action with around 60 separate disputes lodged in 2022 alone.

This country's taxpayers stumped up £600 per household to ensure not a single rail worker lost their job during the pandemic, but many of those very same people will be forced into losing a day's wages through no fault of their own but because of stubborn union leaders' refusals to modernise.

Union bosses will claim they're willing to do a deal but how can anyone take them seriously when, earlier this month, the RMT dismissed a Network Rail offer worth 8% over the next 2 years without even consulting their members.

Unfortunately, it's too late to call off today's damaging strikes but I urge the RMT and indeed all unions to stop holding the country to ransom with the threat of further industrial action and get off picket lines and back around the negotiating table. If not, we risk passengers turning their backs on the railway for good.

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