

WEST COAST

RAILWAYS

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THE U.K.'s LEADING SPECIAL TRAINS OPERATOR

Ian Prosser
HM Chief Inspector of Railways
Railway Safety Directorate
Office of Rail & Road
1 Kemble Street
London
WC2B 4AN

22nd March 2016

Dear Sir,

West Coast Railway Company commits to the following improvements and gives you this as our letter of intent.

- Recognising the need to further strengthen and embed fully the improvements we have already made we will carry out a strategic review with the intent of reducing the business complexity.
- In order to satisfy ourselves that lessons have been learned and that our improvement plan is being successfully implemented the board and management team have been restructured to strengthen our focus on the future safe operations of our trains including a regular programme of a board subcommittee with an independent Chairman drawn from the UK rail industry whose sole focus will be safety.
- We have engaged the services of a respected independent safety consultancy to review our management arrangements and conduct safety culture surveys and gap analysis within the organisation. They will also conduct an assessment of the executive, identifying development plans if necessary. The attached documentation demonstrates that this engagement has started.
- The Managing Director of WCR has special dispensation, granted by the board, to pursue safety related improvements and training requirements independently of the board.
- We have participated and have fully signed up to the pan industry arrangements for the future operation of steam on the mainline railway.
- We are directing more resources into the development of our route risk assessments and process through to completion and accept that this will be managed through an Improvement Notice from ORR.
- All steam charters will have a suitably qualified traction inspector on the footplate, except for regular operations where a suitable and sufficient risk assessment can demonstrate an inspector is not necessary.

- We have rigorously assessed all of our footplate crew and commit to using the 29 steam drivers that we have discussed with you, of which 24 are WCRC employees.
- WCRC have already prohibited the operation of mixed vacuum and air braked vehicles.
- Having successfully trialled the fitting of CCTV to steam locomotive cabs, WCRC will continue with its efforts to reassure locomotive owners and traincrew staff to enable the fitting to become the norm over time.

Signed for and on behalf of WCR Board of Directors

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Smith', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Smith

Chairman