

Mr. M. Cash
General Secretary RMT
BY EMAIL

7th May 2020

Dear Mick,

Re- Principles for managing the risk of exposure to COVID 19 to passengers and employees across the GB mainline rail industry

I refer to our discussions within the Rail Industry Coronavirus Forum (RICF).

The high-level plans for managing Covid-19 will ultimately comprise a series of phases ranging from lockdown through to the reinstatement of a full timetable and associated passenger demand.

The 1st phase of this high-level plan focused on reacting to the lockdown and the need for the rail industry to provide a robust train service for key and essential workers.

The next phase as the UK begins its recovery is focused on the easing of the lockdown with the rail industry providing more services and capacity to meet a gradual expected increase in planned passenger demand.

Further phases to enable further service level and usage increases are expected to follow in the months ahead.

In this regard, I am enclosing the GB Rail Industry principles developed through the Rail Industry Coronavirus Forum (RICF) for managing the risk of exposure to COVID 19 to passengers and employees across the GB mainline rail industry when services and usage increases to align with the Government's policy and time scales for the relaxation of lockdown.



These principles are designed to support the commencement of the next phase with a consistent and phased approach to the increasing of services and passenger levels whilst enabling detailed discussions to take place within each rail business to reflect their unique and specific local circumstances.

These principles are based on the current government and public health policy guidance on social distancing including maintaining 2 metres separation and should be read in conjunction with the more detailed guidance already provided.

All employees will have an active role in facilitating social distancing principles to be maintained on the railway network. This will include provision of information, advice, signage, posters, announcements, control of station entrances / gate-lines, queuing systems using barriers or floor markings etc. as appropriate, and through role modelling social distancing themselves.

The expectation is that social distancing remains self-policing which has been the case since lock down. Therefore, employees will not be expected to enforce social distancing through physically intervening in potential conflict situations. In such circumstances, employees will be encouraged to inform passengers of the correct behaviour and then log / report such situations so that this can be tracked and improvements made to the plan, where possible.

As the current level of lockdown measures are eased and the number of train services and passengers increases, the use of employer supplied protective equipment, such as the wearing of face coverings, will become more important. Where protective equipment is identified in a risk assessment as a requirement, it shall be appropriate for the task considered, for example a face mask or covering may be appropriate for one task, but in another it may be appropriate to have a visor. Additionally, the type of protective equipment chosen should take into account ease of use, personal preference (as this will encourage correct usage), maintenance and disposal requirements.



Existing local and network control arrangements to manage passenger flows and crowding at stations and or trains should be adapted to plan to maintain social distancing. The industry also expects the Government to accompany any easing of the lockdown with clear communications around the application of social distancing when using public transport. The rail industry will seek to reinforce and locally tailor these messages across the railway network to help manage passenger demand to the planned available capacity where this is necessary

Finally, it is recognized that these principles will need to be subject to regular review by all parties to reflect any further updated health guidance and advice issued by UK and Devolved Government's and Public Health Bodies across the UK.

Yours sincerely,



Andy Meadows
Chair of Rail Industry Coronavirus Forum

