Minister for Transport and the Islands
Humza Yousaf MSP

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6 February 2017

Dear

Devolution of British Transport Police (BTP)

At our discussions in Parliament on 24 January I agreed to update progress to allow you to provide further reassurance to staff and passengers regarding the plans following on from the introduction of the Railway Policing (Scotland) Bill in Dec 2016. The aim of the Scottish Government is to ensure railway policing in Scotland has a strong and robust future, building on the skills, knowledge and experience of the BTP; and to enhance railway policing in Scotland through direct access to the local, specialist and national resources of Police Scotland.

Terms and Conditions for BTP officers and staff

We fully recognise that terms and conditions of service for BTP officers and staff is a very personal matter, particularly in relation to job security and pensions. That is why we are working with their representatives to ensure a triple-lock guarantee that secures the jobs, pay and pensions of railway policing officers and staff in Scotland. Police Scotland (PS) has outlined its intention to maintain a specialist railway policing function within the broader Police Scotland function and offered reassurances that the number of officers and staff will be ring-fenced at their appearance at the Justice Committee round table held in November 2016. They additionally made it clear that they will honour the significant personal commitment that BTP officers and staff in Scotland have made to choose a career in railway policing on their integration into Police Scotland.

Cross Border Working

We acknowledge the request from cross border operators regarding the continuous service currently provided for passenger and freight services that move between Scotland and England.

I have raised this matter at meetings with UK Government and they have confirmed they will actively work with us to ensure a seamless policing service delivered in an effective and efficient manner for passengers and operators. Additionally they acknowledge the need to address command and control, jurisdiction and operational policing issues using legislation at Westminster as the mechanism to ensure there are no barriers to effective policing of the railway.

We also envisage the existing working relationship between police services will continue in the future between Police Scotland specialist railway function and the BTP in England and Wales.

Railway Policing Management Forum
In previous discussions you made clear your desire to ensure that Police Scotland engage fully with the rail industry in a way similar to existing involvement in setting railway policing priorities and objectives. We have listened to what you say and strengthened existing legislation by including, as a statutory obligation, given the industry a clear voice for the railway industry through the duty for the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) and the chief constable to engage with operators.
The opportunity to strengthen existing engagement routes is the best option to explore and I am happy to facilitate a meeting between the rail industry , BTP, PS and SPA to start initial discussions on how the group will function.

Rail Union Engagement
I meet regularly with transport unions including ASLEF, RMT and TSSA and have been able to offer reassurances that our plans have never been an exercise to cut either cost or personnel numbers. Indeed our intention would be to enhance the high standards of safety and security for railway passengers and staff.
The Cabinet Secretary for Justice also met with BTP Federation and TSSA in December offering them clarity on our plans including a summary of the triple lock guarantee.
I would be happy to meet with the rail unions in addition to my regular engagement to specifically discuss BTP matters.

Police Scotland
Work is already underway in assisting Police Scotland to fully understand the expectation of the rail industry and the levels of service currently delivered by BTP. BTP hosted a workshop in December providing greater detail regarding jurisdiction, security, fatal incidents and priorities and objectives. I understand you have now been offered the detail from the workshop and it would certainly be helpful to understand if there are additional areas that should be considered at this early stage.

I trust this offers you further reassurance that seamless transition is a clear and achievable target for this government to build on the excellent work of BTP in Scotland by benefitting from the local support services available to Police Scotland. Please don't hesitate to contact officials or myself regarding this matter.

Best Wishes,
H. Yousaf

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Abellio ScotRail,

Our ref: 2017/0027573

19 September 2017

Dear

Railway Policing (Scotland) Act 2017

As you are no doubt aware the Railway Policing (Scotland) Bill 2016 has now completed its passage through the Scottish Parliament and received Royal Assent in early August as the Railway Policing (Scotland) Act 2017; a link to that legislation is now at:

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2017/4/contents/enacted

I am grateful for your support and engagement in this process and look forward to our next meeting on 27 September at the Scottish Parliament. I am keen to progress three key areas would welcome your views on how best to progress Railway Policing Agreements, Cost Allocation Model and the operation of the Railway Policing Management Forum prior to integration of the BTP in Scotland into Police Scotland on 1st April 2019.

The Scottish Government have now been working in joint partnership with the Department for Transport, BTP Authority, BTP, Scottish Police Authority (SPA) and Police Scotland for some time on these matters. As our meeting will follow immediately after the Joint Programme Board meeting scheduled for 26 September I will also provide you with an update of programme working. I am aware that the SPA and Police Scotland have been allocating significant effort to ensure the smooth integration of railway policing operations and it is my intention to allow them to outline details of this work, how they plan to move it forward and their plans for future engagement with yourselves. I am also keen to hear about any additional railway policing matters you may wish to discuss.

Should you wish to contact me directly please feel free to do so. I look forward to our next meeting at the Scottish Parliament on 27th September 2017.

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Cross Country Trains

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