



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

By email to: Mr Mark Carne, Chief Executive  
Network Rail  
[Mark.Carne@networkrail.co.uk](mailto:Mark.Carne@networkrail.co.uk)

Mr David Statham, Managing Director  
Southeastern Railways  
[David.Statham@southeasternrailway.co.uk](mailto:David.Statham@southeasternrailway.co.uk)

Our Ref: HM/FM/362

12 December 2016

Dear Mark and David

We are writing to request your urgent intervention regarding the poor performance which has beset the Hastings line in recent weeks.

Our constituents have experienced appalling delays. Living so far from London, these constituents are working long hours and paying high rail fares. December is a crucial time of year for rail travel. Constituents deserve better. Many are using the line as an alternative to the industrial action on Southern. It is therefore even more imperative that the Hastings line is running to time.

Over the course of this year, constituents have been impacted negatively by Network Rail's engineering works on Monday and Tuesday evenings. We have queried why this disruption is necessary and received assurances that the inconvenience at this time would prove to be a worthwhile investment for better track and equipment reliability. Our understanding is that the recent poor reliability is down to rail and equipment failures. This seems nonsensical coming at the end of a year of Network Rail engineering work.

We have the following requests:

1. Can you please provide an explanation on the causes of the severe delays over the last month and specify which of these have been the responsibility of Network Rail and which have been the responsibility of Southeastern;
2. Where the responsibility lies with Network Rail, can you please explain why failures have occurred on a line where so much engineering work has taken place and why the relevant equipment causing the delays has not been tested or enhanced;

3. Can you please reassure us, with meaningful evidence, that you are both taking steps to eradicate the causes of the delay and are taking additional steps to ensure that the line is fit to run as an alternative for Southern commuters.

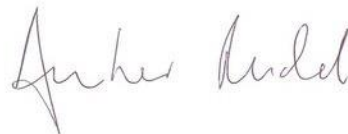
Our constituents, using Southern and/or Southeastern, are experiencing a poor service at the most difficult of times. Many contact us and rightly want answers. We use the service ourselves, as do our staff, and we would like your assurance that both your organisations are working together as a priority to eradicate the poor performance.

We look forward to hearing from you as a matter of urgency. With the recent announcement of more joined-up working between Network Rail and train operators, a joint response would be welcome evidence of this new practice in action.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Huw Merriman'. The signature is stylized with a large 'H' and 'M'.

Huw Merriman MP  
Bexhill and Battle

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amber Rudd'. The signature is written in a cursive style.

Amber Rudd MP  
Hastings and Rye