

In The News: 23rd March

March 23, 2020



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Today's railway's round up is a special broadcast dedicated to the emergency measures the Government has revealed for the railways during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps says the steps have been taken to provide stability and certainty on key services and rail staff.

This includes the temporary suspension of normal franchise agreements and transfers of all revenue and cost risk to the government for a limited period – initially 6 months.

Operators will continue to run services day-to-day for a small predetermined management fee.

All train operators have been presented with the opportunity to temporarily transition onto Emergency Measures Agreements, enabling greater flexibility.

The offer from the government includes measures to provide fee-free refund of all advance tickets as passengers follow government advice and work from home.

The proposed measures come as the railways have already seen up to a 70% drop in passenger numbers. Fares revenue has also reduced as people increasingly work from home and adopt social distancing, with ticket sales down by two-thirds from the same time in 2019.

Secretary of State for Transport Grant Shapps says the action is being taken “to protect the key workers who depend on the railways to carry on their vital roles, the hardworking commuters who have radically altered their lives to combat the spread of coronavirus, and the frontline rail staff who are keeping the country moving”.

He continues saying that the government offers “will give operators the confidence and certainty so that can play their part in the national interest”.

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