

## Open invitation to ASLEF

July 29, 2022



Chair of the Rail Delivery Group, Steve Montgomery, has today issued an open invitation to the leadership of the train drivers' union ASLEF to meet with him to hold meaningful talks to resolve the industrial dispute which is set to bring half of the rail network to a standstill.

He said: "I am ready and willing to talk to the leadership of ASLEF today, tomorrow or indeed anytime next week; they should call off tomorrow's action and talk to us instead. What our passengers and our staff expect is for us to talk and work out a way through this.

"We know our people are feeling the pinch and we want to give them a pay rise, but that is only affordable through reforms to deliver a better, safer, and more efficient railway for customers and taxpayers by updating outdated and inflexible working practices, which have seen costs spiral.

"Aslef has instructed its members to strike tomorrow (30 July) affecting millions of people and causing disruption at the Commonwealth Games, at a time of what should be national celebration. Saturday is also the start of the English Football League season, with games affected across the country.

"Aslef has also announced further action on 13 August, with nine train operators affected, which will come shortly before two further days of action by the RMT and TSSA on the 18 and 20 of August."

On announcing the second strike day of 13 August, Mick Whelan, general secretary of ASLEF, suggested companies had told the union they had been “driven” into this position by government policy, which in turn “forced” the union to announce strikes.

Commenting on ASLEF union strikes on Saturday 30 July, Anthony Smith, chief executive of the independent watchdog Transport Focus, said: “Passengers will be frustrated that, again, their plans are being disrupted. It is crucial that talks continue to find a solution that avoids passengers being continually dragged into this industrial dispute.

“Information will be key throughout the disruption. Train companies should keep looking at the specific areas for improvement we identified from the June strikes about refunds, compensation and clear information. We will again monitor the impact on passengers and on those who cannot travel.”