

Rail readies itself for drivers' strike

July 28, 2022



The Rail delivery Group, which represents Network Rail and rail operators, has warned that a 24-hour walkout by drivers on Saturday, organised by ASLEF, will mean disruption as Commonwealth Games continues and the English football league gets underway.

Action from the drivers will mean walkouts at Arriva Rail London, Greater Anglia, Great Western, Hull Trains, LNER, Southeastern and West Midlands Trains. There will be about 48 picket lines.

Steve Montgomery, chair of the Rail Delivery Group, said: "We're really disappointed that the ASLEF leadership has decided to impose yet more uncertainty and disruption for passengers and businesses in a week which has already seen a strike by the RMT.

"Millions of passengers will have their weekend plans disrupted – particularly those who are working, or going to the Commonwealth Games or the first football match of the season. While we will do all that we can to minimise disruption, if you are going to travel on the routes affected, please plan ahead and check the latest travel advice.

"If you're not able to travel, you can use your ticket either the day before or up to and including 2 August, otherwise you will be able to change your ticket or claim a refund.

“Like any service or business, we must move with the times and cannot continue to ask taxpayers or passengers for more money when we should instead respond to the huge changes in travel behaviour post COVID. By making these necessary reforms such ending the reliance on volunteer working at weekend, we improve punctuality, have more resilient Sunday services and use those savings to give our people a pay rise which has always been what we want to do.

“Further strikes will see our people out of pocket and mean less money to fund a pay rise, so we urge the ASLEF leadership to resume talks so we can reach a deal that is fair to staff and taxpayers, and which secures a bright, long-term future of our railway.”

Yesterday, when adding another date to driver strike industrial action, Mick Whelan said: “It’s not unreasonable to ask your employer to make sure you’re not worse off for three years in a row. Especially as the train companies are doing very nicely, thank you, out of Britain’s railways – with handsome profits, dividends for shareholders, and big salaries for managers – and train drivers don’t want to work longer for less.”

ASLEF comments on Parliamentary sacking

ASLEF meanwhile commented on the sacking of shadow transport minister Sam Tarry for appearing on a RMT picket line and doing interviews with press at Euston station.

General secretary Mick Whelan said: “If Labour does not believe in those things – in all of those things – then what does Labour stand for?

“Sam Tarry is a very good MP, and a very hard-working shadow minister, who did the right thing and has been treated very shabbily by Keir Starmer.”