

Transport for the North Scrutiny Committee Meeting Item 4

Subject: Infrastructure Resilience to Weather

Authors: Owen Wilson and Jim Bamford

Sponsor: David Hoggarth

Meeting Date: 18 December 2019

1.	Purpose of the Report:
1.1	The report provides information on the resilience of the road and rail networks to weather events. Highways England and Network Rail have been invited to attend the meeting to update members on how they are approaching the issue on their respective networks.
2.	Executive Summary:
2.1	Both the road and rail networks have been impacted by severe weather events in recent months and years. The report provides some background information on locations where this has had a particularly severe impact in recent months and years.
2.2	Network Rail is responsible for managing the rail network. Responsibility for the road network is split between Local Highway Authorities (who have responsibility for the operation and maintenance of 98% of roads in the North) with Highways England who are responsible for the Strategic Road Network (SRN) of motorways and major A roads.
2.3	Highways England and Network Rail will discuss the measures they are taking to improve the resilience of their respective networks to severe weather events.
3.	Consideration:
3.1	During the autumn period, the road and rail networks have suffered a number of weather-related impacts causing poor reliability and impacting on the ability of people and businesses to travel around the north with the consequential impact on people's lives and the economy.

3.2	<p>On the rail network for example, there have been a number of instances of flooding causing line closures, sometimes for a considerable period of time. Locations affected in recent months include between Crewe and Chester, the Calder Valley, between Sheffield and Gainsborough, Rotherham Central and Meadowhall, Shirebrook and Worksop and Sheffield and Wakefield Westgate/Leeds and around Doncaster. Carlisle (and the Settle Carlisle route has also been impacted in recent years.</p>
3.3	<p>The rail network is also impacted by other weather events, most particularly the impact of autumn leaf fall, but also high winds, high heat and snow/ ice. The operational aspects of the rail network are monitored by the Rail North Committee. Network Rail and the train operators regularly attend the Rail North Committee and are held to account for performance including the impact of weather events. TfN wrote to the rail operators ahead of the autumn period and received written responses detailing the measures they were taking to mitigate the impacts of autumn weather on rail performance. Industry representative will be attending the next meeting of the Committee on 8 January 2020.</p>
3.4	<p>Network Rail receives funding from the Department for Transport for managing and maintaining the network and are regulated by the Office of Road and Rail. The amount of funding Network Rail has for improving resilience to weather is limited by the funding available in any given 5-year Control period. Transport for the North, in its response to ORR on plans for the 2019-2024 period urged that sufficient resources were made available to Network Rail to consistently deliver the target levels of performance set out within the Northern and TransPennine Express franchise agreements.</p>
3.5	<p>Network Rail have been invited to attend the meeting to discuss their approach to weather resilience.</p>
3.6	<p>As with the rail network the north's highway infrastructure is vulnerable to weather related incidents. Typically, this has included road closures due to snow / ice, high winds and recently the impacts of severe rainfall. Areas affected by flooding in recent months have included parts of South Yorkshire, particularly roads in Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield, with Meadowhall J34 of the M1 affected. Elsewhere, a number of routes in North Yorkshire were badly affected by heavy rain in September, resulting in closure for several days due to flood damage, and disruption to the Cycling World Championships based in Harrogate.</p>
3.7	<p>Four years ago Storm Desmond brought record breaking rainfall to parts of England; the UK overall recorded the wettest calendar month since 1910. There was severe flooding in Carlisle, Kendal and the Lake District with roads completely inaccessible. The events of 2015 were the third extreme flood event to hit Cumbria in a decade, on this</p>

	occasion resulting in unprecedented flood damage. Impacts on the highway included: 2 major bridges (Pooley Bridge and Staveley) destroyed and three major roads closed due to significant damage (the A591 at Dunmail Raise, the A592 along Ullswater, and the A686 at Langwathby), with a total of 792 bridges and over 350km road damaged.
3.8	Although the UK has experienced milder winters in recent years, when severe winter weather does occur it can have a major impact on highways. In 2018 the so called 'Beast from the East' had a major impact across the North, with all trans-Pennine east-west routes closed at one point, and the A628 Woodhead Pass closed for 2 ½ days.
3.9	Local Highway Authorities have responsibility for the operation including maintenance of 98% of roads in the North, with Highways England responsible for the Strategic Road Network (SRN) of motorways and major A roads. Around 33% of all traffic and 66% of heavy goods traffic is on the SRN. Highways England have been invited to attend the meeting to discuss their approach to weather resilience.

4.	Conclusion:
4.1	Both the road and rail networks have been impacted by severe weather events in recent months and years. The lack of resilience of parts of the networks can have a significant affect, impacting on customer experience and the economic cost of travel and movement of freight. Impacts can be short term, in terms of immediate discomfort and financial cost to transport users, and longer term through the undermining confidence in the North's transport networks.
4.2	Highways England and Network Rail have been invited to the meeting to set out the measures they are taking to improve resilience of the networks.

5.	Recommendation:
5.1	It is recommended that the Committee notes the report and discusses measures to improve the networks with Highways England and Network Rail.

List of Background Documents:

There are no background papers to this report.

Required Considerations

Equalities:

Age	Yes	No
Disability	Yes	No
Gender Reassignment	Yes	No
Pregnancy and Maternity	Yes	No
Race	Yes	No
Religion or Belief	Yes	No
Sex	Yes	No
Sexual Orientation	Yes	No

Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Equalities	A full Impact assessment has not been carried out because the report is for noting.	Owen Wilson and Jim Bamford	David Hoggarth

Environment and Sustainability

Yes	No
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Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Sustainability / Environment – including considerations regarding Active Travel and Wellbeing	A full impact assessment has not been carried out because the report is for noting and discussion.	Owen Wilson and Jim Bamford	David Hoggarth

Legal

Yes	No
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Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Legal	The legal responsibilities for maintaining network resilience rests with the parties outlined in the report; accordingly there are no other obvious legal implications for Transport for the North.	Owen Wilson and Jim Bamford	Julie Openshaw

Finance

Yes	No
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Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Finance	TfN Finance Team has confirmed there are no financial implications for TfN as the responsibility for maintaining network resilience rests with the network operator.	Gareth Sutton	Iain Craven

Resource

Yes	No
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Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Resource	TfN HR Team has confirmed there are no resource implications.	Owen Wilson and Jim Bamford	Stephen Hipwell

Risk

Yes	No
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Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Risk	A risk assessment has not been carried out is	Haddy Njie	Iain Craven

	not required as the report is for noting.		
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Consultation

Yes	No
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Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Consultation	A consultation has not been carried out because the report is for noting.	Owen Wilson and Jim Bamford	David Hoggarth