

REDUCED SERVICE

Due to several health and personal problems BGOLUG's small volunteer resources have had to severely curtail the time they can devote to the Group's work. We are keeping in contact with Transport for London (TfL) London Rail and London Overground Rail Operations Limited (LOROL) as well as keeping in contact with relevant Industry figures, GLA members and MPs and attending relevant meetings with them as well as some boroughs. We appreciate that we are not communicating sufficiently with members who are not connected to the internet or arranging meetings for ordinary members (the Executive Committee continues to meet). We remain hopeful that we will be able to resume full service in the near future.

Richard Pout (Secretary) and Glenn Wallis (Assistant Secretary), BGOLUG, 1st June 2010.

NEW DIESEL TRAINS FOR BARKING-GOSPEL OAK SERVICES

The first Bombardier *Turbostar* 172 001 has been released for type and vehicle approval testing and is based at Willesden TMD but has yet to be handed over to LOROL. Thanks to *Dazz285* we are able to illustrate the train here so you can see what you will be travelling in by the summer's end. We are concerned at the lack of grab rails around the standing/bike/wheelchair areas adjacent to the entrance doors and would welcome any comments you may have on the internal layout. The photos were taken at Willesden Depot on 13th May 2010



172 001 with 378 004



172 001 car 59411



172 001 car 59311 cab



Looking to the rear of 59311 & into 59411. Note the 'sand-bags' to simulate a loaded train and test equipment.



Looking forward towards 59311's open cab door. Note the space for bikes, wheel-chairs & standing passengers.



Another view looking towards the rear of 59311 and through the open gangway doors into 59411.

Tuesday, 15TH May 2010

The BGOLUG Secretariat attended a *LOROL Passenger Board* meeting in a Shoreditch hotel on the evening of 11th May. The title is rather deceptive. We do not sit around the table having a frank exchange of views, but rather sit in rows watching power-point presentations, trying to ask questions of clarification in between the three presentations all within the 75 minutes allowed for the entire meeting. Just to make sure the LOROL managers stick to the script TfL

London Rail send along a 'minder' to watch and note any troublemakers. We tried to be well behaved!

Timetables

The Watford DC and Barking-Gospel Oak Line timetable leaflets were available but for some reason the North & West London Line timetables were not yet back from the printers which suggests no one knew what to put into them until quite recently! These have been on the on the Network Rail website for at least a week (tables 59 & 176). The official line is that these timetables will commence from 1st June and LOROL refused to be drawn on any further developments on the grounds that nothing has been decided yet. While there was a reasonable level of confidence on display, we gathered that fingers were still crossed that Network Rail would hand back the North London Line on time and fingers **and toes** were crossed that Canonbury, Highbury & Islington and Caledonian Road & Barnsbury stations would be sufficiently complete to be able to open. Indeed while we suspected that only the emergency exit in Highbury Station Road would be complete in time, we have since heard from one of our 'informed sources' that Highbury & Islington will not open **at all** on 1st June!

North London Line

The same timetable as operated before the blockade will continue to apply. It appears that current intentions are for this timetable to remain until May 2011 when the additional two peak trains per hour service which was originally to be Stratford-Camden Road will be introduced. The surprise here was that this service is now intended to be extended to Willesden. This must be due to Camden Road retaining its original track layout and signalling until after the Olympics (at least). In order to free-up paths around the Hampstead Loop we would be advocating these two services be diverted to Queens Park/Willesden Junction Low Level via Primrose Hill, should electrification of the Barking-Gospel Oak Line take place to allow the long promised Barking-Clapham Junction services to operate.

Barking-Gospel Oak

From 1st June there will be a 15-minute peak frequency **BUT** the off-peak will remain every 30 minutes because a lot of North London Line freight will continue to be diverted to the Barking-Gospel Oak route. That means that this timetable will likely apply until May 2011. This is bad news for those commuting to work/college after 09:00 and those schoolchildren and students travelling home before 16:00.

From BARKING Monday-Friday: Trains start at 06:24 (earliest first train yet), then every 15 minutes from 06:47 until 09:47. Trains then run every 30 minutes until 15:17 and then every 15 minutes* until 19:17 and every 30 minutes until 23:17. **Saturdays:** First train 06:39 and every 15 minutes until 10:09. Trains then run every 30 minutes until 15:09, then every 15 minutes until 19:09 and return to 30-minute intervals until the last train at 23:09. **Sundays:** The timetable is as now except that it is expected that buses will replace trains on most Sundays.

*Except at 16:05

From GOSPEL OAK Monday-Friday: The first train starts later at 06:35 but then trains follow at 15-minute intervals until 10:35 when the 30-minute frequency commences until 16:05. The evening peak 15-minute service starts with the 16:05 and finishes with the 19:05. Trains then run at 30-minute intervals until the earlier last train at 23:05. **Saturdays:** First train now later at the old 06:25 time. The next train starts off the 15-minute frequency at 06:55 until 10:40 when trains run thereafter every 30 minutes. The 15-minute frequency resumes at 15:40 until 19:10 when trains return to every 30 minutes until the last train at 23:10. **Sundays:** Unchanged but expected to be replaced by buses most days.

There are a number of aspects of this timetable we are unhappy with and as it is likely to be in force for at least a year, if not longer, we will be working up proposals for adjustments in December.

ROLLING STOCK: We have so far ascertained that *Sprinter* 150s 120, 123 & 129 have had the 18 seats returned ready for transfer to First Great Western. LOROL's Mark Eaton was asked for an assurance that no *Sprinters* would be allowed to go off lease until at least 2 new Class 172 *Turbostars* had entered public service and that thereafter releases would be on 'a one in, one out basis'. He said that would be LOROL's aim, but he gave an absolute assurance that certainly a *Sprinter* would only go off lease when a *Turbostar* had entered public service to replace it. LOROL made no mention of the possibility of hiring in a Chiltern *Networker Turbo* Class 165 but we have learnt from one of our 'informed sources' that LOROL are trying to find away to release enough crews to learn these units as well as the new *Turbostars*.

However we have learnt from a posting on *UK Rail Forums* by someone from either Bombardier or the Angel Trains ROSCO which will own the Class 172s that 172 001 has not been handed over to LOROL.. It was delivered to LOROL's Willesden depot on the night of Tuesday 4th May, and is still on Type Test/Vehicle Acceptance testing with a First GBRf driver contracted to Bombardier. All bogies are instrumented and the saloons full of computers and other instrumentation that will be used to validate the design. The unit has been photographed and videoed on the West Coast Main Line on Euston-Milton Keynes trips and on the Bletchley-Bedford Line, the latter to demonstrate compliance to railway group standards on jointed track at 50mph. It has also visited Aylesbury Depot for multiple working tests with Chiltern's Class 165 and 168 units. Before 172 001 set off for the Capital it carried out multiple working tests with 172 002 on the Old Dalby test track. 172 002 remains at Derby. All this testing is to prove the units perform as designed and to gain an acceptance certificate from Network Rail.

So LOROL drivers won't be getting their hands on it for a while it seems. *Dazz285* has posted 12 photos of 172 001, 3 of which are the best interior shots so far seen. The standing areas around the doors have been achieved by simply omitting pairs of "airline seats" but there seems to be little for the standees to hang on to. These areas are for bikes and wheelchairs too.

Stations

LOROL gave a presentation about station works. This was mainly aimed at those present representing the stations south of New Cross Gate recently transferred to LOROL and described the deep cleaning and 'spruce up' work these stations would be receiving, as NLL and B-GO stations received in 2008. The Phase 3 works were briefly touched on but enough for us to ask if there was actually any planning or timescales in this work because in addition to the "scatter-gun" approach, it was over a year behind schedule. Leyton Midland Road has "had the builders in" for around six months with little to show for it. We learnt that LOROL was powerless to locate the new platform "roundel" type station name boards under platform lights because the TfL London Rail signage specification enforced by TfL's *Rail for London* (RfL) contract compliance organisation specified that platform name boards must be erected at intervals which do not coincide with the platform lamp posts (as has happened at Kilburn High Road and Headstone Lane)! Further, a change to the above TfL London Rail signage specification means that the old BR "arrows of indecision" logo which is now the standard DfT *National Rail* logo is to be removed from stations that only have London Overground services calling at them. How will the average potential passenger know the station connects with the national rail network or that national rail tickets are available at the station?

We of course reiterated for the umpteenth time that we wished to see **all** the perforated metal panels replaced with glazing and not just those in the ends of the steel waiting shelters and that lighting kits, available from the manufacturer, should be installed also. Of course, LOROL can

only pass our requests to RfL for onward transmission to the wise and all knowing TfL London Rail!

For a less jaundiced account of the LOROL Passenger Board meeting see <http://foresthillsociety.blogspot.com/2010/05/lorol-passenger-board.html>

London Assembly Transport Committee Scrutiny

As we previously advised, we are participating in a scrutiny of the delivery of the orbital rail network and the Transport Committee are interested in learning of passengers experiences and views on the recent line closures and the effectiveness of rail replacement buses and other alternative routes. We think that could include passengers on lines suffering an increase in passengers while the North London Line was closed between Stratford and Gospel Oak. If you have any contributions to make on this please send them to us urgently.

And Finally.....

Would you like to contribute, as a rail user, your experiences and comments for a documentary looking at conditions on the UK's rail network? An independent TV Production Company is interested in user views on recent reports of overcrowding, high cost of tickets and unreliable services on some lines. They would like to talk to anyone who is a regular passenger/commuter and has strong feelings on any or all of these subjects either way. If you are interested and want further further details please get in touch.