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Dear Navin,

I would firstly like to thank you and the other members of the London Assembly Transport Committee for accompanying Crossrail Chair Tony Meggs and I on the visit to Bond Street in February. I hope it was informative and showed the progress that has been achieved at one of our nine brand new stations.

As I mentioned, the key focus for Crossrail in 2020 is commencing the intensive operational testing phase, known as Trial Running, in autumn – this will require the project to transition from a construction project into an operational railway with multiple test trains running through the tunnels and stations. The drive from now to Trial Running is critical, with a focus on completion of the works and assurance of the assets. This safety and reliability assurance is paramount, and we are making good progress, with tunnel and track works finished and most stations now nearing completion.

Following successful progression through Trial Running we will commence the final phase of testing known as Trial Operations. This is when the railway starts to come to life with staff and future passengers being invited onto trains and stations to test real-time scenarios.

In support of delivering these important phases of the project, I was delighted in this last period to welcome Jim Crawford to the Crossrail team. Jim joins us as Chief Programme Officer with an overarching responsibility for the end to end delivery of the Elizabeth line. Mark Cooper has taken on the new role of Chief Projects Officer, he will oversee completion of the remaining works, assurance and safety certification of the assets and provide a relentless drive to the start of Trial Running.

We recently held our regular Strategic Partner Forum - a meeting established last year to bring together the Chief Executives and Managing Directors of suppliers working on all elements of the project. It was really promising to see the open dialogue and willingness to engage in challenging discussions as we strive as one team towards safely reaching Trial Running by autumn. All documents submitted from suppliers for safety assurance need to be of the highest quality and I have asked that these senior leaders stay personally accountable for what their teams produce and submit.

MOVING LONDON FORWARD





Safety

In January we achieved 'Target Zero' – we had no high potential near miss incidents, no lost time incidents (an incident resulting in a staff member being required to take time off from work), and we recorded the highest ever score on the Health and Safety Performance Index measure which we use to record our contractors' capability to manage health and safety. This is a fantastic achievement and was the result of the leadership shown by all those working to deliver the Elizabeth line.

Organisational focus remains on ensuring that the migration to an operational environment is proactively managed. At the most recent Crossrail Safety and Health Executive Leadership Team meeting our focus moved to dynamic testing and operational trend analysis for health and safety incidents. This open discussion amongst our supply chain and delivery teams is vital in maintaining a culture of transparency and knowledge sharing.

It is unfortunate that following a zero-harm period, in February we had three incidents across the project. At Liverpool Street station, there was a reportable (RIDDOR) incident where an operative tripped and trapped their arm, resulting in a fracture. At Whitechapel station, there was also a lost time case where an operative trapped and fractured a finger between a carried load and a fixed object. At Tottenham Court Road, a high potential near miss occurred when a piece of hoarding collapsed due to Storm Ciara, although fortunately there were no injuries.

Internal reviews of all incidents have been undertaken and appropriate actions are in place, including temporary suspension of related work and point of work briefings. Given the previous Period's excellent performance, this is disappointing and demonstrates the need to keep safety and health at the forefront of everything we do.

Central Section Progress

To support productivity on physical works and submission of assurance evidence, multidisciplinary and empowered Integrated Delivery Teams (IDTs) mentioned in my last letter have now been established, with a focus on unblocking the path to Trial Running by speeding up decision making.

The 23 IDTs represent stations, shafts, portals, routeway chapters and the control centre. The teams have completed the first round of triaging to determine the essential outstanding works to be completed ahead of entering Trial Running. The outputs from this exercise will undergo further intensive review to ensure a consistent approach across all teams. A daily management call between all key sites is also in place to drive progress, escalate issues and unblock delivery.

We have achieved some key milestones, including the Track Safety Justification being certified by the Railway Assurance Board for Crossrail (RAB-C) on 28 January, Connaught Tunnel achieved Interim Acceptance on 14 February, and Mile End Shaft achieved Handover to the Infrastructure Manager on 24 February – these are major achievements and represent an opportunity to learn and apply lessons. Effort is now focussed on embedding these lessons from to the next batch of assurance documentation submissions and handovers across the programme to ensure a culture of continuous improvement. A weekly surgery has been established for key assurance deliverables required for Handover to enable this.



Focus and Challenges

Over the past four weeks, greater clarity has been gained on the assurance timeline. The safety assurance process that follows the contractors' submission of information must be as efficient as possible and fully integrated between the Infrastructure Managers and Crossrail. This will strengthen the organisation's alignment to getting into Trial Running at the earliest and safest opportunity. The integrated paths to assurance (routeway and delivery assurance) have been heavily reviewed in January and February through a series of schedule workshops.

Focus is also increasing on an end-to-end plan, and how the organisation responds to the corporate and delivery challenges faced with the transitions into Trial Running, Trial Operations and entering passenger service. This plan is being strengthened and integrated into the schedule and forms a regular part of Crossrail Executive and Board conversations.

Operational Readiness

TfL Rail performance in January, including the expanded network out to Reading, was above target, and the moving annual average trend is also above target.

Driver training continues on the Heathrow Spur in preparation for Paddington to Heathrow services using new class 345 Elizabeth line trains (Stage 2B), this is planned to be introduced this spring.

The Operational Readiness team is closely aligning simulated desktop exercises to those planned for live Trial Operations when staff and future customers will test the railway ahead of opening. This will help build capability and confidence for the teams as well as providing further valuable insights into the challenges around delivering the Trial Operations programme.

Network Rail

Progression towards securing sufficient access onto Network Rail infrastructure for dynamic testing across the Great Eastern Main Line and Great Western Main Line interfaces has been positive, with access for transition testing confirmed from now through to May.

Network Rail continues its station enhancement works to improve customer service. Works are progressing at Acton Main Line, West Ealing, Southall, Hayes & Harlington and West Drayton and is currently forecast for completion by the end of 2020. At Ilford and Romford stations, works have commenced for the major station enhancements. Ilford is still due for completion by December 2020 with Romford following in early 2021.

Kind regards



Mark Wild
CEO