

LNER – update on East Coast services

We have received the following Service Update from LNER on Wednesday morning following the discovery of cracks in a few of the Class 800 Series Hitachi trains – the Azuma.

“London North Eastern Railway (LNER) is currently running 85 per cent of its usual timetable, which allows for ongoing engineering work on the East Coast Upgrade.

“One InterCity 225 train is in traffic to ensure services are fully covered, and a small number of services have run in altered formations.

“All trains continue to be thoroughly inspected daily before they leave the depot. Trains will only re-enter service if they meet agreed safety criteria, and this includes a small number of trains that have been found to have cracks where the yaw damper connects to the bolster bracket.

“Over time, trains will be subject to a Forward Repair Plan, which will ensure the long-term continued safe running of the fleet.”

Customers are reminded to check www.lner.co.uk for the latest updates and information before they travel, and we apologise for any inconvenience caused.

At the end of last week Hitachi Rail, train operators, and

government agreed, with oversight from the Office of Rail and Road, a service recovery plan to safely reintroduce more 800 Series and 385 Series trains to the network.

The fleet of 800 series trains was removed from service as a precaution when cracks were found on some trains.

Following extensive safety checks on their trains, Transpennine Express, Hull Trains and ScotRail were able to operate services across all of their routes since the discovery.

After further rigorous safety checks involving ORR's HM Railway Inspectorate, GWR and LNER will now begin reintroducing trains with a more regular service for passengers. Trains on some routes may be less frequent than usual and train availability could vary, for a number of reasons.

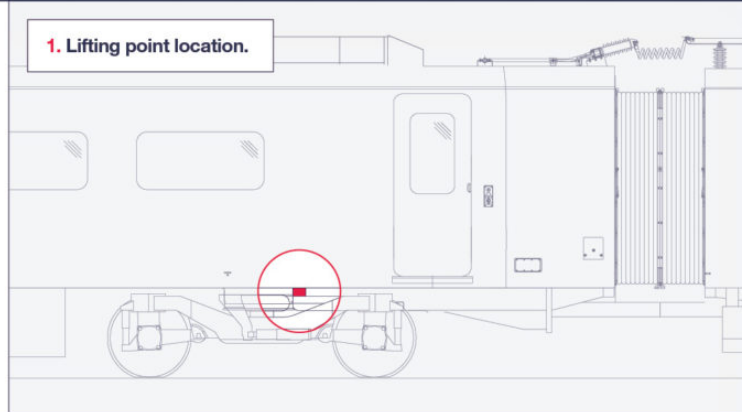
Passengers are being advised to check the latest travel advice from their train operator. Eligible passengers are also being encouraged to claim refunds.

What is a lifting point?

On 8th May, maintenance teams identified small cracks under the train carriages on the lifting points.

The lifting points are not used as part of the normal train operation; their purpose is to allow the train to be lifted up in depots for maintenance.

1. Lifting point location.



2. Lifting point plate, where cracks have been identified. These enable support to lift carriages during maintenance.

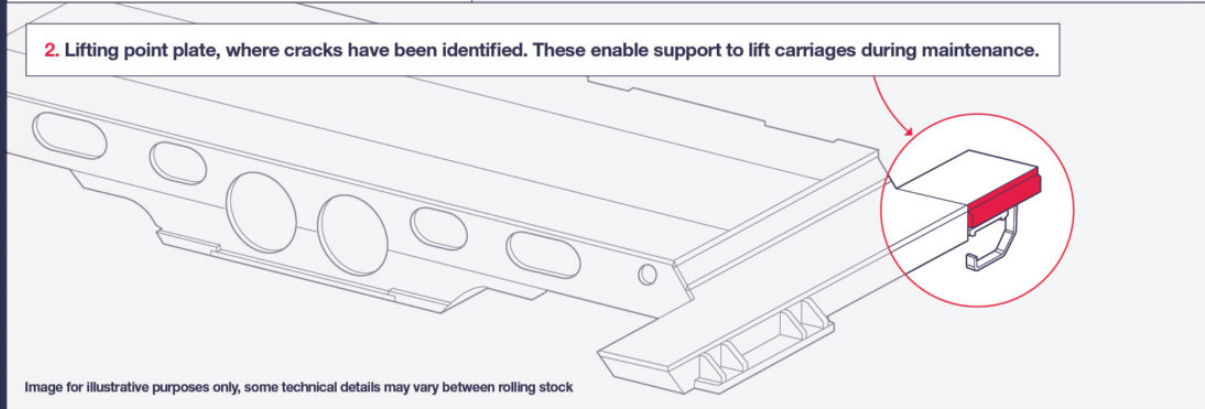


Image for illustrative purposes only, some technical details may vary between rolling stock

Service Recovery Plan

The service recovery plan follows joint work between Hitachi Rail, train operators and the regulator around the safe return to service of some trains. Since discovering the faults, Hitachi Rail engineers and independent experts have completed rigorous tests and research to gain a clearer understanding of the cracking issue.

Based on the work undertaken to understand the issue, and after extensive engagement, Hitachi Rail and train operators, working with the rail regulator, have put in place suitable criteria for the trains to meet before they can re-enter service.

The service recovery plan includes thorough inspections by specialist teams before trains leave the depot. Trains will only re-enter service if they meet agreed safety criteria. Working with Hitachi Rail, the rail regulator will continue to carry out rigorous oversight to ensure robust processes are

being followed.

Over time, trains will be subject to a Forward Repair Plan, which will ensure the long-term continued safe running of the fleet.

Andrew Barr, Group CEO of Hitachi Rail, said: "Today's agreement sets out our joint plan for the phased reintroduction of our trains into service, which will continue to deliver the highest possible safety standards. Safety remains our number one priority, and we and our partners have worked round the clock to agree an approach that allows the return of trains to service where they have been deemed safe.

"With our service recovery plan now underway, the operators will begin reintroduction of trains as they are individually approved and deemed safe. We would like to thank our partners for their ongoing support as we work collectively to reintroduce more trains into service."

David Horne, LNER Managing Director, said: "I am pleased we have been able to work as an industry to agree a service recovery plan with Hitachi and industry partners that will allow trains to return safely to our route. We are continuing to work together to begin the return of Azuma trains into service from next week. Customers should continue to check before they travel with LNER and I apologise for the disruption caused."



Photo courtesy of LNER