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Date: 14th September 2006

Dear Stakeholder

Re: Southeastern's proposals to enhance facilities for disabled passengers at stations. – Step Free Access, Help points and Minor works consultation

As part of our franchise commitments and to further meet our obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Southeastern will be spending £2.85 million up to March 2009 in three main areas:

- to improve step free access to a number of stations by either providing paths or ramps from inaccessible platforms to nearby roads, paths or entrances;
- to provide Help points at stations in the Kent area, (similar to those provided by Transport for London). These will enable passengers to talk to an operator, or get assistance as required where a station is either unstaffed, or staff are only available on an inaccessible platform; and
- to carry out other minor works at stations to improve access and usability. These might include: adjustable counters for wheelchair users, automatic doors, ramps, additional handrails, antislip surfaces, dropped kerbs, signage etc.

Please note that this work will not cover the installation of lifts, which is being separately funded under the Department for Transport's *Access for All* programme. (The stations which will benefit from this funding are Blackheath, Denmark Hill, Lewisham, Swanley, Strood, Herne Hill, Orpington, and Staplehurst. Additional stations will be considered for this scheme but they will be subject to separate consultation by the DfT).

To help us assess where our priorities should lie, we would appreciate your response to the following questions.

- 1) Will the provision of ramps, which to meet a minimum gradient of 1 in 20, may well be up to 80 metres long, be a practical solution to offering step free access? (Bearing in mind that the provision of lifts is not going to be an alternative).
- 2) Where would be the best places to locate the Help Points at stations (either specifically or in general)?
- 3) What other miscellaneous minor works can you suggest to be carried out for stations either specific to a location or in general?
- 4) Are there other stations where you would suggest improvements for Step Free access, Help Points or minor work, which we have not mentioned.

Please see the attached spreadsheets, which give the specific locations that we have currently identified for the work mentioned above. These are subject to further feasibility studies and should not be regarded as an absolute list, more a first draft.

If you have any other comments regarding this work, or suggestions for work to be carried out at your local station or in general about how Southeastern can improve the

service it offers disabled people please also include them in your return.

We would like your comments at the latest by **10th November 2006**. Respond to me at the above address, either by post, fax or email. Please include "Step Free, Help point and Minor Work Consultation" in the subject heading.

If you require this consultation paper in audio or large print then please let me know. This paper will also be available on our website www.southeasternrailway.co.uk

Finally, if you are aware of any other organisations or individuals who should be included in this consultation, please forward this letter and the attached spreadsheet to them.

A summary list is attached of those groups who have been consulted.

Yours sincerely

Justin Ryan
Accessibility and Inclusion Manager