John Bengough
Rail Sustainability - Operations
Department for Transport
4/32 Great Minster House
76 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DR

DIRECT LINE: 020 7944 5035
Mobile: 07850 205 327
E-mail: john.bengough@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Web Site: www.dft.gov.uk

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Piers Johnson
Director of Asset Management
RBS
by e-mail

Dear Mr Johnson,

Class 220 & 221 Voyager trains – compliance with accessibility requirements

You may be aware that Class 220 and 221 vehicles were built to the standards within the Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations 1998 ("RVAR 98"), save for two areas where compliance was not achieved immediately. The Department granted exemptions in 2004 that allowed the vehicles to enter service despite these two non-compliances (see http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2004/955/made).

One exemption expired at the end of April 2005 and it is my understanding that the related non-compliance was rectified before that date. The second exemption, relating to the lack of contrast between the flooring in the vestibule and the saloon was due to expire at the end of April 2014.

I wanted you to be aware that the Rail Vehicle Accessibility (Non-Interoperable Rail System) Regulations 2010 ("RVAR 10") came into force on 6 April 2010 and replaced RVAR 98. Changes to the technical standards meant that the one outstanding area of non-compliance became acceptable provided there is a door between the vestibule and saloon, as is the case on Voyagers.

I am pleased to confirm, therefore, that, in the Department's view, Class 220 and 221 Voyagers now fully comply with accessibility requirements, which is important given the legal deadline of 1 January 2020 by which time all rail vehicles must be accessible. It remains a requirement, however, for all such vehicles to continue to be maintained and operated in compliance with RVAR 2010, which is subject to enforcement by the Office of Rail Regulation (to whom I am copying this letter).

I hope this is useful.

Yours sincerely,

John Bengough
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