



Department for Transport

Tobyn Hughes
Managing Director
Nexus
Nexus House
St James Boulevard
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 4AX

Baroness Vere of Norbiton
Transport Minister for Roads and Security

Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

Tel: 0300 330 3000
E-Mail [REDACTED]@dft.gov.uk

Web site: www.gov.uk/dft

December 2019

It is extremely disappointing to see that the Tyne and Wear Metro will not meet the deadline to provide accessible trains for every passenger and every journey by the end of the year.

As an operator you have had ten years to prepare for the 31 December 2019 deadline set in the Rail Vehicle Accessibility (Non-Interoperable Rail System) Regulation 2010. It is deeply frustrating that disabled passengers will still be waiting into the next decade to see the accessibility improvements that will be delivered through the introduction of the new trains you are currently procuring.

Let me be clear that we are absolutely committed to ensuring that all passengers can travel by rail with ease and confidence. The Secretary of State's powers to permit non-compliant vehicles to continue in operation have not been used lightly and should never result in detriment to the quality of disabled passengers' journeys.

However, I recognise that the scale of non-compliance is limited to the four original Metrocar vehicles, which are being retained to deliver a robust peak time service.

It is for these reasons that I have reluctantly agreed to issue a strictly time-limited exemption to Tyne and Wear Metro. But you must continue to provide evidence to the Secretary of State to both demonstrate that your introduction of new vehicles remains on track and that these four original Metrocars will be the first vehicles to be replaced.

My position on these matters is unequivocal. Delivering an accessible service for every passenger on every rail journey is essential to creating an inclusive and accessible railway. It must not be delayed any longer.

BARONESS VERE OF NORBITON