

Train operating companies offer two-year pay deal to drivers' union

Train operating companies have offered the drivers' union a two-year pay deal in a bid to resolve the bitter dispute which has led to a series of strikes.

The Rail Delivery Group (RDG) said it was offering a "landmark outline proposal" that would deliver more reliable services for passengers, in exchange for a pay increase of 4% for 2022 and 4% for this year.

It also includes a commitment to no compulsory redundancies until at least March 31 2024.

A statement said: "The offer is contingent on common sense, vital and long overdue changes to working arrangements across the industry.

We urge Aslef to work with us to bring an end to the dispute for our people, our passengers and the future of Britain's railways

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“Many of these are already best practice in parts of the railway and are designed to avoid disruptive gaps in services.

“If accepted, the proposal would mean the base salary for the average driver would increase from £60,000, to almost £65,000 by the end of 2023.”

[Aslef](#) said it had not seen the offer.

Steve Montgomery, chairman of the RDG, said: “This is a fair and affordable offer in challenging times, providing a significant uplift in salary for train drivers while bringing in common-sense and long-overdue reforms that would drive up reliability for passengers and allow the railway to adapt to changed travel patterns.

“With taxpayers still funding up to an extra £175 million a month to make up the shortfall in revenue post-Covid, these changes are also vital for us to be able to fund the pay rise our people deserve.

“Instead of staging yet more damaging strike action and holding back changes that will improve services, we urge Aslef to work with us to bring an end to the dispute for our people, our passengers and the future of Britain’s railways.”

The RDG said proposed changes included a “Sunday commitment protocol”, whereby drivers who are rostered to work a Sunday shift are contractually committed to doing so unless alternative cover can be found.

“The change is vital in a post-Covid world which has seen leisure travel – currently at 116% of pre-Covid levels on Sundays – recover far more strongly than commuter and business travel,” the group said in a statement.

The RDG said its proposal reduces the time it takes to train drivers through better use of technology, allowing more drivers to join the workforce more quickly.

Changes are also being proposed for learning new routes more rapidly.

The RDG said it emailed the offer to Aslef mid-afternoon.