

# Press Release

11 November 2007

## **New beginning for CrossCountry train travel**

A new train operator begins services today (11 November), bringing fresh vision for the future of the UK's most extensive rail franchise.

CrossCountry is the brand and identity of the new company, which is part of leading European transport operator Arriva. From Aberdeen to Penzance and from Stansted to Cardiff, it will provide medium and long distance train services over around 1,500 route miles, calling at over 100 stations.

Andy Cooper, managing director of CrossCountry, said:

"The CrossCountry name has a long and proud history for rail travellers and the staff who operate the trains. We are reviving that name to emphasise the important service we provide to our customers, trains running across the length and breadth of Great Britain.

"CrossCountry connects people and communities across the UK, providing journeys to most places either directly or with just one change of train. Over time we will make radical improvements to the service we provide to customers, making travelling by train and changing trains easier and simpler. Importantly, we will be providing what CrossCountry passengers most want – more seats at busy times.

"CrossCountry, like any other train company, is all about its people. We welcome our new employees from Virgin and Central Trains and value the experience and knowledge they will all contribute to the delivery of our exciting plans. From day one our focus and priority will be effective delivery and good performance on our services."

CrossCountry's new website at [www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk](http://www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk) goes live at 10am on Sunday 11 November. Early in 2008 the site will be improved again to make ticket purchase even easier, with passengers quickly directed to the cheapest available fares.

CrossCountry's innovations, which are planned for introduction within the first two years of the franchise, feature the following benefits for travellers:

- 35 per cent increase in seating capacity in critical evening peak on principal routes
- at-seat catering on all routes for all passengers and not just First Class

- radical improvements in ticketing and reservation booking, including home printing of tickets and tickets by mobile phone, with discounted tickets available much closer to the start of travel
- investment in improved rolling stock, with all other trains refurbished to the standard of the popular Voyagers
- the reintroduction of HSTs to provide 550-seat trains on busy routes
- Wi-Fi available to all Voyager and HST passengers, free in First Class.

## **Ends**

### **Notes to editors:**

- From 11 November customers requiring timetable information should log on to [www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk](http://www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk) or call 0845 7 48 49 50. To purchase CrossCountry rail tickets call 0844 811 0124. Customers requiring special assistance or additional support when travelling should contact Journey Care on 0844 811 0125 (telephone) 0844 811 0126 (textphone).
- CrossCountry is part of Arriva plc. Arriva is one of the largest private sector providers of passenger transport in mainland Europe, employing more than 37,000 people and providing more than one billion passenger journeys every year.
- Arriva provides transport services including buses, trains, commuter coaches and water buses in nine European countries: Czech Republic, Denmark, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the UK. Operations in a tenth country, Poland, are due to start later this year.
- Arriva's rail services operate in Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK, with Polish services scheduled to start in December 2007.

## **CrossCountry - Future Innovations**

### **More and better trains:**

- 35 per cent increase in seating capacity in critical evening peak on principal routes by June 2009
- nearly 20,000 extra seats through Birmingham every weekday
- introduction of five High Speed Train (HST) sets each with eight state-of-the-art refurbished coaches (total of 550 seats per set), providing longer trains with more seats and luggage space on the major North East-South West route
- longer Voyager trains on other key services
- internal reworking of Voyager and Class 170 fleets to meet customer priorities for more seats and more luggage space
- additional services to the base service pattern providing through journey opportunities between Edinburgh and Reading, Bournemouth and Newcastle, and Penzance and Manchester

- additional late evening services to and from Stansted Airport.

### **High quality service on board:**

- introduction of at-seat catering, reflecting customer preferences
- Wi-Fi access for all seats on all HSTs and Voyagers, and improved mobile phone reception on Voyagers
- First Class accommodation on all trains, including ex-Central Trains service
- hot plated food available to First Class passengers
- three members of staff providing on board service on long distance trains
- staff more accessible and visible to passengers.

### **A ticketing and information revolution:**

Centred around a new internet retailing service, providing:

- easy to use service, guiding passengers towards the cheapest fares and best interchange options
- print at home and mobile phone ticketing
- personalised journey information, with text updates on itinerary
- wider and better information on stations and connecting transport services
- flexible reservations systems to cope with late changes to journey plans
- £1 million investment in more ticket machines and information screens at key stations
- information campaign on alternative locations (to Birmingham New Street) for interchanging between trains
- additional staffing to provide help and assistance during December 2008 timetable change.

### **A railway contributing to environmental improvements:**

- training staff in environmentally-friendly ways of working
- reducing on-board waste and increasing recycling
- cooperating with industry and Arriva initiatives to develop alternative fuels
- encouraging modal shift to rail by providing more trains with more seats.

### **A secure railway:**

- introducing a new 'Secure Trains Scheme' to give passengers confidence about their on-board security
- working with industry partners to extend Secure Station Accreditation across key CrossCountry calling points
- employing additional security staff.

### **Staff and stakeholders:**

- £1.4 million to be invested annually in staff training and development
- regular employee surveys
- consultation on new staff uniforms
- regular stakeholder events across the whole franchise area.