

21 March 2025

**Daran Ponter**

Chair, Greater Wellington Regional Council

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**Tēnā Koe Daran,**

Thank you for your letter received 18 March. We fully understand the frustration and inconvenience caused to Wairapa line customers by these recent disruptions and sincerely regret the impact to those reliant on our services.

Restoring reliability while maintaining high-quality customer service is our top priority. We are acutely aware that these disruptions, following the recently completed renewal works, have compounded the challenges faced by our passengers. To that end, this week we held a dedicated workshop to assess available solutions.

Our immediate focus is on optimising the use of available staff, as the recent disruptions have been primarily driven by unusually high levels of long-term illness and sick leave.

We're also pleased to provide the Wairarapa Recovery Plan to GWRC/Metlink, outlining our immediate, medium and long-term interventions, with a clear implementation timeline. We'd welcome the opportunity to meet at your earliest convenience if you'd like to discuss this in greater detail.

While we're doing everything within our control to recover performance on the Wairarapa Line, broader contractual and financial constraints, long the subject of discussion with your team, continue to have significant influence.

For example, additional leave entitlements for sick leave and the Matariki public holiday, while necessary, remain unfunded. This places us in the difficult position of being unable to provide the level of staffing and service that Wellington's rail customers expect. While we are proactively working to mitigate these impacts on the Wairarapa Line, we cannot guarantee similar challenges won't arise elsewhere on the network while we devote our resources to this task.

However, we appreciate GWRC/Metlink's recognition of the constraints and are buoyed by our alignment on key objectives: optimising staffing levels and improving customer experience by addressing fiscal constraints ahead of July 2025.

Please be assured that, in the interim, our teams are working hard to restore sustainable staffing levels with the resources we have available and minimise impacts to Wairarapa Line customers.

I trust you'll agree that our organisations share the collective goodwill, collaborative spirit and commitment that will deliver an enduring solution for users of the Wellington rail network. We're thankful for your continued support as we work to achieve this goal together.

Ngā mihi



**Peter Lensink**

Chief Operating Officer, Transdev Australia & New Zealand