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Press releases

PASSENGERS EXPECT TRAIN COMPANIES TO PUT BRAKES ON JANUARY FARE RISE

17.08.2010

Passenger Focus has this morning called on the rail industry to show restraint in 2011 following the announcement of today's inflation figure of 4.8%.

The July Retail Price Index (RPI) figure is part of the formula which allows train companies to increase regulated fares, including season tickets, off-peak return journeys and commuter fares, by up to RPI +1% (RPI +3% on some routes).

Ashwin Kumar, Passenger Focus rail director, said: "*Passengers continue to tell us their top priority for improvement on the railway is better value for money.*"

"With the whole country feeling nervous about our economic prospects, passengers will expect train companies to show restraint next January. Now is not the time for train companies to sweat passengers off the train."

The independent passenger watchdog would also like to see continue the policy of limiting the flexibility of train companies to increase fares on individual routes.

"In the past, the average fare rise has masked increases on some routes of 10 or 11 per cent. We hope the Government continues to limit train companies' flexibility so passengers on some routes don't face double digit rises," Mr Kumar said.

He concluded: "*Our research has shown that passengers in Britain*

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already pay some of the highest commuter fares in Europe. For example, an annual season ticket for a journey such as Warrington to Manchester costs 60% more than an equivalent journey into Paris. Just because you can increase fares, does not mean you should – this is a time for restraint."

Ends

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