

UNDERGROUND DIARY

FEBRUARY 2013

The 'work to rule' about detraining issues on the Bakerloo Line continued on **Friday 1 February** with roundly six trains cancelled during the day. That apart, the combination of a stalled train at Praed Street Junction for 20 minutes from 15.30 and a signal failure at Edgware Road at 16.55 resulted in five C&H cancellations for the evening peak.

The only notable problem on **Saturday 2 February** was a smell of burning on the southbound Jubilee Line between Swiss Cottage and St. John's Wood which suspended services between Finchley Road and Waterloo from 15.40 to 16.25. As is often the case and despite extensive checks, nothing untoward was found.

Euston LU station closed from 07.10 to 07.40 on **Sunday 3 February** because of a fire alert on the main line station. The Northern Line was suspended south of Stockwell from 09.20 for an hour because of a person under a southbound train at Clapham South. At 15.30, points failing at Earl's Court suspended the District Line between Wimbledon and Edgware Road and Hammersmith – South Kensington (the line was suspended east of South Kensington for weekend engineering work). Two westbound trains were stalled, one near Triangle sidings and one approaching Earl's Court, both from the High Street Kensington direction. Services resumed at 16.30

Nothing new untoward occurred on **Monday 4 February**.

Tuesday 5 February was thus:

- Bank/Monument closed 06.10 to 06.35 – smell of smoke from lift machine room. The Waterloo & City Line (normal start time 06.15) was thus unable to start until 06.50, once train staff were in position.
- Metropolitan and Piccadilly lines suspended west of Rayners Lane 10.00 to 10.35 – defective eastbound Metropolitan Line train at Ruislip Manor.
- Piccadilly Line suspended east of Wood Green 13.20 to 13.50 – Track Recording Train 'gapped' off current on the eastbound approach to Arnos Grove.

On **Wednesday 6 February** West Kensington station was unable to open until 05.40 because of incomplete overnight work in the ticket hall. A signal failure approaching Bank suspended the Waterloo & City Line from 08.25 to 09.35. Two stalled eastbound trains were authorised in turn to return wrong line Waterloo, the first at 08.45, the second at 09.00. At 08.25 a train entering Loughton sidings became 'gapped' off current, suspending the service between Woodford and Epping until 09.10. The day ended with a points failure at Watford South Junction, which suspended the northbound local service between Harrow-on-the-Hill and Watford from 23.35. One northbound train stalled at the junction, being authorised to return to Moor Park, arrived there at 00.25. What remained of the service resumed at 00.50, but effectively just the last train to Watford.

On **Thursday 7 February** a fire alarm activated in a vent shaft at Brixton, with the station being closed and Victoria Line service initially suspended south of Victoria from 07.10. At 07.30 the service resumed, but running empty between Stockwell and Brixton until 07.45. A further suspension south of Warren Street took place from 08.50 to 09.35 because of smoke reported at platform level at Victoria, which was reported to have been coming from the station upgrade site at street level. The Jubilee Line was suspended east of North Greenwich from 08.05 to 08.30 because of signalling problems at Canning Town. Just after this incident concluded, a passenger fell between the platform and train on a westbound train at London Bridge, suspending the service between Canary Wharf and Waterloo from 08.45 to 09.10.

The only notable event on **Friday 8 February** was a most-of-the-day signalling problem on the Piccadilly Line with control being lost between Wood Green and Cockfosters. Only the few trains in Arnos Grove sidings could initially enter service under local control. The first train from Cockfosters depot entered service at 05.40 but only the east end was available. By 07.30 a 'special service' had been implemented, which meant there was no Piccadilly Line service to Uxbridge and a limited shuttle between Acton Town and Rayners Lane. It wasn't until 19.30 that normal signalling control was restored at the east end of the line, although control was still not possible from Earl's Court. Although 'minor delays' was deemed as being sufficient throughout the day, cancellations varied between 20 and 28 until mid-evening.

On **Saturday 9 February** a report of a rail defect at Stonebridge Park suspended the Bakerloo Line north of Queen's Park from 11.55 to 12.25. Osterley station closed from 18.10 to 19.30 because of a local power failure.

Sunday 10 February was thus:

- Piccadilly Line suspended east of Oakwood 08.55 to 09.20 – loss of signalling control at Cockfosters.
- Piccadilly Line suspended King's Cross – Hammersmith 13.30 to 14.50 – person under a westbound train at Hyde Park Corner.
- Edgware Road Bakerloo Line station closed 15.50 to 16.50 – smell of burning in ticket hall.
- District Line held Putney Bridge – Wimbledon 21.25 to 21.40 and suspended west of Putney Bridge from 23.30 to 00.10 – Network Rail signal failure at East Putney. The problem began at 20.30 and initially a reduced service continued to operate.

On Monday 11 February **Jubilee Line** services north of Wembley Park were unable start up until 06.15 because an overnight sleet train stalled approaching Stanmore. The same problem occurred with a train approaching High Barnet with the northbound service between Finchley Central and High Barnet not starting until 06.25.

Tuesday 12 February offered few excursions from the norm, apart from Leyton station closing from 22.30 to 23.10 because of a passenger altercation in the ticket hall.

Wednesday 13 February began with points failing at Neasden, suspending the Jubilee Line between Wembley Park and Willesden Green and the Metropolitan Line south of Wembley Park from 05.30 to 06.05. Points failing at North Acton Junction suspended the Ealing Broadway branch of the Central Line from 17.10 until 18.05. One eastbound train stalled approaching the junction was authorised to return to West Acton, arriving at 17.35. A local power failure required Brent Cross to close from 19.45 to 21.50.

A multiple signal failure at Farringdon at 05.30 disrupted the Hammersmith & City and Circle lines on **Thursday 14 February** with trains working through under failure conditions after a 20-minute stand. In consequence the Metropolitan Line service terminated at Baker Street until 06.35. Just before 07.30 a signal failure east of Earl's Court caused an initial 15-minute delay with the incident train diverted to High Street Kensington. In consequence eastbound trains were routed through platform 2 which caused a traffic jam of trains during the morning peak. To enable the failure to be fixed, the Edgware Road service was suspended from 10.05 to 10.40. In the meantime a westbound District Line (to Ealing Broadway and thence to Ealing Common depot) accepted a wrong signal offered west of Acton Town and headed off towards Northfields. The train returned empty to Acton Town and went to depot from platform 4 – an unusual move indeed.



Tufnell Park station was unable open until 06.20 on **Friday 15 February** because of lift defects. The Central Line was suspended between White City and Marble Arch because of a person under the first eastbound train at Notting Hill Gate. Services began on that section at 07.05. A District Line train accepted a wrong signal at Hanger Lane Junction in the evening and ended up at North Ealing and thence onwards empty to South Harrow, where it is seen (*Left*) reversing in the eastbound platform.

Photo: John Creed

Saturday 16 February began with a defective westbound train between Stratford and Mile End at 06.40. Once the train had arrived at Mile End, passengers were detrained and the train continued empty to reverse west to east at Bethnal Green at 07.35, when westbound services resumed. There was then a person

ill on a northbound Bakerloo Line train at Queen's Park at 13.10, suspending the service north of Queen's Park until 13.35, with approaching northbound trains being diverted direct into the southbound platform to reverse. The day ended with a person under a northbound Victoria Line train at King's Cross at 23.40, causing a 25-minute delay.

A points failure at Brixton from 13.05 on **Sunday 17 February** suspended the Victoria Line service south of Victoria until 13.55. Stage I of the new TBTC signalling system was commissioned on the Northern Line between High Barnet and West Finchley. Insofar as the control of the line is concerned, Line Controllers now reside at the new control centre at Highgate, while the signal operators remain at Cobourg Street until the last section of the new signalling becomes operative. As various sites are commissioned, then the appropriate signalling desks at Cobourg Street will be decommissioned. This view (*Below*) at High Barnet nine days later shows Train 450, a 1995 Tube Stock special working running empty between High Barnet and Finchley Central for staff training. Note the conventional signals and signage covered over and new TBTC-related signs.

Photo: Kim Rennie



Monday 18 February offered the following:

- Reduction of District Line service east of Barking from 12.50 to 17.20 – signal failure at Upminster Bridge. (Service also suspended with Barking signal failure – see below).
- Reduction of District Line service west of Putney Bridge also from 12.50 to 15.00 – Network Rail signal failure at Wimbledon Park. In the middle of this (14.15 to 14.40) a SPAD by a westbound train at Wimbledon Park added a 25-minute delay to a much reduced service.
- District Line suspended east of Plaistow and Hammersmith & City Line suspended east of Moorgate from 16.00 to 16.30 – signalling problem at Barking.
- Bakerloo Line suspended north of Queen's Park 16.00 to 16.30 – person trackside at Kensal Green.

On **Tuesday 19 February** a signal failure at Northfields suspended the Piccadilly Line west of Northfields from 08.15, initially for an hour. A defective blockjoint required attention and a further

suspension took place from 10.20 to 10.55. A signal failure north of Harrow-on-the-Hill at 13.15 suspended the Metropolitan Line between Northwood and Harrow until 14.25. In the meanwhile a signal failure at Finchley Road at 14.00 continued to disrupt the service and prolonged service recovery, exacerbated by points failing at Rayners Lane later at 19.20 suspending the service between Harrow and Uxbridge until 20.30. In this last incident the Piccadilly Line was largely unaffected but one stalled Metropolitan Line train was authorised to return to West Harrow.

The only incident of note on **Wednesday 20 February** was on the Bakerloo Line from the start of traffic, with a loss of signalling control at Elephant & Castle and services suspended south of Waterloo (trains reversing in London Road). Services began at 07.20.

A defective southbound Bakerloo Line train, being taken out of service at Queen's Park at 10.35, stalled entering the South Shed at Queen's Park on **Thursday 21 February**, suspending the service between Queen's Park and Paddington until 11.05. A signal failure on the westbound approach to South Kensington at 18.40 suspended the outer rail Circle Line, with District Line trains continuing, but rather delayed, under failure conditions. The Circle Line resumed at 20.05. The day ended at midnight with points failing at Hammersmith, suspending the Hammersmith & City Line west of Edgware Road until 00.55. One train stalled approaching Hammersmith was authorised to return to Goldhawk Road, arriving there at 00.15.

On **Friday 22 February** SSR lines through King's Cross were suspended from 06.40 because of points failing. Two westbound S Stock trains were stalled between Farringdon and King's Cross, arriving at the latter in turn at 07.20 and 07.25. Services resumed at 07.30 but the Metropolitan Line was delayed further by a person ill on a southbound train at Wembley Park from 07.40. In this instance, southbound fast trains were diverted via the local line, creating a traffic jam of trains.

Saturday 23 February was as follows:

- Northern Line suspended on the Edgware branch from start of traffic until 06.20 – train gapped off current across the southbound line, having departed from Golders Green shunting neck and intended for the middle platform.
- A westbound Central Line train lost ATO codes approaching Stratford at 11.10, suspending the service between Leytonstone and Liverpool Street until 11.45. The train was sent empty in Restricted Manual mode to reverse at Bethnal Green and thence back to Hainault depot.
- Piccadilly Line suspended Acton Town – Rayners Lane 23.45 to 00.25 – Train Operator of an engineer's train taken ill.

On **Sunday 24 February** a delegation from CoMet (Community of Metros) from overseas were intending to ride the LT Museum's 1938 Stock from Aldgate (depart 10.07) to Acton Town (arrive 11.06) via Baker Street and Rayners Lane, and then have a tour of The Depot at Acton. However, at 08.40, an engineer's train on route to Aldgate was incorrectly routed through platform 3 at Edgware Road, instead of the booked platform. The train was longer than normal and was thus too long to operate the signalling via platform 3, the area becoming completely 'locked up'. In consequence the Hammersmith & City Line was suspended west of Baker Street and the District Line east of High Street Kensington. The 1938 Stock train was also affected and was sent via Rayners Lane to Baker Street (platform 1) to meet the overseas delegation who had been put on an S8 train from Aldgate. Three trains were stalled between stations, each being authorised to return wrong line to their previous stations – Paddington (Suburban), Paddington (District/Circle) and Baker Street, this last move causing the H&C suspension to be extended to King's Cross while the wrong direction move took place. Following the securing of three sets of points at Edgware Road, the offending train departed, enabling services to resume at 10.20. The only other notable event of the day was a passenger trapped in a stalled lift at Stratford for an hour from 08.50, apparently none the worse for his/her ordeal.

The only incident of note on **Monday 25 February** was a person under a westbound District Line train at Tower Hill at 13.15. The District Line was suspended between Mansion House and Whitechapel and the Circle Line in its entirety. Also suspended was the Hammersmith & City Line east of Moorgate because of the traction current layout and arrangements in the Tower Hill and Aldgate areas. Services resumed at 14.20.

There was a 20-minute late start to the Piccadilly Line from Cockfosters depot on **Tuesday 26 February** because of incomplete repairs to a cable damaged overnight at Oakwood. A southbound

Northern Line train, from Golders Green depot heading south towards Hampstead, became gapped off current departing the depot, suspending the Edgware branch from 17.40 to 18.15.

A person trackside at Brixton on **Tuesday 27 February** caused a 15-minute delay to the Victoria Line south of Victoria from 15.55, but the station remained closed until 16.35, with trains running empty between Stockwell and Brixton. Later, a person ill on the southbound platform at Edgware Road resulted in southbound Bakerloo Line trains non-stopping from 19.40 to 20.05.

The Metropolitan Line started up late on **Thursday 28 February** because of a defective tamping machine on the northbound at Kilburn, suspending the service south of Wembley Park until 06.45. A person trackside at Totteridge at 17.05 suspended the Northern Line north of Finchley Central until 17.35. Russell Square station closed from 17.10 because of lift defects, reopening at 18.30. The station had been operating in exit only mode since 15.25 but rush hour passenger flow was too great for this to continue through the evening peak. A signalling problem between Finsbury Park and Tottenham Hale at 18.00 caused a 20-minute stand on the Victoria Line, while a local power failure caused Rayners Lane station to close from 19.30 to 20.50.

February 2013 ended with the Bakerloo Line Train Operators' detraining dispute (which began on 18 January) continuing unabated. To summarise, Train Operators now have to detrain their own trains at Queen's Park, Stonebridge Park and Harrow & Wealdstone, taking their full time to do so. This causes 'blocking back' on occasions, sometimes back to Baker Street on the northbound. At present some 5 to 6 trains are cancelled each day to try and ease the problem. The situation is not made any easier by the all-day stepping back of crews at Elephant & Castle with the service having to be constantly reformed because of late running and out of turn train working. Train staff want detraining staff reinstated at all locations – it seems that management won't give in and it would appear neither will the Train Operators. What is noticeable, of course, is the lack of information put out to passengers about the delays caused by the blocking back.