

UNDERGROUND DIARY

MARCH 2014

Saturday 1 March began with a defective train at Borough at 07.00, which suspended the northbound service via the City. One train was stalled behind approaching Borough, which was authorised forward but with its passengers remaining on the train for the duration. The incident train, which initially had a door problem and then no movement, moved off at 08.15, allowing the stalled train into the platform, and the service to resume. Other problems included:

- Piccadilly Line trains non-stopped Gloucester Road 15.30 to 16.00 – lift defects.
- Queensway station in exit-only mode 18.15 to 20.05 – lift defects.
- Reduced Metropolitan and Piccadilly Line services through Rayners Lane 19.05 to 21.30 – signal equipment failure in signal cabin. Eastbound Metropolitan Line trains detrained in platform 2, reversed into and out of siding (double shunt) and continued from platform 1. Piccadilly Line Rayners Lane reversers were curtailed at South Harrow.
- Victoria Line suspended north of King's Cross from 20.05 and north of Highbury from 20.30 – person under a northbound train at Seven Sisters. Services resumed at 21.30.
- Leicester Square station closed 22.30 to 23.05 – football hooligan skirmishes outside the station.

The District and Circle lines started up late on **Sunday 2 March** because of a late finish to work on points at Triangle Sidings. The all clear enabled services to begin through the area from 07.30. Other incidents included an eastbound District Line train stopping at Chiswick Park and the doors not being opened just before lunch time, a Network Rail signal failure at Gunnersbury at 15.50 (15-minute delay), and a 20-minute delay at High Street Kensington at 19.00 with a signal failure. The only other event was a SPAD by an eastbound Hammersmith & City Line train at King's Cross earlier in the day, causing a 30-minute stand from 13.35 while the train was set back behind the signal.

On **Monday 3 March** a signal failure at Tower Hill resulted in a 35-minute suspension through the area from 10.25. Two westbound trains were stalled, one for 30 minutes, the other for the duration. Service recovery from the failure on the Circle and Hammersmith & City lines was hampered by a lack of Train Operators, with 12 trains cancelled at midday.

The only incident of note on **Tuesday 4 March** involved stations. Arsenal station closed from 08.25 to 09.20 because of a local power failure, Kilburn Park 18.35 to 19.25 because of escalator defects and Northwood 21.50 to 22.25 because of a passenger ill in the ticket hall.

On **Wednesday 5 March**, Rayners Lane station closed between 08.15 and 09.40 because of a person ill on the eastbound platform. Points failing in Barking sidings and a consequential signal failure at Upney suspended the westbound District Line between Upminster and Barking from 12.20. A limited eastbound service was able to operate with some trains being turned short in Barking bay platform. Services resumed at 12.55.

The Northern Line had a late start from Morden on **Thursday 6 March** because of grease contaminated rails in the South Wimbledon area. The first northbound train from Morden departed at 06.25 by which some 15 trains had been cancelled. Service recovery was set back by a points failure at Colindale at 09.45, suspending the service north of Golders Green until 10.15. Metropolitan and Piccadilly Line services were suspended west of Rayners Lane from 11.00 to 11.45 because of a person on the track at Ruislip – a westbound Metropolitan Line train managed to stop short. A person under a train at Finsbury Park eastbound Piccadilly Line at 19.40 suspended the service between King's Cross and Arnos Grove until 20.10.

On **Friday 7 March** a Network Rail signal failure at Gunnersbury suspended the District Line's Richmond branch from 14.00 to 14.35, 15.45 to 17.00 and again from 18.45 to 19.25. There were then two further problems, both after midnight and in the early hours of Saturday, but in Friday's traffic day. The first was at South Kensington at 00.35 when a westbound train was discovered showing the wrong train number – at the close of traffic it is necessary for trains to proceed in the correct timetabled number order for safety reasons (overnight working staff look out for these!). A special 'line clear' was given for the last trains to run from 01.00. In the meanwhile traction current was discharged in error under the last westbound Piccadilly Line train at 00.50 which was at South Kensington at the time. Once another 'line clear' had been obtained, the train was able to depart after some 20 minutes.

Saturday 8 March was as follows:

- Multiple signal failure Elephant & Castle – Bakerloo Line suspended south of Lambeth North from 06.10 and south of Piccadilly Circus from 06.45 after points failure following the first train reversing at Lambeth North. Services resumed at 09.25.
- Central Line suspended North Acton – West Ruislip 08.50 to 10.20 – points failing westbound at North Acton Junction. Plans to implement a West Ruislip – Northolt shuttle from 09.40 came to nothing because all eastbound trains on the branch had already gone eastbound and no serviceable trains were available in Ruislip depot!
- District and Piccadilly lines suspended through Acton Town 13.35 to 14.30 – signal failure eastbound at Acton Town. The District Line had been previously suspended west of Putney Bridge 13.00 to 13.30 because of a Network Rail signal failure at Wimbledon.
- Northern Line's Barnet branch suspended from 23.55 to 00.35 – points failure at East Finchley.

On **Sunday 9 March** a signal failure at West Kensington from the start of traffic prevented the District Line from starting up until 07.25. A loss of signalling control at Cockfosters at 15.40 suspended the Piccadilly Line east of Oakwood and reduced the service between there and Arnos Grove. One train stalled on the approach to Cockfosters was authorised to return to Oakwood, arriving at 16.30 which had suspended the service east of Arnos Grove from 16.10 while this was dealt with. Services resumed at 17.25 with 12 trains being cancelled early-evening.

Monday 10 March began with a multiple signal failure between Rayners Lane and Eastcote on the westbound from 05.30. The Piccadilly Line was suspended west of Rayners Lane with the Metropolitan Line continuing under failure conditions. It was deemed possible to resume the Piccadilly Line to Uxbridge from 07.30 but a further 20-minute delay took place from 09.30 while a defective piece of equipment was replaced. The Central Line had a disturbed morning peak with a westbound train with a door defect at Liverpool Street causing a 20-minute delay from 08.00. Lift defects at Russell Square resulted in the station closing from 09.25. Westbound trains resumed stopping at 09.55 with the station open normally from 11.15.

Piccadilly Line services started up late at the east end of the line on **Tuesday 11 March** because of a late finish to rail cleaning on the westbound at Finsbury Park. First trains ran from 05.50. A fire alarm activated closed Waterloo LU station and suspended the Waterloo & City Line from 20.15 to 20.45.

Wednesday 12 March was thus:

- A reduced Bakerloo Line service north of Queen' Park from 06.30 to 08.30 – high ballast following re-railing between Stonebridge Park and Harlesden front- and back-tripping trains.
- Heathrow T4 station closed 11.45 to 13.10 – BAA owned and operated station entrance shutter closed because of a local power failure.
- Bakerloo Line suspended south of Piccadilly Circus from 15.20 to 15.45 – defective northbound train at Lambeth North.
- Waterloo & City Line suspended from 15.20 – multiple signal failure in Waterloo depot. Once the cause of the failure had been established a two-car unit in depot shunted to make space for reversing, a three-train service resumed at 17.15 with a fourth train being added shortly after.
- Network Rail signal failure at Gunnersbury from 00.25, suspending the service until the end of traffic.

On **Thursday 13 March** a signal failure at Waterloo suspended the Waterloo & City Line from 07.45 to 08.55. A northbound Northern Line train at Oval was unable to change from tripcock to TBTC mode at 08.05, causing a 20-minute delay. A suspicious item on the station at St. Paul's saw the station close and trains non-stop from 15.30 to 16.30. A person under a westbound train at St. Paul's suspended the Central Line between Liverpool Street and Holborn from 18.40. One westbound train was stalled off current between Bank and St. Paul's until 19.50. Services resumed at 20.05 with some 30 trains cancelled by that time. Another person under a train occurred at Green Park on the southbound Jubilee Line at 22.05, suspending the service between Finchley Road and Waterloo. Services resumed at 23.25 but with disruption until the end of traffic.

Signals failing at Earl's Court westbound disrupted the District Line from 06.10 on **Friday 14 March**, along with a knock-on effect to the outer rail Circle Line. Clear signals were obtained by 07.00. Covent Garden station closed from 09.45 to 10.35 because of lift defects on one of the remaining

pair – the other pair are being replaced. The Bakerloo Line service to Harrow & Wealdstone was reduced by half during the day from 10.30 because of an intermittent repeat Network Rail signal failure reportedly caused by a defective block joint. In the meantime, the Northern Line had two instances of defective trains being unable to switch from one mode to the other at the new signalling boundary points. The first was at Chalk Farm northbound at 07.30 when a train was unable to change back to tripcock mode. Although an hour's shut-down of the Edgware branch ensued, an *Underground News* reporter only noted 'severe delays' being broadcast. The train moved off at 07.35 in slow speed, detraining at Belsize Park on the way and reaching Golders Green depot at 08.30. This must surely count as a 'suspension' in anyone's language? The second took place at Chalk Farm southbound at 17.45, with a train unable to switch to TBTC mode. In this case the service was 'suspended' between Edgware and Camden Town. The train moved off in slow speed, arriving at Camden Town at 18.25 and Mornington Crescent some 10 minutes later. There it was reversed south to north and left at 18.50 for Golders Green depot. Problems were exacerbated with a signal failure at Hampstead and a defective train at Kentish Town. But with no recorded cancellations, both problems must have caused megga congestion during their respective periods.

Saturday 15 March was uneventful until the evening when, at 19.15, passenger action on an eastbound Central Line train at Leytonstone suspended the service between there and Hainault in the inner rail direction only. Other eastbound trains were able to run via middle platform 2 with Hainault trains diverted to run via Woodford. Services resumed at 19.50. A person trackside on the southbound Jubilee Line at Baker Street suspended the service between Finchley Road and Waterloo from 21.50 to 22.15.

The only incident of note on **Sunday 16 March** was a points failure at Elephant & Castle from 10.55, suspending the Bakerloo Line service south of Lambeth North. One train was stalled on the approach to Elephant & Castle which was authorised to return to Lambeth North, arriving at 11.20. Once the problem had been identified and then repaired, services resumed at 13.40 but with only one platform available at Elephant & Castle. In consequence, a number of trains remained cancelled for the rest of the day, varying between five and nine.

Monday 17 March began with a fire alarm activation at London Bridge, which closed the LU station from 06.15 to 07.05. Two separate signal failure on the District Line disrupted the morning peak – westbound at Westminster from 08.45 and eastbound at South Kensington from 08.55. In the case of the latter, two trains were stalled between stations for over 20 minutes. The Piccadilly Line was suspended between King's Cross and Hyde Park Corner from 21.00 because of a passenger on the track at Holborn. It took some coaxing to get the person off the track and services eventually resumed at 21.30.

Tuesday 18 March began with points failing at Gloucester Road from 07.15, suspending the District and Circle lines through the area, on the eastbound approaches and back onto the Wimbledon and Ealing/Richmond branches. Six trains were stalled between stations because of the large number of trains involved, with services resuming at 08.15. The District Line then had a disturbed evening peak in the westbound direction from 16.55 when a train at Temple was commandeered by the police to transport a large number of football supporters to Fulham Broadway, causing a 20-minute delay. One train was stalled between Mansion House and Blackfriars for some 15 minutes. The Metropolitan and Piccadilly lines were suspended through Rayners Lane from 20.30 to 21.05 because of two signals failing on the westbound approach. The Piccadilly Line suffered a further 20-minute stand from 21.20 with the same problem.

Wednesday 19 March was thus:

- Caledonian Road station closed 06.00 to 06.35 – lift defects.
- Warwick Avenue station closed 15.40 to 16.20 – item caught up in escalator with the other escalator out of service for maintenance.
- Maida Vale station closed 17.30 to 18.50 – local power failure.
- Network Rail signal failure at Richmond – 25-minute suspension from 21.45 and a further 60-minute suspension from 22.25.

Thursday 20 March offered the following:

- Southbound City branch of the Northern Line suspended 07.35 to 08.20 – defective train at Angel. The train moved off in slow speed to Moorgate, where it regained full line speed.

- Regent's Park station closed 06.55 to 10.35 – power supply issues.
- Piccadilly Line suspended Hyde Park Corner – King's Cross 10.15 to 10.55 – multiple signal failure eastbound between Covent Garden and Holborn.
- District and Hammersmith & City lines suspended through Aldgate East 20.40 to 21.15 – passenger ill on a westbound H&C train. Service recovery on the H&C and Circle lines was hampered by a Circle Line train stalled at Aldgate for 20 minutes from 22.00.
- Central Line suspended White City – Marble Arch 21.35 to 22.05 – defective eastbound train at Shepherd's Bush. Despite Shepherd's Bush being just one station from the previous 'controlled' signalling area, three eastbound trains managed to become stalled in the tunnel behind the incident train.

On **Friday 21 March** a passenger who had fallen onto the track at Hammersmith resulted in the District Line to Ealing Broadway and Richmond being suspended from 15.20 to 16.05. A person reported trackside at Finchley Road at 18.25 suspended the Metropolitan Line south of Wembley Park and the Jubilee Line between Waterloo and Willesden Green. Two northbound Metropolitan and two northbound Jubilee Line trains were stalled between stations, reaching platforms between 18.50 and 19.00, after which services resumed.

Saturday 22 March saw a number of cancellations on the Victoria Line throughout the day because of a shortage of Train Operators, this peaking at six trains by mid-evening. A fire in a main line equipment room at Walthamstow Central just before 21.00 resulted in the station closing and trains running empty between there and Blackhorse Road until 22.15.

It is also reported (in the *Evening Standard* on 24 March) that "A Tube driver has been arrested after allegedly being drunk in charge of a train. The 50-year-old man was at the controls of a northbound Jubilee Line train on Saturday. Sources said he had had been due to take a break and be replaced by a new driver at Wembley Park part way through his shift. But he did not get out of the train until several stations later. At that point a colleague smelled alcohol on his breath and the police were called. He was arrested (at Queensbury) after failing to provide a breath sample and is currently suspended from duty But being drunk in charge of a Tube train could result in criminal charges and instant dismissal from the job".

A train radio communications problem affected several lines from the start of traffic on **Sunday 23 March** with services on some sections starting up later than scheduled. These were:

- Metropolitan, Circle, Hammersmith & City lines – all lines suspended until 07.30.
- Bakerloo Line – whole line suspended until 07.45.
- Piccadilly Line suspended west of South Harrow until 07.35.
- District Line suspended High Street Kensington – Edgware Road until 07.30.

A signal failure westbound at Northfields suspended the Heathrow branch of the Piccadilly Line from 15.30 until 16.05. Service recovery was then hindered by a SPAD for 30 minutes westbound at Acton Town from 16.05 which was followed by signal failures on the Heathrow Terminal 4 loop and eastbound at Holloway Road.

The Central Line had a disturbed morning peak on **Monday 24 March**, beginning with a signal track circuit failure at Hainault from the start of traffic, preventing the service via Newbury Park from starting up until 06.15. Another track circuit failure at West Ruislip from 06.50 resulted in departing trains having to proceed in restricted manual mode towards Ruislip Gardens, but suspended west of Ruislip Gardens (and the service thinned between there and North Acton) from 07.10 until 09.05. The failure of the eastbound starting signal at South Kensington from 13.55 resulted in the inner rail Circle Line being suspended, with a reduced District Line service continuing, with trains being authorised past the offending signal until clear at 15.30, when the Circle Line resumed.

Tuesday 25 March was thus:

- 20-minute late start to westbound Central Line through Leytonstone – signal failure following overnight work.
- Richmond branch of the District Line suspended 12.55 to 13.30 – Network Rail signal failure at Richmond.
- Northbound Northern Line via the City suspended 09.20 to 09.55 – defective train at Bank, which was worked forward empty and stabled in the Euston loop.

- Northern Line suspended north of Golders Green from 10.25 – person under a southbound train at Colindale. One train stalled approaching Colindale returned to Burnt Oak by 11.10, with services resuming at 11.20. Service recovery was hampered by a simultaneous signal failure at Camden Town from 10.25, which had cleared by 11.00.
- Defective S7 train eastbound at Moorgate at 14.30 caused an initial 15-minute delay but in turn created a 30-minute gap to the H&C Barking service.

Wednesday 26 March began with a signal failure on the northbound Barnet branch at Camden Town at 06.50, causing two separate stop delays of 15 and 20 minutes with normal signalling by 07.35. The Victoria Line's morning peak was disrupted by a defective northbound train at Stockwell from 07.50, with the train intermittently losing full speed. Having reached Oxford Circus by 08.15 it was detrained and sent empty to depot. Eastbound Central Line trains non-stopped Bank from 20.55 to 21.35 because of a person ill on the platform.

The Victoria Line had a 30-minute late start on **Thursday 27 March** because of incomplete overnight re-railing work at Seven Sisters. A signalling problem westbound at Earl's Court at 06.45 resulted in platform 3 being taken out of use for the rest of the day from 09.42, with all trains having to work via platform 4. Train 121 (7096+7003) stayed in platform.3 in consequence until close of traffic! This caused a considerable amount of congestion and a number of trains were cancelled in consequence. An eastbound train stalled between Chancery Lane and St. Paul's from 10.55, which suspended the Central Line between Marble Arch and Leytonstone until 11.30 while the offending train was worked to Liverpool Street sidings. The day ended with Regent's Park station closing from 23.50 to the end of traffic because of power supply issues.

The closure of Holloway Road station from 05.55 to 06.20 because of a fire alarm activated kicked off events for **Friday 28 March**. A SPAD by a southbound train approaching Lambeth North at 18.45 suspended the Bakerloo Line south of Piccadilly Circus until 19.10. Those two incidents apart, the day was otherwise uneventful.

Westbound District Line trains were diverted through Circle Line platform 2 at Gloucester Road throughout **Saturday 29 March** because of a defect on points found overnight. At 14.40 points failing at Harrow South Junction suspended the Metropolitan Line from Wembley Park to Uxbridge, Watford and Rickmansworth, trapping one train at the outer home signal on the northbound local line until 15.15. Services resumed at 15.30.

Sunday 30 March was as follows:

- District and Circle lines suspended through High Street Kensington from 11.05 – signal failure. One stalled outer rail Circle Line train was authorised to return towards the crossover to Gloucester Road. The Circle Line resumed at 11.55, only to be suspended again from 12.25, but with both lines resuming at 12.45.
- Piccadilly Line suspended Acton Town – Northfields 12.05 to 12.30 – points failure Acton Town east sidings (already suspended Acton Town – Hammersmith for weekend engineering work).
- Central Line suspended Liverpool Street – Marble Arch 16.35 to 17.55 – person under a westbound train at Chancery Lane. This resulted in some 23 trains being cancelled by early evening.

On **Monday 31 March**, Bond Street station closed from 07.05 to 07.35 because of a fire alarm activated with both lines non-stopping in consequence. A Network Rail signal failure at Richmond at 09.10 suspended the Richmond branch of the District Line until 10.15. One westbound train stalled approaching Richmond was authorised to return to Kew Gardens, arriving at 09.35. Signal track circuit failures at North Acton (from 14.40) and Northolt (from 14.50) caused grief for the Central Line during the afternoon. Although both were fixed by 16.05 there were still a total of 11 trains cancelled for the evening peak. The day (and month!) ended with two notable incidents. The first was a power surge at 22.22 affecting five separate power supply locations, all of which required equipment to be reset. Services were suspended as follows:

- Bakerloo Line south of Lambeth North until 00.35.
- Victoria Line south of Stockwell until 23.45 (with trains running empty between Stockwell and Brixton).
- District Line Parsons Green – Wimbledon until 23.00 and Turnham Green – Richmond until 23.50.
- Waterloo & City Line until 22.50.

Several stations were affected by the power surge and had to close, reopening at 23.10 (Borough), 23.40 (Putney Bridge), 23.45 (Brixton), 24.00 (Southfields) and 00.25 (Elephant & Castle). Charing Cross remained closed until the end of traffic. The second incident was a bridge strike at East Putney at 00.40 (on Tuesday morning, in Monday's traffic day), suspending the District Line west of Parsons Green until the close of traffic.