# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE** | **Anti-Social Behaviour on our Rail Network Ministerial Statement** |
| **DATE** | **13 February 2020** |
| **BY** | **Ken Skates AM, Minister for Economy, Transport and North Wales** |

Today I visited staff at TfW to learn about their experiences of working within rail. Whilst I am aware that the vast majority of rail passengers experience journeys that are safe and without incident, I was saddened to hear that instances of anti-social behaviour and assaults are increasing across our rail network. The issue of passengers and staff’s safety is a key focus for this Government, and no one should have to deal with any abuse or anti-social behaviour on our rail network.

A review of reported incidents shows that approximately 85% of them occur on our trains, where it is not possible to provide universal coverage of Police and Security personnel. In the last year alone there have been nearly 350 reported accounts of physical or verbal abuse against staff on trains. Whilst this is a small number in compared with overall passenger journeys made, the implications and effect on mental wellbeing of staff and passenger can be significant. Such incidents should not be tolerated.

Everyone has the right to work or travel on our network without the fear of abuse or threats. The staff who are there to help us all are our family and friends. These are the people we socialise with, the people we enjoy being with and the people who are working hard to get us from A to B, often in difficult circumstances.

We must stamp out anti-social behaviour and do everything we can to support passengers and staff to do their jobs and to make their journeys in a safe and pleasant environment.

Trains are confined areas, and when anti-social behaviour spills onto our trains they can become incredibly intimidating environments for customers and staff. Our trains should be safe environments that everyone can use no matter what time of the day or where they travel.

I am proud of all the hard work Transport for Wales, Network Rail and the British Transport Police do in making our network safe. This Government took a significant step towards ensuring passenger safety by committing during the procurement that there will be a second person on every train in the Wales & Borders rail service. Services such as British Transport Police’s 61016 text messaging service are also an important tool allowing passengers to report incidents quietly over text to help make our network safer.

The introduction of additional security personnel, focused staff training as well as British Transport Police support will help decrease this trend, but I am aware that more can be done.

In Government, we recognise that the current programme for protecting passengers and staff will not reduce the number of incidents unless we take a different approach. I am aware that TfW have held workshops in North and South Wales with front line teams to better train and address concerns. These workshops included operational staff, Trade Union representatives and experts from Railway Safety Standards Board and British Transport Police to find a more robust solution to deter anti-social behaviour.

From those workshops came several workstreams to support the further reduction of anti-social behaviour including Body Worn Cameras, a Communication Programme and Incident management and action.

As a result, I am pleased to inform members that TfW will implement (through guidance from the British Transport Police) a Body Worn Camera strategy with the intent to act as a robust deterrent to antisocial behaviour, support assault prosecutions, and boost public confidence with cameras acting as a deterrent

TfW have now deployed a Body Worn Camera trial using cameras and software supplied from four industry leaders. These trials will be held in Machynlleth, Holyhead, Cardiff and Carmarthen. TfW are using different types of cameras and technology to identify the best supplier. Each camera and software will be assessed on a variety of operational factors.

Once this trial concludes TfW will review the findings and then work towards rolling out the introduction of body worn cameras to all train staff. I will inform members of the outcome of these trials.