Dear Humza,

Thank you for your letter of 6 December, further to our broader meeting in October, in which you set out your aspirations for the British Transport Police in Scotland.

I am happy to confirm that the UK Government will continue to actively work with the Scottish Government to put in place arrangements which will ensure a seamless policing service for cross border passengers and operators, and ensure that the effective and efficient policing of these routes is maintained once the responsibility for policing is split between the British Transport Police and Police Scotland. Our officials are already working closely and constructively on a range of matters to give effect to this policy, and will continue to do so.

The Joint Programme Board established by the two Governments to provide joint leadership and partnership working, in order to deliver the objectives of the UK and Scottish governments for the devolution of policing of railways and railway property, is working well.

I fully agree the need to consider and address command and control, jurisdiction and operational policing issues. The Section 90 and Section 104 Orders will, as you say, provide the mechanism for doing so, though operating protocols will also ensure that the border does not present a barrier to the effective and seamless policing of the railway. There are of course a host of other issues which will also need to be addressed, not least the terms of transfer of BTP assets and the arrangements for transferring officers and staff to Police Scotland, which will be critical to securing an effective and orderly transfer.
I would also add the importance of ensuring that, as the work progresses, appropriate account is taken of the implications for the policing of the railway across the whole of the UK, ensuring as far as possible that there is no detriment either to Scotland or the rest of Great Britain from the proposed approach.

Your war

[Signature]

PAUL MAYNARD