



## Storm Doris

### The challenge

Storm Doris was well forecast to hit parts of the UK on 23rd February 2017 and much of the country was prepared to face not only severe weather but also some serious travel disruptions.

For the team at First Travel Solutions (FTS), the build up to the storm actually started on the 22nd February with some train operating companies (TOCs) requesting contingency standby coaches to combat the forecasted disruption across the various rail networks.

They were right to be so well prepared as Storm Doris blew in with a vengeance as per the weather forecast.

### The solution

On the 23rd February when Storm Doris hit the UK, the first request for emergency transport came into the control room at 06.47 on behalf of Great Western Railway (GWR).

This very much set the tone for what was to be an exceptionally busy day for the team at FTS. Knowing this was going to be the case the control room at FTS was fully manned and operational with additional resource drafted in to assist. This really was a case of the team getting their sleeves rolled up and mucking in to provide transport support for a significant amount of customers.

During the day, over 50 requests for coach transportation were received, totalling 233 coaches for a multitude of clients including London Midland, GTR and Arriva Trains Wales.



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Other TOCs also requested coaches to cover their own particular disruptions and due to major flight disruptions across the country, coaches were being utilised to convoy passengers between airports.

Whilst the team at FTS were at full stretch dealing with emergency requests being made throughout the day, they still had to ensure they were tracking and monitoring all their pre-planned coach work.

In addition to all this, FTS staff also had 136 pre-planned taxi journeys to track. The major weather disruption across the UK resulted in the team at FTS recruiting an additional 146 emergency taxis. This was mainly for

Transpennine Express and easyJet to ensure their train and air crews reached their destinations safely and on time.

## The result

Over the course of the 23rd February, the team at FTS recruited a total of 381 emergency vehicles for customers.

This ensured the vast majority of people reached their destination safely and on time.

As the weather related disruption continued, it was clear coach drivers' hours were becoming a real problem, with the legal driving time for many drivers expiring.

This became evident when the FTS control room received a further request for 37 coaches and drivers late on 23rd February to start at 05:30 on 24th February.

These were requested by London Midland services that had been effected by damage caused by Storm Doris. Many drivers had to take their legal break but the team at FTS successfully recruited

23 emergency vehicles and drivers in the early hours of the 24th February who could commence work at 05:30 and onwards ensuring London Midland's emergency request was delivered.

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