Testing Timetables - guidelines and help for beginners.

Firstly, thankyou for looking to see what's involved testing timetables for PC-Rail Simulations. We hope the following notes will explain the process of downloading, testing and reporting your findings.

The Yahoo Testers Group

To be able to test timetables you need to be a member of the Timetable Testing forum which is hosted on Yahoo similar to the PC-Rail group. This group is used to send testing reports which enables the author and other testers to see what is happening and can avoid duplication of issues.

The author keeps a master copy of the timetable, sending revised versions as appropriate.

The testing group can only be joined through invite only. Details of how to join this will be sent via a separate email from the Group. Once you have read through these notes and are happy to proceed I'll send an invite to join the testers group. Once you have joined 'log on' and have a look through the various sections.

To check what timetables are being tested, written or pending, visit the files section and check the testing status file. The top section lists all the timetables currently under test and what version is being tested. Version one is the first one tested and once reports have been received over say a couple of weeks, the timetable amended by the author and uploaded again, it will become version 2 and so on. Once all is well and testers are happy it will be released.

Testing is usually carried out at Level 5 (but see below) and the default setting for punctuality margin of 2 minutes is permissible.

Timetable files are e.mailed directly or via the Yahoo Group thus you need to have a registered version of the appropriate simulation to run it. Generally it is wise to test one timetable at a time but there are no hard and fast rules about this.

Testing and reporting.

Run through the timetable (at level 5 if possible although it may be necessary to run at higher levels during quiet periods) and make any notes covering :

- Conflicts with other trains/platforms.
- Unable to run trains to time.
- Confusing notes.
- Spelling Mistakes in notes.

The format of the notes section should correspond to the details in guidelines for notes, also found in the files section. (accessible once you have joined the group).
There are also notes on this in the guide to creating your own timetables at
http://www.pcrailservices.co.uk/create.htm

Avoid sending a report as soon as you have found an error (unless deemed a programme error) but try to work though a couple of hours or so of the timetable or more depending on what time you have available. Some of the previous messages on the group will give you a good idea on the style and content.

If unsure please ask.