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THE SUNDAY TIMES

Train bosses on top salaries as fares rise

David Rankin Published: 17 February 2013



TRAIN

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company bosses are earning six figure salaries at a time when rail passengers are enduring above-inflation fare rises, latest figures have revealed.

Freedom of Information requests sent to all train operating companies asked how many executives were taking home salaries at that level or above.

Only the public-sector run East Coast line revealed its figures, with others not obliged to do so because they are privately-run.

At East Coast, six executives earned salaries of £100,000 a year or more. Manuel Cortes, leader of the TSSA rail union, said: "One of the reasons we have the highest rail fares in Europe is because we have created an army of Fat Controllers since John Major sold off British Rail 20 years ago.

“Then we had one Fat Controller on a modest salary. Now we have dozens, some of whom are paid more than £1m a year for running regional monopolies at the expense of both the passenger and the taxpayer.

“These people are laughing all the way to the bank while the rest of us fund their private gravy train.”

Only one company, CrossCountry, offered any pay details without a Freedom of Information request.

Its information, covering 2011, showed the highest paid director, thought to be managing director Andy Cooper, was on £220,000 a year, including pension contributions.

Transport for London’s 2011/12 annual report showed 30 bosses on the £14.8bn Crossrail project were earning more than £100,000 a year.

Bob Crow, general secretary of the transport union the RMT, said: “It’s scandalous that the only train operator disclosing top bosses’ salaries is the publically-owned East Coast, while the private train companies hide behind a veil of secrecy as they bleed passengers dry.

“You can bet your boots that the reason they want to lurk in the shadows and hide behind the cloak of commercial confidentiality is because they are milking it and they know there would be public outcry.

“Compare that to the cleaners on Arriva Trains Wales on basic minimum wage currently balloting for action for a fair deal. That’s the shocking reality of the haves and have-nots on Britain’s railways.”

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