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From the Minister of State
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9th October, 2019.

Lilian,

Effects of modes of train operation on disabled passengers

In late 2016, the Transport Select Committee recommended that the Department and the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) jointly commission research into the potential effects of driver-only operations (DOO) on the “turn up and go” accessibility of the railway to disabled people who require assistance getting on and off trains. It further recommended that the Department draw on this research to produce guidance to train operating companies on the measures that should be taken to mitigate potential detrimental effects on disabled people’s access.

Together with the Rail Delivery Group, who as you are aware have since replaced ATOC, DfT commissioned Steer consultants to conduct research into the effects of different modes of train operations on disabled passengers, in relation to both spontaneous travel and pre-booked assistance. It was intended that covering all modes would provide the fullest view of the issues that need to be addressed in order to facilitate a better service for disabled people. Steer were also commissioned to recommend measures that could mitigate any potential detrimental effects of any of the modes of train operations, and produce good practice guidance for train operators based on the recommendations.

This work was completed earlier this year and a copy of the report and draft guidance are attached to this letter. The research found that there were no significant differences in passengers’ overall satisfaction based on mode of operation. Similarly, levels of satisfaction do not vary significantly between different station staffing levels. The most important influences on overall satisfaction were the ease of getting around the station, boarding and alighting the train, information at the station and the helpfulness of staff both at the station and on the train.

Whilst the Department does not consider the report to be a definitive assessment of the effects of different modes of operation and recognises there are some limits to its robustness, it provides useful findings as a basis for further investigation and in particular an indication of areas where industry efforts should be focused in order to ensure disabled passengers receive a satisfactory service. Ministers met with members of the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC) in June to discuss their views of the documents and explore what further work could be carried out in this area.

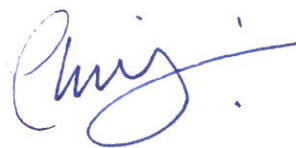
DfT and the RDG are continuing to work across the industry to ensure operators are as well placed as possible to support all passengers who need assistance to travel, whether it is booked in advance or not.

Also attached to this letter is a copy of a letter from the Department's Permanent Secretary to the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee which sets out recent progress in this area, as well as other activity which is planned or underway to make the railways more accessible.

Making sure everybody is able to travel by train easily and with the support they need remains a key priority of the Department, and we will continue to work with industry partners and other stakeholders to deliver the important commitments made in last year's Inclusive Transport Strategy.

Personally I believe there is a lot more we can and should be doing to ensure accessibility is not something we, as a rail industry, have to think about, but is part of our DNA. There are certainly lessons to be learnt from this report, but this is a step in the right direction.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Chris Heaton-Harris MP
Minister of State for Transport



Department
for Transport

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From the Permanent Secretary

Web site : www.dft.gov.uk

4th September 2019

Meg Hillier MP
Chair, Committee of Public Accounts
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

Dear Meg,

Progress on improving the accessibility of the railways for disabled people.

In the Department's response to your Committee's report on rail management and timetabling¹ earlier this year, we committed to write to you, together with the rail regulator, the Office of Rail and Road (ORR), setting out the progress the Department has made to improve rail accessibility since the publication of the Inclusive Transport Strategy in July 2018. We also committed to provide an update on monitoring performance with regards to the accessibility of the rail network which the regulator has responsibility for.

As you may be aware, over the past two years the ORR has consulted extensively on the key areas for improvement of assisted travel. On 27 July, the ORR published Accessible Travel Policy guidance² for train and station operators, which replaces the Disabled People's Protection Policy. The guidance includes several strengthened requirements that will make the rail network more accessible for disabled and older passengers. The ORR will be writing to the Committee shortly to provide an update on the guidance and on how it will monitor and enforce train and station operators' performance in relation to their licence obligation to have in place and implement an Accessible Travel Policy.

Turning to action by the Department, on 8 July, Nusrat Ghani MP, as Minister with responsibility for accessibility across all transport modes, made a written statement to the House of Commons to mark the one-year anniversary since

¹ <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmpublic/1793/179302.htm>

² https://orr.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/41517/accessible-travel-policy-guidance-for-train-and-station-operators.pdf

the publication of the Inclusive Transport Strategy³. As it sets out, whilst a relatively short period of time has passed since the publication of the Strategy, we have already reached some significant milestones and continue to make progress in delivering the Strategy's commitments.

A key achievement has been the announcement in April 2019 of the 73 stations that will benefit from the additional £300 million we committed in the Strategy to extend the Access for All programme. The improvement works at these stations will be carried out between 2019 and 2024. On 8 July, the Department also announced the relaunch of the Mid-Tier Access for All programme, to fund smaller-scale works which boost accessibility at stations, using £20 million of the available funding. The Access for All programme was launched in 2006 and has installed accessible, step free routes at over 200 stations, with another 1,500 stations benefiting from smaller scale access improvements.

The Department is closely monitoring rail industry progress towards the 31 December 2019 accessibility standards⁴ deadline. Accessible rail vehicles are a key part of making the network accessible and good progress has been made over the last decade with high numbers of vehicles being refurbished or replaced. The mandatory accessibility standards cover the design and function of a range of features such as doors and door controls/ warnings, priority seating, wheelchair spaces, handholds and handrails, among others.

We know improvements to infrastructure are essential but they are only part of the picture. To coincide with the anniversary of the Strategy, we published research⁵ on the experiences of disabled rail passengers which was conducted in collaboration with Transport Focus. The research looked at the end-to-end journey experiences for disabled people who travel by rail, and we are using the findings from it to inform the changes we are working with the industry to make across the network.

The Department has been working closely with the Rail Delivery Group (RDG), the membership body for all rail operators, to support the delivery of several initiatives to provide a better service for disabled passengers. In April 2019, the RDG launched a new interactive 'Access Map'⁶, which enables disabled passengers to find out in one place how accessible stations across the country are. This means they can more easily plan their journeys according to their needs, removing some of the uncertainty that passengers

³ <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2019-07-08/debates/1907088000015/InclusiveTransportStrategy>

⁴ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014R1300&from=EN>
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/432/contents/made>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/experiences-of-disabled-rail-passengers>

⁶ <http://accessmap.nationalrail.co.uk/>

facing a new journey can feel and helping to boost their confidence to travel by train.

The RDG is also making significant improvements to the Passenger Assist scheme to ensure the provision of reliable, high-quality assistance for disabled passengers where they need it. The industry body is upgrading the systems used by booking centres and station staff to speed up bookings for assistance and to increase reliability. Supported by the Department, the RDG is also leading a project to deliver a Passenger Assist application for the wider travelling public, due to be available in Summer 2020. The app will enable customers to book, change and cancel assistance quickly and will mean they do not have to provide information about their individual requirements each time they book. The RDG recently held an accessibility drop-in session at the Houses of Parliament which was attended by a number of Peers and Members, to showcase how the rail industry is working together to address some of the challenges of accessibility, including the changes to Passenger Assist, and to raise awareness of the various initiatives and offers that are currently available.

One in four disabled people say negative attitudes from other passengers prevent them from using public transport. To address this, the Department is working closely with disabled stakeholder groups and key influencers to develop a marketing campaign aimed at increasing disabled people's confidence to use public transport.

Due to launch in 2019, the campaign will target three key audiences: the travelling public, disabled people and transport operators as we seek to increase awareness of disabled people's needs, particularly those with non-visible disabilities. We will reamplify existing messaging that seeks to promote disabled rights, concessionary cards and passenger assistance alongside increased understanding of hate crime.

The Department is working closely with the RDG and the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC), independent statutory advisers to the Department on transport access for disabled people, to review the eligibility criteria for the Disabled Persons Railcard, which will include exploring how we can improve the provision for companions and carers. Research to support the review has been commissioned and is now underway. The review is expected to be completed by the end of 2019. The Public Accounts Committee will be interested to know that there has been an increase in the of holders of Disabled Passenger Railcard; with 239,000 Disabled Persons Railcards⁷ in circulation, up by 7.4% on a year ago. In November 2018, the industry introduced the first ever impartial and independent Rail Ombudsman to investigate and rule on unresolved passenger complaints, thereby helping to make sure passengers are heard

⁷ <https://dataportal.orr.gov.uk/media/1256/dprc-factsheet-2018-19.pdf>

and that they get a fair deal when train companies fall short. Disabled passengers who are dissatisfied with the service they have been provided with, including where assistance has failed, should in the first instance complain to the service provider but if dissatisfied with that response they can now take their case to the Ombudsman.

In September 2018, the Williams Rail Review was established to look at the structure of the whole rail industry and the way passenger rail services are delivered. Accessibility of the rail network is a focus for the Review, and the Review team is considering the needs and priorities of disabled passengers in its work and identifying how accessibility can be improved for everyone. In the Inclusive Transport Strategy, we committed to introducing a number of new accessibility requirements in future franchises where these are not already required by the ORR as a result of their revised Accessible Travel Policy guidance. While the Williams Review is ongoing, we are looking for opportunities to introduce the new requirements in Direct Awards and future franchise replacements.

We hope you find this update helpful. The ORR's further update to you which will follow will provide a fuller picture of the importance being placed on accessibility right across the industry to ensure that disabled people have the same access to rail as everyone else. We acknowledge that there is still a lot more to do and our Department will continue to work with disabled people's organisations, train operators, and industry partners to achieve progress in this area.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bernadette Kelly". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

Bernadette Kelly CB
Permanent Secretary

Effects of modes of train operations on passengers with disabilities

Effects of modes of train operations on passengers with disabilities

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Executive Summary

Steer was commissioned by the Department for Transport (DfT) and the Rail Delivery Group (RDG) as a specialist rail technical advisor to conduct research into the effects of different modes of train operations (in England and Wales) on passengers with disabilities; both on spontaneous travel, and on pre-booked assistance.

Market research was conducted at a range of stations encompassing the four primary modes of operation¹ and a range of passenger disabilities. This market research was supported by qualitative interviews and a literature review.

Around half of passengers with mobility difficulties were looking for some type of assistance during their journey, primarily with boarding and alighting. Across all modes of operation, around 94% of all mobility impaired and 97% of respondents did obtain assistance, leaving a relatively small number of instances where assistance was not received from staff.

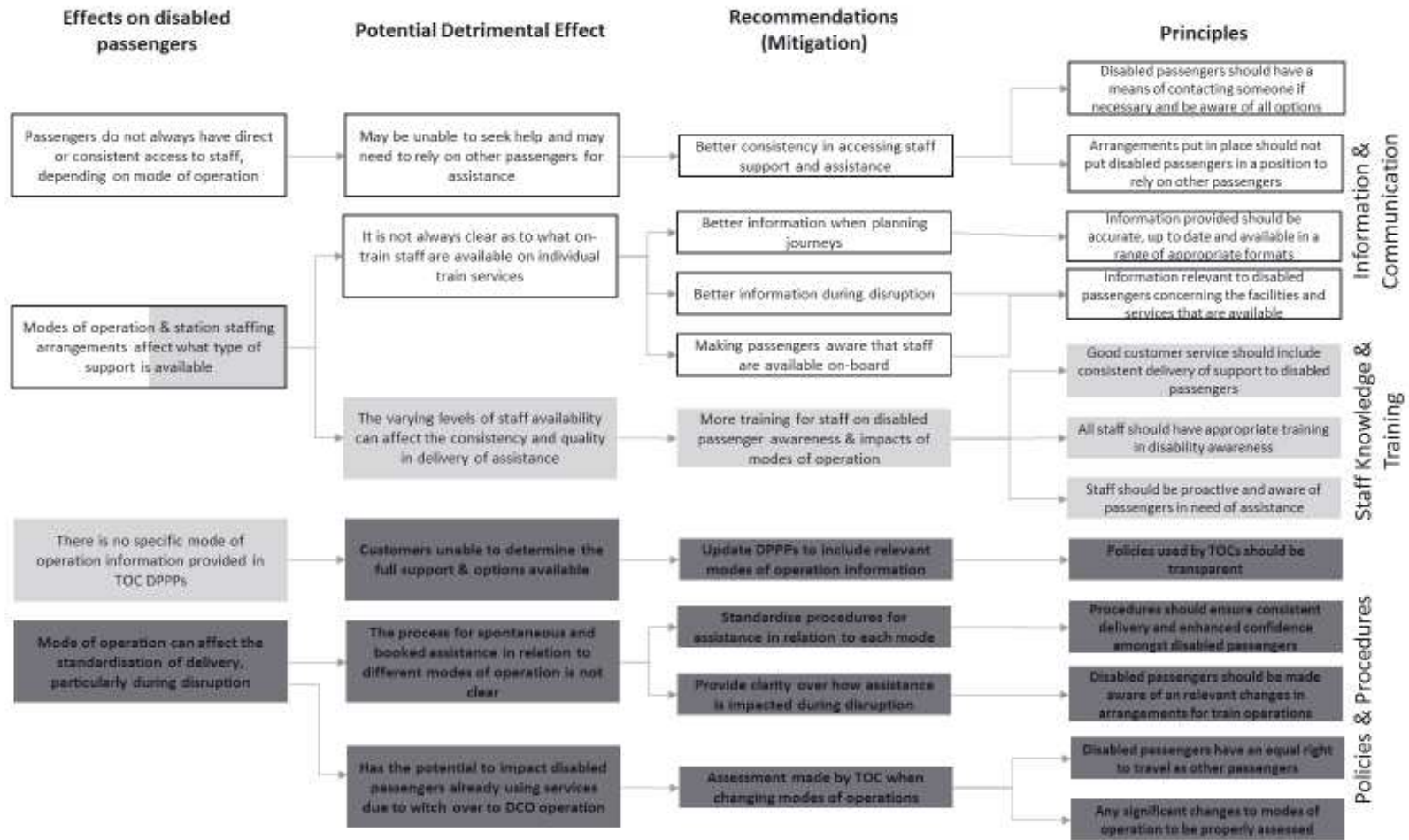
A majority (two thirds) of passengers were travelling alone and 1% travelled with a helper. Overall, just 4% pre-booked assistance with their journey. Our research indicated that there is a relatively low level of awareness amongst passengers that they could book journey assistance.

There were no significant differences in satisfaction by mode of operation with between 80 and 83% of respondents giving a good or excellent rating. The most important influences on overall satisfaction were the ease of getting around the station, getting on and off the train, information at the station and the helpfulness of staff at the station and on the trains. All these factors have a greater influence than the mode of operation of the train.

The industry should identify and deploy an approach to address the concerns identified by disabled passengers identified in the research. These mitigations need to be consistent across all stations and all modes of operation, since all modes of operation offer similar challenges to disabled passengers. The mitigations are summarised in the flow chart below and broadly summarised into three areas: information and communication; staff knowledge and training and policies and procedures.

¹ Driver Guard operation (DGO/G), Driver Controlled Operation (DCO), Driver / Guard Operation (DGO (D)) and Driver Only Operation (DOO)

Effects of Modes of Operation - Creation of Principles



1 Introduction

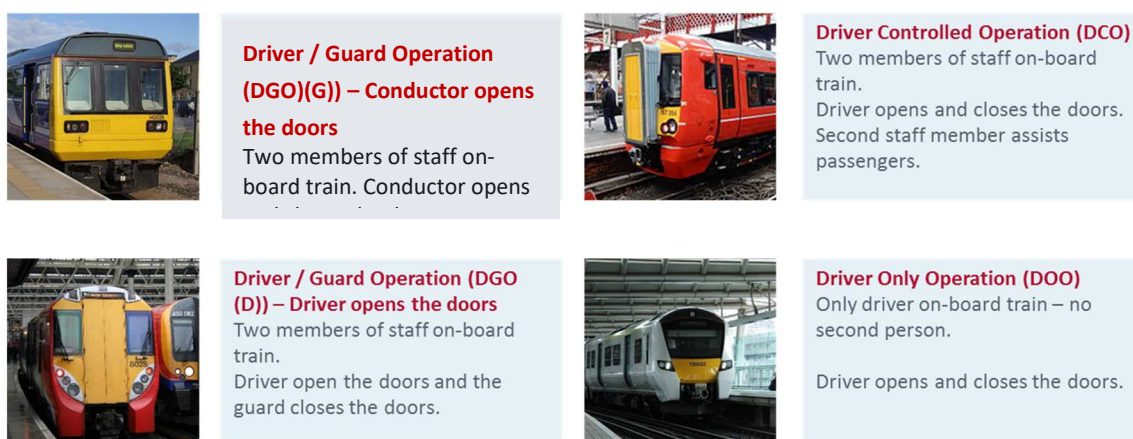
- 1.1 Steer was commissioned by the Department for Transport (DfT) and the Rail Delivery Group (RDG) as a specialist rail technical advisor to conduct research into the effects of different modes of train operations (in England and Wales) on passengers with disabilities; both on spontaneous travel², and on pre-booked assistance. The key output of this project in the Terms of Reference was a detailed report providing:
- details of the effects that Driver Only Operation has on passengers with disabilities; when travelling spontaneously or on pre-booked travel;
 - to the extent that it is not already happening, recommend measures that could mitigate any detrimental effects of different modes of train operations on disabled rail users; in respect of the relevant applicable legal and contractual framework and the adoption of best practice; and
 - a guidance document to be issued in the name of the Department for Transport and Rail Delivery Group to Train Operating Companies based on the findings and recommendations of this research.
- 1.2 The brief included the following work streams:
- Work Stream A: Data Collection and Review.
 - Collect and review sample data of disabled travellers who require assistance and have taken a spontaneous or pre-booked journey; and
 - Conduct a literature review of related research.
 - Work Stream B: Findings and recommendations.
 - Use the findings of data collected and reviewed to make recommendations.
 - Work Stream C: Production of a guidance document.
 - Use the findings and recommendations to produce a guidance document.
- 1.3 This report describes our activity and conclusions, including an overview of our proposed guidance document.

² In this introduction we used the word 'spontaneous' because that was the word used in the Terms of Reference. For the rest of this report, we have used the term 'spontaneous' to refer to passengers requiring assistance but who have not requested this in advance. We use the more general term 'unbooked assistance' to include both such spontaneous passengers and passengers who do not request assistance.

2 The modes of operation

- 2.1 In order to support our comparison of the effects of different modes on disabled passengers, we reviewed the state of play in the rail sector in England and Wales and the categories of modes of operation. There are differences in the effect that each mode of operation has on how passengers with disabilities are able to board and alight from trains at stations.
- 2.2 We identified four different modes of operation. These are summarised in Figure 2.1, and discussed in more detail below.

Figure 2.1: Types of operation



- 2.3 In this chapter, and those following, we have adopted the term ‘second staff member’ (SSM) as a collective term for any on-train staff, including a Conductor³, but excluding staff such as dedicated revenue protection or catering staff. When referring specifically to a Conductor who has responsibility for working of the train, we use that more specific term.

³ The term Conductor is used in the text of the report as it is the industry standard term. However, when describing the mode of operation (for example DGO (G) or Driver / Guard Operation) the term Guard is used.

Driver / Guard Operation – Guard opens door: DGO (G)

2.4 This mode is currently in use by the following operators:

- Northern: All routes
- Transpennine Express: All routes
- Greater Anglia: Rural and Regional services, Norwich to London Express Services
- Arriva Trains Wales: All routes
- Great Western Railway: All routes except for local Thames Valley services some services to Oxford/Bedwyn
- Merseyrail: All routes
- East Midlands Trains: All routes
- West Midlands Trains: All routes not operated by Class 350
- Chiltern: Multiple unit services north of Banbury and loco hauled services throughout
- Virgin West Coast: All services
- London North Eastern Railway: All services
- South Eastern – Medium and Long-Distance services (excluding High Speed)
- South Western Railway
- Grand Central
- Hull Trains
- West Midlands – all services
- Transport for Wales
- Cross Country: Services Operated by High Speed Train

Associated impacts on how passengers with disabilities are able to board and alight

Before the train arrives

2.5 The Conductor will be available on the train to identify any passengers requiring assistance at the next station. In some cases, however, they may not be able to access all parts of the train due to lack of corridor connections between units or when trains are extremely busy, or be able to identify and assist passengers who are not located in the vicinity of the door control panels.

Train arrives

2.6 The conductor will have made their way to a suitable place where they can safely release the doors. This might be a cab or door position with controls. Once they have done this, they should be able to immediately identify any passengers on the platform requiring assistance, however there is a chance that they are already engaged with a passenger on-board the train.

2.7 The Conductor will normally require line of sight up and down the train in order to lock the doors again before departure. This is usually done on the platform for absolute safety. If stations are only a few minutes apart, the Conductor may not be able to move far from the door control panel / rear cab meaning passengers in need of assistance on board may not be reached or noted.

Time spent on platform

2.8 The Conductor can assist passengers getting on and off the train, independent of any platform staff. This includes deploying a ramp, which is either located on the platform or on the train itself.

Train ready to depart

- 2.9 The Conductor visually inspects the platform and closes the doors, sometimes with the assistance of platform staff. Conductor remains by the door controls until the rear of the train has left the platform (looking out of a side window if available). Again, if stations are only a few minutes apart, the Conductor may not be able to move far from the door control panel / rear cab.

Once the Train has left the station

- 2.10 The Conductor will be available on the train to assist any passengers who have boarded. In some cases, though, they may not be able to access all parts of the train due to lack of corridor connections between units and/or the train being extremely busy and / or the need to return to door controls where there is only a short distance between stations.

Driver / Guard Operation – Driver opens door: DGO (D)

- 2.11 This mode is currently in use by the following operators:
- South Western Railway: All routes
 - Southern: West London Line services and all those operated by DMU or Class 313
 - Southeastern: Non-high speed mainline services operated by Class 375
 - West Midlands: All services operated Class 350
 - Cross Country: All Services Operated by Voyager Units

Associated impacts on how passengers with disabilities are able to board and alight

Before the train arrives

- 2.12 The Conductor will be available on the train to identify any passengers requiring assistance at the next station. In some cases, however, they may not be able to access all parts of the train due to lack of corridor connections between units and/or the train being extremely busy.

Train arrives

- 2.13 The driver will release the doors, once the train has stopped at the correct position. The Conductor should immediately be available to identify passengers requiring assistance on the platform, however there is a chance that they are already engaged with a passenger on-board the train.

Time spent on platform

- 2.14 The Conductor can assist passengers getting on and off the train, independent of any platform staff. This includes deploying a ramp, which is either located on the platform or on the train itself.

Train ready to depart

- 2.15 Once Conductor has finished assisting those in need, then Conductor visually inspects the platform and closes the doors, sometimes with the assistance of platform staff. Conductor remains by door controls until the rear of the train has left the platform (looking out of a side window if available).

Once the Train has left the station

- 2.16 The Conductor will be available on the train to assist any passengers who have boarded. In some cases, however, they may not be able to access all parts of the train due to lack of corridor connections between units and / or the trains being extremely busy and / or the need to return to door controls where there is only a short distance between stations.

Driver Controlled Operation: DCO

- 2.17 This mode is currently in use by the following operators:

- Southern: Most Services
- Gatwick Express: All Services
- Southeastern: High speed services

- 2.18 In England and Wales, whilst a SSM should be rostered for every service, the practice to date has been that a train may operate, in exceptional circumstances, in the absence of the SSM, commonly called on-board supervisor or train host. The conditions under which this may happen vary between operators, dependent upon the agreements reached with trade unions. There are associated impacts for how passengers with disabilities are able to board and alight, as set out below.

Associated impacts on how passengers with disabilities are able to board and alight

Before the train arrives

- 2.19 The SSM will be available on the train to identify any passengers requiring assistance at the next station. In some cases, however, they may not be able to access all parts of the train due to lack of corridor connections between units and/or the train being extremely busy.
- 2.20 However, this mode of operation offers improved opportunity to identify these passengers requiring assistance as the SSM is no longer required to turn their attention to the opening of the doors in DCO (G) mode (2.6 above) or restrict their movements to the proximity of the door panels.

Train arrives

- 2.21 The driver will release the doors, once the train has stopped at the correct position., The SSM could still be engaging with passengers on-board the train (as they will not be needed to close the doors), enabling more support to be offered to those requiring assistance with disembarking. However, it is common for SSMs to get out at each platform to identify any passengers requiring assistance to board.

Time spent on platform

- 2.22 The SSM can assist passengers getting on and off the train, independent of any platform staff. This includes deploying a ramp, which is either located on the platform or on the train itself.

Train ready to depart

- 2.23 The driver observes the doors using in-cab monitors and closes them once safe to do so. The SSM has no involvement in this process and can use this time to continue assisting passengers. Platform staff are sometimes available to advise the driver as to when the shut the doors, using batons or CD (Close Doors) /RA (Right Away) signs adjacent to signals.

Once the Train has left the station

- 2.24 The SSM will be available on the train to assist any passengers who have boarded. In some cases, though, they may not be able to access all parts of the train due to lack of corridor connections between units and / or the train being extremely busy. Unlike in DCO(G) and DCO (D) mode, however, the SSM will not need to remain within proximity to any door control panel, especially when located in the rear cab or when stations may be closely located.

Driver Only Operation: DOO

- 2.25 This mode is currently in use by the following operators

- Great Northern: All Services
- Thameslink: All services
- Greater Anglia: All services out of Liverpool Street, except Loco hauled, on the Clacton branch, on the Harwich branch and beyond Ipswich
- c2c: All services
- London Overground: All services
- GWR: Thames Valley local services, and some services to Oxford/Bedwyn
- Chiltern: Multiple unit services south of Banbury
- Heathrow Express: All services
- Southern: South London Metro services
- Southeastern: North Kent Metro and sub-urban Services with Greater London
- London Underground: All lines
- Nexus Tyne and Wear Metro

Associated impacts on how passengers with disabilities are able to board and alight

Before the train arrives

- 2.26 There will be no member of staff on the train to identify on-board passengers requiring assistance. Passengers would need to use the on-board help point if needing to speak to the driver.

Train arrives

- 2.27 The driver will release the doors, once the train has stopped at the correct position.

Time spent on platform

- 2.28 Staff will be available to assist passengers if they have pre-booked assistance or at staffed stations, if platform staff are available for spontaneous requests. The driver would not normally be expected to leave the cab to support a passenger, except in an emergency.

Train ready to depart

- 2.29 The driver observes the doors using in-cab monitors or platform based monitors and / or mirrors, and closes them once safe to do so. Platform staff are sometimes available to advise the driver as to when to shut the doors, using batons or CD (Close Doors) /RA (Right Away) signs adjacent to signals.

Once the Train has left the station

- 2.30 There will be no member of staff available on the train to assist any passengers who have boarded, except in an emergency. Passengers would need to use the on-board help point if needing to speak to the driver.

2.31 Summary tables illustrating the modes of operation can be found in Appendix A.

The role of station staff

2.32 Each of the modes have further conditions that affect how assistance is given, relating to whether there is station staff available. Staff availability at a station affects how much a train operator is in a position to provide assistance to those passengers needing it.

2.33 Whilst retail staff may be able to give general assistance to disabled passengers; platform staff are a critical resource as they can provide active assistance. The availability of such staff varies between stations. For the purposes of this study, we categorised four conditions, as set out in Table 2.1:

Effects of temporary non-availability of different staff types

2.34 The temporary non-availability of both on-board and station staff affects how operators can provide assistance to passengers:

- Driver and/or Conductor
 - The train cannot be operated without these safety critical roles and will be cancelled. This, therefore impacts equally on all passengers, whether disabled or not.
- SSM, other than Conductor
 - The train will still be able to operate, in agreed types of circumstance, because the SSM is not safety critical. The train will run under driver only operation conditions. This removes support for assistance on-train and at un-staffed locations
- Platform Staff
 - Lack of available platform staff may prevent spontaneous travel capabilities and even force booked assistance to be cancelled. This will present passengers requiring assistance with significant problems, especially if it is not communicated to them in advance.

3 Obligations placed upon operations by the legislative and guidance requirements

3.1 We undertook a literature review of the legal and operational frameworks that apply to the scope of this study, recognising the hierarchy of:

- National and European legislation;
- DfT Policy; and
- ORR Licence Conditions.

3.2 This was supported by a review of the Autumn 2017 Transport Focus National Rail Passenger Survey (NRPS), recent Transport Focus research, recent ORR research and individual TOC Disabled People’s Protection Policies.

3.3 Table 3.1 provides an overview of the documents that were researched as part of this review. This list was carefully targeted to provide a broad range of documents and to ensure that suitable knowledge can be obtained for each part of the passenger journey.

Table 3.1: Summary of texts reviewed

Area of policy	Documents reviewed
Legal and Operational Frameworks	Equality Act (2010).
	EC Rail Passenger Rights & Obligations (1371/2007).
	EC TSI:PRM (1300/2014).
	Railways (Interoperability) Regulations (2011).
	RVAR Regulations (2010).
	Design Standards for Accessible Railway Stations.
	Railway Group Standard Interface between platforms, track & trains (GI/RT7016).
	How to write your Disabled People’s Protection Policy (DPPP).
NRPS and Other Research	National Rail Passenger Survey.
	Transport Focus Research.
	ORR research.
	DfT / Disabled Persons’ Transport Advisory Committee consultation.
Operators Use of DPPPs	TOC DPPP.

3.4 The findings of our literature review can be found in Appendix B.

Impact of obligations affecting the modes of operation

3.5 Our objective in undertaking the literature review was to identify the requirements that the industry must take into account in relation to the modes of operation and their implications for journeys by disabled passengers. A key principle of the legislation is that any mitigations that are put in place must be suitable for the purpose.

3.6 Research by ComRes⁴ into the awareness of passenger assisted travel shows that passengers see being able to board and alight the train the second biggest barrier (behind platform access issues) to rail travel and it is the most frequently requested form of booked assistance. In contrast, the majority of accessibility legislation simply covers the station itself (as demonstrated by the Design Standards for Accessible Railway Stations) or design of the train itself (PRM-TSI and the previous standard - RVAR).

Lack of awareness of passenger assistance services

3.7 Recent research confirms that half of all disabled travellers were not aware of the range of booked assistance services available to them, either through Passenger Assist or for spontaneous travel (49% of respondents, as found by the ComRes research into the awareness of passenger assisted travel). This can affect what the passenger is expecting when they arrive at a station to make a journey, which may include DCO or DOO services.

Lack of certainty over presence of an onboard staff member

3.8 One of the biggest causes of anxiety for disabled passengers is the fear of not being able to get off the train at their destination. A mystery shop of turn-up-and-go travel (researched by Aecom) found that passengers are not always sure if there is (or will be) a member of staff on the train for their journey or not. This lack of certainty raises their anxiety and may prevent them from accessing particular facilities or requesting assistance for the rest of their journey.

The importance of on-train equipment

3.9 Trains operating under DOO generally don't have any staff on board (except for special cases such as revenue patrols), and trains that normally operate as DCO can, in some circumstances, operate in DOO mode. Therefore, on train equipment – especially audio-visual passenger information systems – must be properly working and displaying the correct information. Train operators must provide arrangements to ensure that equipment is consistently working and put in place appropriate mitigations if the equipment is not working.

3.10 Our key findings are summarised in tables Table 3.2 to Table 3.9. These have been broken down to the main steps of a typical passenger journey:

⁴ ORR Research into passenger awareness of assisted travel services (ComRes, 2017)

*Customer arrives at station***Table 3.2: Customer arrives at station**

Findings	Source (Document Reviewed)	Implications for this review
Operators should take reasonable steps for providing access to the station.	Equality Act 2010	Mitigation required if no staff available to meet passenger or if a station is physically inaccessible.
Passengers should be provided with information concerning the accessibility of rail services.	Rail passenger rights & obligations	Appropriate channels and tactics to ensure information is timely and up-to-date.
Station operators should provide accurate and up-to-date accessibility information.	How to write your DPPP / Draft Accessibility Action Plan	Appropriate channels and tactics to ensure information is timely and up-to-date.

*Customer met by member of staff***Table 3.3: Customer met by member of staff**

Findings	Source (Document Reviewed)	Implications for this review
Identified improvement in consistency and usage of station meeting points.	Passenger Assist Mystery Shop	Pushing for consistent use of meeting points. Identify mitigations if not used. Identify better solutions for larger / busier stations.
Many instances where staff were not present or were unable/unwilling to assist passengers.	Passenger Assist Mystery Shop	Competent, knowledgeable, equipped and motivated staff. Mitigation required if no staff available to assist passenger.
Accessing the platform is the biggest barrier to travel and is the most requested form of assistance.	Awareness of Assisted Travel Services	Competent, knowledgeable and equipped staff. Mitigation required if no staff available to assist passenger.
Help with luggage (49%) and Getting to the platform (28%) are two of the top five requested forms of booked assistance.	Research into passenger experiences of Passenger Assist	Competent, knowledgeable and equipped staff. Mitigation required if no staff available to assist passenger.

*Customer assisted onto the train***Table 3.4: Customer assisted onto the train**

Findings	Source (Document Reviewed)	Implications for this review
Passengers should be able to board trains safely.	Equality Act 2010	Competent, knowledgeable, equipped and motivated staff. Mitigation required if no staff available to assist passenger.
Accessible rail services and trains, with railway undertakings making all reasonable efforts.	Rail passenger rights & obligations	Competent, knowledgeable, equipped and motivated staff. Mitigation required if no staff available to assist passenger.
Train design supports accessible boarding.	PRM TSI / RVAR / Railways (Interoperability) Regulations Compliance with PRM-TSI	Passenger may (or may not) require assistance depending on type of train. To be complied with by 1 January 2020.
Defined characteristics for new or modified platforms.	Interface between Station Platforms, Track and Trains	The Passenger may (or may not) require assistance depending on types of train and platform.
The majority (78%) of journeys made by disabled passengers are made alone, increasing the likelihood of additional support and assistance being needed.	Experiences of disabled rail passengers	Competent, knowledgeable, equipped and motivated staff. Mitigation required if no staff available to assist passenger.
Many instances where staff were not present or were unable/unwilling to assist passengers in boarding the train and finding their seat.	Passenger Assist Mystery Shop / Draft Accessibility Action Plan	Competent, knowledgeable, equipped and motivated staff. Mitigation required if no staff available to assist passenger.
Boarding the train is the second biggest barrier to travel and is the most requested form of assistance.	Awareness of Assisted Travel Services	Competent, knowledgeable, equipped and motivated staff. Mitigation required if no staff available to assist passenger.
Boarding / alighting the train (58%), Provision of a ramp (28%) and Getting to a seat (25%) are three of the top five requested forms of booked assistance.	Research into passenger experiences of Passenger Assist	Competent, knowledgeable, equipped and motivated staff. Mitigation required if no staff available to assist passenger.

*Train departs station***Table 3.5: Train departs**

Findings	Source (Document Reviewed)	Implications for this review
Train design supports safe resting while train accelerates (e.g. dedicated wheelchair space, identifiable grab rails).	PRM TSI / RVAR / Railways (Interoperability) Regulations	The Passenger may (or may not) require extra assistance depending on type of train. To be complied with by 1/1/20.
Defined requirements for DOO equipment (e.g. lighting levels).	Interface between Station Platforms, Track and Trains	How to ensure that driver is aware that those wanting to board have done so.

*Customer on train***Table 3.6: Customer on train**

Findings	Source (Document Reviewed)	Implications for this review
Passengers should be able to travel on board safely and in comfort.	Equality Act 2010	Mitigation required if no staff available to support passenger on-board.
Passengers should be provided with information concerning the accessibility of rail services.	Rail passenger rights & obligations / Draft Accessibility Action Plan/DPPP.	Appropriate channels and tactics to ensure information is timely and up-to-date.
Train design supports independent access for disabled passengers on-board the train between key areas (doors, seat, toilets and buffet).	PRM TSI / RVAR / Railways (Interoperability) Regulations	Requirement more important with more chance of no staff being on-board. Passenger may (or may not) require extra assistance depending on type of train. To be complied with by 1/1/20.
40% of respondents do actually travel during peak times. 30% regularly commute for work and a further 10% travel for business purposes.	Experiences of disabled rail passengers	Consideration of additional support or advice when trains are busy (e.g. Conductor may not be able to pass down train).
Issues such as the visual information display not working on-board the train all contribute to the passenger's (negative) experience.	Passenger Assist Mystery Shop	Mitigation required if audio and visual displays not working when no on-board staff available.
General lack of uncertainty if a second member of staff was on-board or not.	A Mystery Shop of turn-up-and-go (TUAG) Services	Consideration of how operators can provide more certainty and set expectations.

*Train arrives at station***Table 3.7: Train arrives**

Findings	Source (Document Reviewed)	Implications for this review
Passengers should be able to alight trains safely.	Equality Act 2010	DGO(D) – the Conductor should be ready with the passenger. DGO(G) – the Conductor may take longer to assist.
Train design supports safe resting while train accelerates (e.g. dedicated wheelchair space, identifiable grab rails).	PRM TSI / RVAR / Railways (Interoperability) Regulations	Passenger may (or may not) require extra assistance depending on type of train. To be complied with by 1/1/20.
Defined requirements for DOO equipment (e.g. lighting levels).	Interface between Station Platforms, Track and Trains	How to ensure that the driver identifies those requiring assistance in boarding.

*Customer assisted off train***Table 3.8: Customer assisted off train**

Findings	Source (Document Reviewed)	Implications for this review
Passengers should be able to alight trains safely.	Equality Act 2010	Competent, knowledgeable and equipped staff. Mitigation required if no staff available to assist the passenger.
Accessible rail services and trains, with railway undertakings making all reasonable efforts.	Rail passenger rights & obligations	Competent, knowledgeable and equipped staff. Mitigation required if no staff available to assist the passenger.
Train design supports accessible alighting from train.	PRM TSI / RVAR / Railways (Interoperability) Regulations	Passenger may (or may not) require assistance depending on type of train. To be complied with by 1/1/20.
Defined characteristics for new or modified platforms.	Interface between Station Platforms, Track and Trains	The passenger may (or may not) require assistance depending on types of train and platform.
The majority (78%) of journeys made by disabled passengers are made alone, increasing the need for additional support and assistance from staff.	Experiences of disabled rail passengers	Competent, knowledgeable and equipped staff. Mitigation required if no staff available to assist the passenger.
Many instances where staff were not present or were unable/unwilling to assist passengers in alighting the train.	Passenger Assist Mystery Shop / Draft Accessibility Action Plan	Competent, knowledgeable and equipped staff. Mitigation required if no staff available to assist the passenger.
Alighting the train is the other second biggest barrier to travel and is the most requested form of assistance.	Awareness of Assisted Travel Services	Competent, knowledgeable and equipped staff. Mitigation required if no staff available to assist the passenger.

Boarding/alighting the train (58%) and Provision of a ramp (28%) are two of top five requested forms of booked assistance.

Research into passenger experiences of Passenger Assist

Competent, knowledgeable and equipped staff. Mitigation required if no staff available to assist the passenger.

Customer leaves station

Table 3.9: Customer leaves station

Findings	Source (Document Reviewed)	Implications
Operators should take reasonable steps for providing access exiting the station.	Equality Act 2010	Mitigation required if no staff available to meet passenger; should be known before passenger alights the train and ideally before a passenger boards the train

4 Policies of TOCs as set out in DPPPs

- 4.1 Passenger Operator licences require that each train operator publish a Disabled People's Protection Policy (DPPP). This is approved by ORR and sets out a company policy on assisting disabled passengers. The DPPP must be made available as public leaflet that is clear and easy for passengers to use and is also made available online.
- 4.2 There are various forms of support that all train operators are required to provide and explain, such as:
- assisted travel and use of Passenger Assist booking system;
 - railcards and discounted fares;
 - support for both pre-booked and spontaneous travel;
 - provision of ramps; and
 - provision of alternative transport where necessary.
- 4.3 There is a great variety of different policies and initiatives set out in the DPPPs by the TOCs of England and Wales. This is set out in some detail in Appendix D.

Summary of Key Differences

- 4.4 Table 4.1 provides a summary of key differences in accessibility and assistance commitments for the various train operators. We note that there has already been substantial investment in new trains with better facilities and improved equipment, meaning that the situation in five years' time will be very different.
- 4.5 We note in particular the following initiatives of some TOCs related to the train journey itself:
- Priority seat card – card issued to eligible passengers to enable them to request passengers occupying priority seats to give their seats up without needing to explain;
 - Scooter card – a pass that confirms that a model of a mobility scooter is in conformance with restrictions;
 - Scooter box – a means of checking whether a scooter is acceptable for travel; and
 - Blue assist – a scheme for those who have difficulty communicating to write a message on a card to hand to front-line staff.

Table 4.1: Summary of key differences in accessibility and assistance commitments stated in DPPPs for the various train operators

Operator	Communication tools	Map	Notice recommended for Booked Assistance	Classes of stock with toilets but no UAT	Train staff	Specific comments
Northern	BlueAssist, Orange Wallet, Bridges, 'Baby on Board' badges, Priority Seat Card	No	24 hours	142, 144, 153 [these 3 classes to be OOS by 2020] 319, 323 [being fitted]	All trains	By 2020: all trains will meet 'modern accessibility standards'; all stations with > 3,000 passengers per year will get help points, CIS and PA systems
South Western Railway	BlueAssist (May '18)	Yes	24 hours. 4 hours for some journeys at set hours	None	All trains	By 2020: all trains (except Island Line) will have accessible toilets; install step-free access at 6 stations.
GTR Southern	Travel Support Card, Priority Seating Card	Yes	12 hours staffed, 24 hours unstaffed. Contact the day before.	None	Some trains	Accessible parking at various stations; new trains (Class 700); connected tablets for station staff
West Midland Trains	Priority Seating Card	No	24 hours	150 [being upgraded], 153 [OOS by 2020], 323 [to be upgraded]	All trains	Accessible ticket machines at 110 stations. New trains should improve accessibility.
Chiltern	None specified	No	24 hours	None	Not specified	New and additional seating at all stations; new mobility assistance buggies for Marylebone
Grand Central	None specified	No	24 hours	None	All trains	Free wi-fi
Virgin Trains	None specified	No	24 hours	None	All trains	Accessibility improvements at a number of stations
London Overground	None specified	Yes	24 hours	Not specified	Not specified	Commitment to a 'Turn Up and Go' service; various station improvements
TfL Rail	None specified	Yes	24 hours	Not specified	Not specified	Commitment to a 'Turn Up and Go' service
Arriva Train Wales	None specified	Yes	24 hours	142, 143, 153 [these 3 classes to be OOS by 2020], 15 [being fitted], loco-hauled trains	Some trains	All new-build rolling stock will be PRM compliant by 2020; improved handling of assistance dogs
Greater Anglia	Priority Seating Card	No	24 hours (48 hours for international travel)	153 [OOS by 2020], 317 [OOS shortly]	Intercity services	All trains will be fully compliant with RVAR and PRM-TSI regulations by 2020
Virgin Trains East Coast	None specified	No	24 hours	None	Some trains	RNIB 'Maps for All' at Virgin managed stations; free 1st Class upgrades
Hull Trains	BlueAssist	No	24 hours	None	All trains	Accessible Travel Group

Operator	Communication tools	Map	Notice recommended for Booked Assistance	Classes of stock with toilets but no UAT	Train staff	Specific comments
Cross Country	None specified	No	24 hours	None	All trains	At-seat catering
Merseyrail	None specified	No	1 hour	None	All trains	Procurement of new trains underway; help points with induction loops on all platforms
c2c	None specified	No	4 hours	None	Not specified	24-hour helpline; double compensation; c2c Live booking app
Southeastern	Priority Seat Card	No	12 hours	None	Some trains	'Recite Me' online app; 24-hour helpline; scooter boxes to check size of scooter; Class 465/466 currently undergoing refurbishment to have accessible toilets
Transpennine Express	BlueAssist	No	24 hours	None	All trains	Accessibility Consultation Forum; various station improvements
Great Western Railway	Priority Seat Card	No	24 hours	Class 165 [being fitted], 153 [OOS by 2020], Class 143 153 [OOS by 2020]	Some trains	Guide dog travel charter; customer panels and webinars; passenger assistance app; Class 165 refurb
East Midlands Train	Scooter card	Yes	12 hours	153		Installing customer help points with hearing loops at all stations; full refunds offered; 24/7 helpline

5 At-station surveys

Introduction

- 5.1 In order to understand the actual experiences of passengers travelling by rail who have a disability or may require assistance at the station, a face to face survey was undertaken with a representative sample of rail users. The primary aim of the survey was to collect data and evidence on the effects of different modes of operation on passengers requiring assistance. In addition, some qualitative information was obtained regarding the improvements disabled passengers would like to see. The survey is included as Appendix D.
- 5.2 Face to face interviews were conducted at a sample of 13 stations over a three-week period from 13th March to 29th March 2018. These stations were selected to represent different modes of operation and different staffing levels (see Table 5.1). A total of 649 interviews were completed, spread across eight groups:
- mobility impairment;
 - hearing impairment;
 - visual impairment;
 - cognitive impairment (including mental health conditions and learning difficulties);
 - other conditions impacting health;
 - multiple disabilities (i.e. more than one of the above list); and
 - encumbered passengers (included for completeness since they were also needing assistance, though such passengers are not covered by legal obligations on TOCs related to disability with the provision of assistance).
- 5.3 Within the survey, questions were asked about levels of satisfaction with each stage of the journey (passenger information at the station, ease of moving around the station, availability of station staff, helpfulness of station staff, ease of getting on or off the train, information on the train, availability of on-train staff, helpfulness of on-train staff), plus overall satisfaction. Respondents were also asked about their need for assistance and whether this was received or not, together with details of the journey being made (focussing, where possible, on the outward leg of the journey they had already made).

Selection of the stations

- 5.4 Stations were selected in order to each represent a combination of a mode of operation and a level of staffing. The stations, and their associated classifications, are shown in Table 5.1:

Table 5.1: Stations selected for the survey

	DGO (G)	DGO (D?)	DCO	DOO
Staffed full time (first to last train)	Huddersfield (served by Northern)	Winchester (served by SWR / CrossCountry)	Haywards Heath (Served mainly by Southern & Gatwick Express – some Thameslink DOO)	Southend Central (Served by c2c)
Staffed part time (daytime, not evenings)	Dewsbury (served by Northern / TPE) <i>Staffed until 1945</i>	Tring Served by London Northwestern / Southern <i>Staffed until 1900</i>	Horley (Served mainly by Southern - some Thameslink DOO) <i>Staffed until 1945</i>	Downham Market (Served by Great Northern and Greater Anglia) <i>Staffed until 1730</i>
Limited (mornings or evenings only)	Harrogate (served by TPE / VTEC) <i>Staffed Mon – Sat mornings</i>	Earlsfield (served by SWR) <i>Staffed during peaks only</i>	Earlswood (Served mainly by Southern) <i>Staffed weekday mornings only</i>	Aylesbury Vale Parkway (Served mainly by Chiltern) <i>Staffed Monday to Saturday mornings only</i>

- 5.5 A pilot survey was undertaken at St Albans City, categorised as a full-time staffed DOO station. These have been added to the responses from the 12 stations above.

General findings

- 5.6 The survey revealed a number of important contextual insights which are summarised below.

Assistance required

- 5.7 Around half of the passengers with a mobility difficulty were looking for some kind of assistance during their journey, most commonly with getting on or off the train: nearly a third of mobility impaired passengers required assistance boarding the train, and a similar proportion alighting. Passengers with other disabilities were less likely to want assistance: around a quarter required some assistance, with around one in eight looking for help with boarding or alighting.

Assistance received

- 5.8 In the majority of instances, the assistance wanted was obtained (covers both booked and spontaneous assistance). For example, 94% of mobility-impaired and 97% of all respondents did obtain assistance. However, this still does leave a small number of instances where the assistance wanted was not received, and it is also worth noting that there are some instances (2% of journeys by mobility impaired passengers) where this assistance was from another passenger.
- 5.9 Interestingly, the majority (two-thirds) of respondents were travelling alone with just 1% with a helper: all the respondents with a helper had either a mobility impairment or cognitive impairment, but even for these groups just 2% were with a helper.

Pre-booked assistance

- 5.10 Overall, just 4% of respondents pre-booked assistance with their journey. Those with a mobility impairment were the most likely to pre-book, but only around one in ten did so.
- 5.11 One reason for the low level of use may be the low level of awareness: 35% of all respondents and 46% of mobility impaired respondents were aware they could book pre-book assistance.

Impact of the mode of operation on passenger satisfaction

Overall satisfaction

- 5.12 Interestingly, there were no significant differences in the overall satisfaction by mode of operation, with between 80% and 83% of all respondents giving a rating of good or excellent for all of the modes of operation. For passengers with a mobility difficulty, the results were similar, with the percentage giving a good or excellent rating varying from 75% to 82% with these differences not being statistically significant.
- 5.13 To explore this further, ‘key driver’ analysis has been undertaken to test, using statistical analysis, what factors influence the overall satisfaction scores. This shows that the most important influences on overall satisfaction were satisfaction with ease of moving around the station, getting on and off the train, information at the station, and helpfulness of staff at the station and on the train. These all had a greater influence than the mode of operation (or the staffing at the station).
- 5.14 Examining the key drivers just for passengers with a mobility impairment shows that the key drivers were information at the station, availability of on-train staff, and ease of getting on and off the train. Again, the mode of operation was not a significant factor.

Satisfaction with ease of getting on and off the train

- 5.15 The analysis of overall satisfaction has shown that there are many influences on this with the mode of operation being just one of many influences. The operational review showed that the aspect of the journey most likely to be impacted by the mode of operation is the ease of boarding and alighting the train. The research has also identified that the group most in need of assistance with getting on and off the train is passengers with a mobility impairment. We have therefore undertaken analysis which focusses on the most likely impacts of differing modes of operation; that is, mobility impaired passengers getting on and off the train.

Impact of failing to receive assistance

- 5.16 Examining the satisfaction amongst those that said they wanted assistance but did not receive it did reveal that satisfaction was much lower than for those that received all the help they wanted. Thus, overall satisfaction (based on those giving a rating of good or excellent) amongst those that did not receive all the assistance wanted was just 28%, compared with 84% for those not having any instances on their journey when they wanted but did not receive assistance.

Impact of station staffing

- 5.17 The picture for station staffing is similar to that for the mode of operation in that levels of satisfaction do not vary substantially between stations staffed full time, part time, or to a limited extent. This is consistent with the key driver analysis described above which did not identify staffing levels as a significant influence on passenger satisfaction.

- 5.18 Examining the incidences of where passengers sought assistance but did not obtain it, this shows that there was no clear link between failing to obtain assistance and station staffing levels. For example, the number of occasions on which there was a failure to obtain help getting on the train was 4% for stations staffed full time, 2% staffed part time, and 2% with limited staff.

Discussion of research findings

- 5.19 The survey of passengers needing assistance has shown that in the great majority of cases they received the help they needed (or were happy to travel without assistance). This was the case irrespective of the mode of operation or staffing level.
- 5.20 However, the survey also showed that where there is a failure to provide the assistance wanted it can have a substantial impact (this was evident from the much lower levels of customer satisfaction amongst passengers affected in this way).
- 5.21 The overall finding, therefore, is that the mode of operation of itself does not have an impact on passengers in terms of overall satisfaction in needing assistance. However, reliability and confidence that disabled passenger will receive the required assistance is a key factor.

Open question responses

- 5.22 As part of the At-Stations research, we asked an open question “Are there any improvements you would like to see to make this journey easier?”. After removing answers that were considered to be unrelated to the scope of our study, we created a list of these issues, ranked in order of the frequency with which they were raised.
- 5.23 The most frequent relevant responses are shown in Table 5.2 together with the categories of passenger who raised them:

Table 5.2: Issues to improve raised by passengers – with category of passenger

Comment	Score ⁵	Mobility impairment	Visual impairment	Cognitive impairment	Hearing impairment	Other health reasons	Multiple impairments
Provide more staff at station	44	√	√	√	√	√	√
Provide more staff on train	38	√	√	√	√	√	√
Need to improve staff attitude / availability and willingness to provide assistance at station and on-train	20	√	√	√			
Train interior needs to be updated (e.g. better electronic information)	10	√	√	√			
Improve signage at stations and on trains	10	√	√				
Improve platform-train interface	5	√		√			
Issues with peak hour travel, need for additional staff	5		√				√
Better help/access for disabled, e.g. wheelchairs	4	√					
Information needs to be more visual, i.e. larger print on information boards, larger clocks	4		√				
Need for more information at station/before journey	4	√	√			√	
Announcements are unclear, announcers need to speak more slowly	4				√		√
Need for improved awareness for the various available options for assistance	4	√					

5.24 We have also created a matrix of these responses based upon the mode of operation applicable to the respondent's journeys, as shown in Table 5.3:

⁵ Number of respondents

Table 5.3: Issues to improve raised by passengers – with mode of operation

Comment	Score ⁶	DGO (G)	DGO (D)	DCO	DOO
Provide more staff at station	44	✓	✓	✓	✓
Provide more staff on train	38	✓	✓	✓	✓
Need to improve staff attitude / availability and willingness to provide assistance at station and on-train	20	✓	✓	✓	
Train interior needs to be updated (e.g. better electronic information)	10	✓	✓	✓	
Improve signage at stations and on trains	10	✓	✓		
Improve platform-train interface	5	✓		✓	
Issues with peak hour travel, need for additional staff	5		✓		
Better help/access for disabled, e.g. wheelchairs	4	✓			
Information needs to be more visual, i.e. larger print on information boards, larger clocks	4		✓		
Need for more information at station/before journey	4	✓	✓		
Announcements are unclear, announcers need to speak more slowly	4				✓
Need for improved awareness for the various available options for assistance	4	✓			

5.25 The results illustrated above (Table 5.2 and 5.3) show that disabled passengers place greatest emphasis on the availability and provision of staff at stations and on train and the attitude and willingness of staff to provide assistance regardless of the mode of operation of the train service or the category of disability.

⁶ Number of respondents

6 In-depth interviews

- 6.1 We conducted a number of focused discussions with a smaller number of respondents. The types of disabilities represented in the interviews include visual, mobility impairment, hearing and cognitive impairments and combination of impairments).
- 6.2 Interviewees were asked to discuss all aspects of their trip, from planning their journey in advance, to arriving at the station and boarding a train as well as their experiences on-board and when alighting the train. Issues regarding impacts of having DOO compared with having on-board assistance were discussed in order to allow identification of current issues and risks that can help to inform good practice guidance.

General findings

- 6.3 A few key general findings can be taken away from the interviews:
- under the current provision of assistance, rail travel for passengers with disabilities requires extensive preparation on their side in advance of the journey;
 - in situations where passengers with disabilities have to turn to other passengers for assistance, for instance when no station or on-board staff is available, interviewees felt a lack of accountability and security;
 - help points were not perceived to be fully accessible, visible or helpful;
 - the biggest issue with DOO is the perceived lack of “back-up” or an added layer of security, in case of disruption to the normal train journey; and
 - issues for passengers with disabilities currently arise mostly when trains are diverted from their normal timetable, and these are perceived to become a bigger problem on DOO services.
- 6.4 It should be noted that some of the concerns and issues that were discussed by passengers relate to the specific type of disability. Furthermore, interviewees also stated that their need for assistance and the decision to book or not book assistance in advance of their journey very much depends on the type of journey, as well as the train operator. For regular journeys from known departure and arrival stations, there is less of a need to pre-book assistance. However, for more infrequent or complex journeys, passengers see the value in pre-booking even though there is often uncertainty on whether pre-booking assistance has worked.

Pre-journey preparation

- 6.5 The interviewees specified a number of strategies that they have devised in order to facilitate their journey, some more general but mostly quite specifically tailored to their disability.
- 6.6 Extensive preparation before the journey is often required by the passenger itself, in order to make the travel experience as smooth as possible. This includes knowing the stops along the route and the exact timings of arrival. However, issues arise in case the train is diverted from the normal timetable. Travelling with children can also present a significant challenge for passengers with disabilities, as assistance staff might not be prepared or trained for such situations.
- 6.7 Some interviewees reported that they found the websites to book complicated and confusing to navigate. A comment was also made about a user being unable to finding information on accessibility at the same time as information about the routes. The option to search for the meeting point at a station online beforehand was noted as helpful additional information.
- 6.8 Some disabled people do not want to rely on assistance but need ways to seek help or gain assistance in the event of something going wrong (unplanned assistance required), and this may be at the station or on the train. All such passengers relate to 'being able to feel safe/comfortable' when there is assistance available. They may also wish to be able to share their needs with staff/assistance discreetly.

Reliance on passengers where staff are unavailable

- 6.9 Passengers report feeling vulnerable without on-board assistance being available. This included both those who book assistance and those who want to travel on a spontaneous basis.
- 6.10 Experiences where interviewees had to rely on other passengers for assistance or information were generally positive, with passengers usually being helpful. However, several of the interviewees noted that having to rely on people volunteering to assist makes them feel embarrassed and insecure, as there is a lack of safeguards in place.
- 6.11 Interviewees stated that where another passenger is asked for information or assistance it's not that passenger's responsibility and, more importantly, that they are also not a representative of the train company and thus not accountable in case anything goes wrong which adds an element of risk. Especially in situations such as late at night or on quiet trains, where one cannot guarantee other passengers are around to help. It is unreliable to only depend on assistance from passengers in case pre-booked assistance or station/on-board staff is unavailable, although the assistance which may be offered by other passengers was recognised.

Help Points

- 6.12 Most interviewees did not find Help Points at stations useful. Concerns related to the ability to identify the help points, as well as being routed to a general helpline rather than a specific service for disabled passengers. Indeed, Help Points may create a perception of vulnerability for disabled person as people in the area will know they need help/are disabled/easier target for crime.
- 6.13 Interviewees suggested that having a direct contact number set up for the purpose of providing assistance would more useful.

- 6.14 Another suggestion for improvement was the ability to integrate a chip into a disabled person's railcard with information on the disability and assistance needed saved on it so that the operator on the other end can have all the information ready when taking the call. That way, passengers with disabilities can circumvent the exposure and potential vulnerability of having to explain their disability when using the help point.

Moving to Driver-Only-Operated

- 6.15 Interviewees were asked about their experience boarding, on-board, and alighting trains. In addition to discussing what levels of assistance they would expect currently and their experience in receiving it, they were also asked to discuss how this would change in a scenario where the mode of operation changed to Driver-Only-Operation.
- 6.16 The consensus from the research was that an additional member of staff on the train adds an element of security. In case of DOO, more support would have to be provided by the station staff, including guiding passengers with disabilities onto the train and helping them to their seat. However, the passenger would then be without assistance at the other end of their journey, and without a member of staff to collect them they might end up with limited time only to alight the train. Especially without the necessary infrastructure currently in place, having an additional member of on-board staff is critical for wheelchair users or passengers with mobility impairments.
- 6.17 A crucial point that was made in most of the interviews relates to the lack of real-time updates for passengers requiring assistance. The current system relies quite heavily on trains running according to the timetable. The lack of announcements (either visual or verbal) when trains are delayed or change where they stop can lead to confusion for passengers with disabilities who may end up boarding the wrong train. Station announcements need to be communicated more clearly and in real time to passengers with disabilities, potentially via text notifications. Interviewees emphasised the need to have members of staff present, at the station and ideally also on-board, who can inform passengers with disabilities of any changes to their service, as well as provide assistance in guiding them to the right platform.
- 6.18 The provision of assistance for passengers with disabilities consists of a chain of actions, which is especially vulnerable to breaking down in times of disruption to the train service. Having real-time contact with updates on any delays or disruption, as well as the person providing assistance at the other end of the journey or any interconnecting stops can add a layer of security for the passenger travelling.

Insights for good practice guidance

- 6.19 From the interviews we can draw insights to inform the good practice guidance, including:
- improving the information that is available in advance, for instance making it easier to get information on accessibility at stations and interchanges while looking up routes;
 - offering assistance that is applicable to all types of disabilities;
 - training of staff (equality and awareness) regarding communication and ways to assist for station and on-board assistance;
 - providing a means for disabled passengers to identify themselves as such (possibly including information on a chip card or directly on the disabled passenger's railcard or innovative use of mobile technology and specially designed Apps);
 - improving real-time communication in times of disruption, including making both verbal and visual announcements about delays and cancellations and offering the option to receive those via text or app notification;
 - ensuring the chain of communication for booked and / or requested assistance doesn't break down, especially ensuring that real-time contact is established between staff at the relevant stations;
 - offering a means by which disabled passengers can contact staff involved in their assistance (through a direct number or app);
 - ensuring that advance announcements are in place to make passengers aware their reaching their destination station to allow them to move to the doors.

7 Development of Guidance Document

- 7.1 The project brief requires a guidance document to be issued in the name of the Department for Transport and Rail Delivery Group to Train Operating Companies, based on the findings and recommendations of this research. This document has been shared and developed with both parties prior to completion.
- 7.2 The guidance document sets several principles, which are supported by good practice statements that train operators should consider as part of their service offer. These are particularly important when train operators are looking to change the mode of operation for any of their services.
- 7.3 Table 7.1 below summarises the key principles from the document and sets how these have derived from the research summarised in this report.

Table 7.1: Key principles and link to research

Principles	Research and Legislation
Information provided should be accurate, up to date, and available in a range of appropriate formats so as to meet the needs of passengers irrespective of any disabilities.	The <i>EC Rail Passenger Rights & Obligations</i> necessitates that passengers are provided with information concerning the accessibility of rail services and trains. The <i>Mystery Shop of Turn-up-and-go (TUAG) services</i> found a general lack of uncertainty if a second member of staff was on-board or not.
Disabled passengers should have a means of contacting someone if necessary and should be aware of all the options available.	The in-depth interviews found that having real-time contact with updates on any delays or disruption can add a layer of security for the passenger travelling.
Information relevant to disabled passengers concerning the facilities and services that are available, including the presence of staffing, should be made available prior to starting the journey.	The in-depth interviews found that extensive preparation was needed before the journey to make the travel experience as smooth as possible, including knowing the stops along the route and exact timings of arrival.
The arrangements put in place should not put disabled passengers in a position where they have to rely on other passengers for assistance.	The in-depth interviews found that in situations where passengers with disabilities have to rely on other passengers for assistance, for instance when no station or on-board staff is available, interviewees felt a lack of accountability and security.
Good customer service should include consistent delivery of support to disabled passengers.	The <i>Passenger Assist Mystery Shop</i> highlighted a lack of consistency and quality in delivery.

Principles	Research and Legislation
All staff, from the lowest to the highest level, should have appropriate training in disability awareness and this should be refreshed periodically.	The <i>Research into passenger experiences of Passenger Assist</i> recommends more broader training for staff to improve their understanding of the process and issues passengers may have.
Staff should be pro-active and aware of passengers in need of assistance.	The station surveys found that the need to improve staff attitude and willingness to provide assistance was important for passengers using both DGO and DCO services.
Disabled passengers have an equal right to travel as other passengers and to this end, all reasonable measures should be deployed to enable disabled passengers to travel.	Both the <i>Equality Act (2010)</i> and <i>EC Rail Passenger Rights & Obligations</i> both require operators to take reasonable steps to ensure disabled passengers are not discriminated. This principle is not a legal view of the legislation, but simply acts as a reminder to operators, particularly when altering the mode of operation to train services.
Policies used by TOCs should be transparent.	The <i>EC Rail Passenger Rights & Obligations</i> necessitates that passengers are provided with information concerning the accessibility of rail services and trains.
Procedures should ensure consistent delivery and enhanced confidence amongst disabled passengers.	The <i>Passenger Assist Mystery Shop</i> highlighted a lack of consistency and quality in delivery.
Disabled passengers should be made aware in a timely and appropriate manner of any relevant changes to the arrangements in place for train operations.	The in-depth interviews found that issues for passengers with disabilities currently arise mostly when trains are diverted from their normal timetable, and these are perceived to become a bigger issue under DOO.

7.4 These guidelines will be only effective if they become a relevant part of the ongoing industry management and delivery of rail services. We therefore recommend that the following steps are considered to support the guidelines document.

- The industry uses continuous improvement principles to refine and build on these guidelines to improve the level of service provided to disabled passengers. Effective knowledge share, case studies and investigations will particularly help any further roll out of DCO where a SSM is not guaranteed in all circumstances and DOO.
- Consideration of enshrining relevant principles and/or good practice statements in the DPPP process, to promote consistency and transparency.
- Industry challenges, support and encouragement should continue in this area, to ensure that improvements and innovation continue to be sought.

Appendices

A Summary Tables

Levels of station staffing available

Level of staffing	Description
None	No staff are available to provide assistance. Passengers would need to book or contact operators for assistance.
Limited	The station does have staff, but they may not be able to leave their post immediately and provide support.
Part Time	Staff are available to provide spontaneous travel assistance at defined times (e.g. up until 19:00).
Full	Staff are available to provide spontaneous travel assistance at all times whilst trains are running.

Summary of different modes of operation for each element of station calls (Boarding Trains)

Mode	Platform staff	Before train arrives	Train arrives	Time spent at platform	Train ready to depart	Train left station
DGO (G)	Yes	The platform staff able to support the passenger.	The platform staff should be ready with the passenger to board the train.	The platform staff assist the passenger in boarding, possibly with Conductor's help if boarding is taking place near /on car with door control panel.	The Conductor closes the doors with visual inspection, possibly with support from platform staff.	The Conductor should be able to support passengers on-board the train if they have boarded near the door panel.
	No	The passenger may be able to use help point or freephone number to speak to TOC staff, where available.	The Conductor may be able to identify passengers once they have released the doors and are therefore looking at the platform, however this is dependent on the nature of the door opening process.	The Conductor assists the passenger in boarding.	The Conductor closes the doors with visual inspection. This may mean any tasks associated with supporting these passengers has to be cut short, or alternatively completed first after which the doors can be closed, leading to excess dwell times and delays.	Same as DGO (G) with platform staff.
DGO (D)	Yes	Same as DGO (G) with platform staff.	Same as DGO (G) with platform staff.	Same as DGO (G) with platform staff.	Same as DGO (G) with platform staff.	Same as DGO (G) with platform staff.

Mode	Platform staff	Before train arrives	Train arrives	Time spent at platform	Train ready to depart	Train left station
	No	Same as DGO (G) without platform staff.	The Conductor may be able to identify passengers on the platform.	Same as DGO (G) without platform staff.	Same as DGO (G) without platform staff.	Same as DGO (G) with platform staff.
DCO	Yes	Same as DGO (G) with platform staff.	Same as DGO (G) with platform staff.	Same as DGO (G) with platform staff, except SSM replaces Conductor.	Driver closes the doors, possibly with support from platform staff. SSM freed up to devote time to looking after passengers who have just boarded.	SSM able to support passenger on-board the train without distraction of door opening / closing activities.
	No	Same as DGO (G) without platform staff.	Same as DGO (D) without platform staff.	Same as DGO (G) without platform staff, except SSM replaces the Conductor.	The driver closes the doors; SSM devotes time to looking after passengers who have just boarded.	Same as DCO with platform staff.
DOO	Yes	Same as DGO (G) with platform staff.	Same as DGO (G) with platform staff.	The platform staff assist passenger in boarding.	Same as DCO with platform staff.	No on-board staff to assist the passengers.
	No	Same as DGO (G) without platform staff.	The driver may be unable to identify passengers due to coverage provided by monitors or mirrors.	No assistance available to assist boarding.	Same as DCO without platform staff.	Same as DOO with platform staff.

Summary of different modes of operation for each element of station calls (Alighting Trains)

Mode	Platform staff	Before train arrives	Train arrives	Time spent at platform	Train ready to depart	Train left station
DGO (G)	Yes	The Conductor should be able to support passenger on-board the train provided they are within the proximity of the door opening panels	The platform staff should be ready to assist the passenger in alighting the train. The Conductor would have to release doors first before providing any assistance.	The platform staff assist the passenger in alighting, possibly with Conductor's help. The Conductor is restricted to where the door control panel is located, so delays may be caused when helping passengers elsewhere on the train.	The Conductor closes the doors with visual inspection, possibly with support from platform staff.	The platform staff able to support the passenger if required.
	No	Same as DGO (G) with platform staff.	The Conductor would have to release doors first before providing any assistance.	The Conductor assists the passenger in alighting.	The Conductor closes the doors with visual inspection.	Passengers able to use help point or freephone number to speak to TOC staff if required.
DGO (D)	Yes	Same as DGO (G) with platform staff, except that Conductor is free to focus more on passengers intending to alight.	Same as DGO (G) with platform staff, except Driver releases the doors.	Same as DGO (G) with platform staff.	Same as DGO (G) with platform staff.	Same as DGO (G) with platform staff.

Mode	Platform staff	Before train arrives	Train arrives	Time spent at platform	Train ready to depart	Train left station
	No	Same as DGO (D) with platform staff.	The Conductor may be able to provide assistance quicker as they have not had to release doors.	Same as DGO (G) without platform staff.	Same as DGO (G) without platform staff.	Same as DGO (G) without platform staff.
DCO	Yes	The SSM should be able to support the passenger on-board the train without distraction of door operating duties.	Same as DGO (D) with platform staff.	Same as DGO (G) with platform staff, except SSM replaces Conductor and SSM does not need to remain close to the door closing panel.	The driver closes the doors.	The platform staff able to support the passenger if required.
	No		Same as DGO (G)	Similar to DGO (G) without platform staff, except Conductor does not need to return to door control panel and close the doors.	The Driver Closes the Doors.	Passengers able to use help point or freephone number to speak to TOC staff if required.

Mode	Platform staff	Before train arrives	Train arrives	Time spent at platform	Train ready to depart	Train left station
DOO	Yes	Same as DCO.	Same as DGO (G) without platform staff. Driver opens doors and platform staff need to be available to assist on board passengers to alight	Same as DGO (G) without platform staff. Platform staff to provide assistance to on-board passengers as required	The driver closes the doors.	Same as DGO (G) without platform staff.
	No	No on-board staff to assist the passenger.	Same as DGO (G)		. The Driver closes the doors (as above)	Same as DGO (G and D) without platform staff.

B Review of legal and operational frameworks

Equality Act (2010)

Document Name:	Equality Act (2010)
Author:	UK HM Government
Date:	Published in 2010 with frequent updates
Type:	Legislation



Equality Act 2010

What is it?

- B.1 The Equality Act encompasses the regulations surrounding anti-discrimination law. It replaced several previous pieces of legislation on Sex Discrimination, Race Relations and Disability Discrimination – with one consolidated Act. The Act requires equal treatment in access to employment as well as private and public services.

What is in it?

- B.2 The Act covers a wide range of concepts, locations and services. There is a specific Part on disabled transport, with a dedicated chapter on rail vehicles. Generally, the Act requires station operators to take reasonable steps to ensure that they do not discriminate against disabled people (e.g. access, wayfinding, parking etc.).
- B.3 There are specific references to Rail Vehicle Accessibility Requirements (RVAR), in that people should be able to get on and off vehicles safely and without unreasonable difficulty. They should also be able to travel in such vehicles in relative safety and comfort. Both of these should be achieved by passengers in wheelchairs.
- B.4 The Rail Passenger's Rights and Obligation Regulations (2010) is the instrument which made changes to domestic legislation to facilitate the application of the EC regulation. It is currently in the process of being revised.

Key points for this review

- B.5 The reference to getting on and off vehicles is impacted by the mode of operation, particularly when passengers want to travel spontaneously. This statement implies the use of equipment – such as platform humps or ramps – which require competent and available staff in place (either on-train or on-platform). Consideration may also need to be taken with visually impaired passengers in terms of boarding and alighting.

EC Rail Passenger Rights & Obligations (1371/2007)

Document Name: Rail Passenger Rights & Obligations
Author: European Commission
Date: Published in 2007
Type: Legislation



What is it?

B.6 The Regulation aims at establishing rights and obligations for rail passenger service users in order to improve the efficiency and attractiveness of rail transport for passengers. It requires all Member States to be fully compliant with its requirements by 2024. The UK Government has previously exercised power to exempt Great Britain's domestic railways, but has been working to align with the regulation in many areas.

What is in it?

B.7 The regulation covers several topics in relation to the customer, including ticket purchasing, delays & cancellations and security.

B.8 There is a complete section on disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility (DPRM), giving users the following rights:

- Non-discriminatory access to transport at no additional charge
- Provided with information concerning the accessibility of rail services and trains
- Accessible rail services and trains, with railway undertakings making all reasonable efforts
- Free assistance on trains and station; passengers requested to give 48 hours notice
- Compensation if mobility equipment is lost or damaged

Key points for this review

B.9 The provision of information becomes more important as more trains are operated by DCO, as users will need to know the station access and staffing arrangements. This can be by request.

B.10 When staff are unavailable on-board, railway undertakings must take all reasonable efforts to ensure DRPM still have access to travel by rail.

Persons with Reduced Mobility – PRM TSI (1300/2014)

Document Name: Persons with Reduced Mobility - Technical Specification for Interoperability
Author: European Union Agency for Railways
Date: Published in 2014
Type: Legislation



What is it?

- B.11** Technical Specifications for Interoperability (TSIs) are the specifications that provide for the interoperability of the EC's high speed and conventional rail systems. PRM TSI relates to the accessibility of the Union's rail system for persons with disabilities and persons with other mobility issues. This does not always vehicles operated on non-mainline systems, such as light rail, metros and heritage railways, which are covered by RVAR in the UK.

What is in it?

- B.12 The legislation provides the technical specifications (e.g. measurements, distances, requirements) for trains, stations and other facilities. It includes items such as lighting, door widths, toilets, clearances and seats. This is mandatory for all new equipment and provides guidelines for how refurbished or upgraded equipment should meet the requirements. It doesn't provide any guidance for safety, emergency response (e.g. train evacuation) or the competence required for staff to assist passengers.
- B.13 The 2008 version of this legislation provides the standards that all older rail vehicles are being refurbished to.

Key points for this review

- B.14 The requirements for trains ensure that passengers can safely access parts of the train, without the need for assistance. Use of colours, scrolling displays and announcements help visually impaired and deaf / hard of hearing. Suitable space and universal access toilets help those with difficulties in walking find a place to sit and use the facilities. This is important when there may not be an auxiliary member of staff on-board the train.

Railways (Interoperability) Regulations (2011)

Document Name:	The Railways (Interoperability) Regulations
Author:	UK HM Government
Date:	2011 with update in 2013
Type:	Statutory Instrument



What is it?

- B.15** The Regulations transpose the Railway Interoperability Directive (2008/57/EC) into UK law. They require new, upgraded or renewed structural subsystems or vehicles to be authorised, before they can be used on the mainline railway.

What is in it?

- B.16** The Regulations cover the governance and authorisation for interpreting, applying and overseeing the technical specifications for interoperability.

Key points for this review

- B.17 The relevance for this review is the requirement for accessibility for people with reduced mobility. All vehicles on the trans-European rail system (i.e. the UK mainline network) must comply with the PRM-TSI on or after 1st January 2020. This compliance is either through construction, renewals, upgrades or modifications.

Rail Vehicle Accessibility (Non-Interoperable) Regulations (2010)

Document Name:	The Rail Vehicle Accessibility (Non-Interoperable Rail System)
Author:	UK HM Government
Date:	2010
Type:	Statutory Instrument



What is it?

- B.18 The Regulations (commonly known as RVAR) aims to set standards designed to improve accessibility for disabled people in rail passenger vehicles. This includes metro, tram, and other light rail systems which are not subject to the Railways (Interoperability) Regulations 2006 (and therefore PRM-TSI).

What is in it?

- B.19 The Regulations cover the areas of a rail vehicle accessed by the passenger, including boarding devices, doors, controls, floors, seats and passenger information. The regulations apply to vehicles entering into service from 1 Jan 1999 and all other vehicles in scope must meet standards by 1 January 2020.

Key points for this review

- B.20 As with the PRM-TSI regulations, the improvements to on-board equipment and facilities makes trains more accessible for DPRMs, allowing them to travel more safely and with less assistance. Again, this is important when there may not be an auxiliary member of staff on-board the train.

Design Standards for Accessible Railway Stations

Document Name: Design Standards for Accessible Railway Stations
Author: Department for Transport / Transport Scotland
Date: 2015
Type: Policy / Code of Practice



What is it?

- B.21** The document carries out the Secretary of State for Transport's obligation under Section 71B of the Railways Act 1993. It also provides guidance based on the European Union technical specification for People with Reduced Mobility (1300/2014).

What is in it?

- B.22** The guidance sets out the standards that any infrastructure changes at (or new) stations should meet, for a number of areas, such as platform layout, stairs, information, wayfinding, car parking etc. It highlights the relevant EU and UK standards which inform each guidance area.
- B.23** The guidance forms part of the operating licence that station operators are granted by the ORR; therefore they must adhere to it.

Key points for this review

- B.24** The document covers many aspects of the station design, including platforms, car parks and footbridges.
- B.25** It does however stop short of the train / platform interface, but does reference the Railway Group Standard GI/RT7016 which is reviewed below.

Interface between Station Platforms, Track and Trains

Document Name: GI/RT7016 Interface between Station Platforms, Track and Trains
Author: RSSB
Date: 2014
Type: Railway Group Standard



What is it?

- B.26** The Standard mandates requirements for the design and maintenance of station platforms for their safe interface with track and trains. The aim is to contribute to improving safety (although not at any cost) and achieving ‘standard’ platforms across the National Rail network. This forms part of the overall national ‘rule book’.

What is in it?

- B.27 The Standard contains a number of requirements for the location, height, headroom, usable length and width of platforms. Further requirements cover the location of buildings & structures, lighting and other requirements for the safety of passengers boarding and alighting from trains.
- B.28** These requirements are mandatory for all new stations and for alterations made to existing stations (subject to specific definitions).

Key points for this review

- B.29 The platform height requirements improve the distance and step between the train and the platform, improving accessibility; however, the Standard notes the differences in different train design, affecting this distance.
- B.30 Specific requirements for DOO operation cover aspects such as lighting levels and visibility.
- B.31 Finally, specific colour requirements and markings cover platform structures and edges to be visible for visually impaired passengers.

How to write your DPPP

Document Name:	How to Write Your Disabled People’s Protection Policy: A Guide for Train and Station Operators
Author:	Department for Transport
Date:	2009
Type:	Guidance

What is it?

- B.32** Train and station operators are required by their operating licences to establish and comply with a disabled people’s protection policy (DPPP) which must be approved by the ORR. This guidance forms the basis of ORR’s review and approval of operators DPPP.
- B.33** The ORR have themselves produced a regulatory statement in 2014 setting out their approach to their approval and monitoring role, following the transfer of responsibility from the DfT in October 2013.

What is in it?

- B.34** The Guidance sets out the DPPP structure and the process for reviewing and approvals. DPPPs take the form of two different documents, which are explained in detail. The Passenger

document takes the form of a leaflet and sets out what to expect for that operators stations and trains.

Key points for this review

- B.35 The DPPP define how station operators must provide assistance for their passengers. This includes the publicity of station and train accessibility (making use of the Stations Made Easy section of the National Rail Enquiries website), what assistance can be provided to passengers and how they can book any support.

C Review of NRPS and other research

- C.1 Transport Focus (formerly Passenger Focus) is the independent transport user watchdog, protecting the interests of Britain's rail passengers, England's bus, coach and tram passengers (outside London) and motorway / A road users.
- C.2 Its mission is to get the best deal for passengers. It regularly undertakes campaigning and research, to influence decisions on behalf of passengers. It works with the rail industry, passenger groups and government to secure journey improvements.
- C.3 The following documents have been reviewed:
- Latest NRPS results
 - A 2012 report into the experiences of disabled rail passengers
 - Passenger Assist Mystery Shop

National Rail Passenger Survey

Document Name: National Rail Passenger Survey
Author: Transport Focus
Date: 2017
Type: Survey



National Rail Passenger Survey
Main Report Autumn 2017

transportfocus

What is it?

- C.4** The National Rail Passenger Survey (NRPS) provides a network-wide picture of customers journey satisfaction with rail travel. Opinions of train services are collected twice a year from a representative sample of passenger journeys.

What is in it?

- C.5** Results tended to be broadly similar from the previous year, with overall satisfaction varying between 72% and 96%. Thameslink, Southern and Southeastern showed the biggest rise in satisfaction, suggesting that recent periods of poor performance had improved.
- C.6** Value for money continues to drive the lowest overall satisfaction, with some individual routes within TOCs only achieving 21%.
- C.7** Individual satisfaction for specific station facilities were broadly the same or improved from the previous year.
- C.8** Individual satisfaction for specific train facilities showed more signs of improvement, however the overall satisfaction with the train had dropped by 2%.

Key points for this review

- C.9** Satisfaction for the London and South East (where DCO / DOO is most prevalent) remains the weakest sector, although this is obviously affected by a number of reasons.
- C.10** Interestingly, both Southern and Gatwick Express which have switched from DGO to DCO both saw increased satisfaction to the question on availability of staff on the train.

Experiences of disabled rail passengers

Document Name: Experiences of disabled rail passengers
Author: bdrc continental
Commissioned by: Passenger Focus (now Transport Focus)
Date: 2012
Type: Research



Experiences of disabled rail passengers

October 2012

What is it?

- C.11** The NRPS aims to find out how satisfied passengers are with the rail services they use. This research was commissioned to understand how the specific group of passengers with

disabilities compared with the national picture and to ensure that their views were driving change in improving rail accessibility.

What is in it?

- C.12 The data showed that disabled passengers had similar levels of satisfaction as the national average, with station and on-train factors. However, there were lower ratings for security and ease of getting on and off the train. Some respondents expressed being anxious about being unable to alight the train at their destination.
- C.13 As found elsewhere in this literature review, many passengers are simply not aware that they could book assistance for their journey. For those that did, many found that booking at least 24 hours in advance was simply impactable.

Key points for this review

- C.14 More disabled passengers regularly travel for work that might have been expected. 40% of respondents travel during peak times, 30% regularly commute for work and 10% travel for business purposes.
- C.15 The majority (78%) of journeys made by disabled passengers are made alone, increasing the need for additional support and assistance from staff.

Passenger Assist Mystery Shop

Document Name:	Passenger Assist
Author:	Passenger Focus (now Transport Focus)
Supported by:	DfT / Network Rail
Date:	2014
Type:	Research



What is it?

- C.16 A mystery shop exercise was undertaken to try and establish the effectiveness of PA, measuring the whole experience from first booking through to the journey completion. Mystery shoppers were all existing rail passengers with disabilities, including cognitive impairment. All journeys were made at off-peak times.

What is in it?

- C.17 75% of shoppers were satisfied with the overall service provision, but there were many instances of individual parts of the assistance failing (namely: no assistance available, staff untrained or unwilling to help). There was a general lack of consistency and quality to the service being offered.
- C.18 It was found that passengers' assistance requirements are not always reaching station and on-train staff.

Key points for this review

C.19 Supporting the overall view that there is a lack of consistency and quality in delivery, there were many instances where staff were not present or were unable / unwilling to assist passengers in boarding the train, finding their seat or alighting the train. Issues such as the visual information displays not working on-board the train all contribute to the passenger’s experience.

ORR Research on DPPPs

C.20 ORR carried out a large-scale programme of consumer research during 2017 to look in depth at accessibility and assistance. This allowed them to monitor train and station operators’ compliance with the ORR’s DPPP licence condition.

C.21 It gave a clear picture of passengers with disabilities’ experiences of assisted travel and allowed them to build up a strong evidence base to help prioritise and target regulatory interventions.

C.22 Three pieces of research have been published and are reviewed over the following pages.

C.23 The research focused on the following areas:

- A survey of passengers who have booked assistance. The findings helped to provide insight into passengers’ experiences of the booking process, assistance provision, changing trains, and the knowledge and helpfulness of staff they interact with. It also provided a measure of satisfaction with the overall experience.
- A mystery shop of unbooked assistance - checking compliance, at an industry level, with the obligation to assist passengers who travel without booking ahead.
- A survey to measure levels of passengers with disabilities’ awareness of the current Passenger Assist and turn-up-and-go services. This was also used to investigate any potential barriers to travel for passengers who do not use these services and investigate ways in which information about them could best be presented and disseminated.
- A review of train and station operators’ websites to assess the provision and promotion of online assistance information from an accessibility perspective. This provided us with a snapshot of how accessible these websites are to passengers with particular disabilities or impairments.

Awareness of Assisted Travel Services

Document Name: Research into passenger awareness of assisted travel services
 Author: ComRes
 Commissioned by: Office of Rail and Road
 Date: 2017
 Type: Research



What is it?

C.24 ORR wanted a better understanding of how aware disabled passengers were of the assistance available to them when using the railway. The ORR also wanted to understand the barriers to

this awareness and what factors were deterring disabled passengers from using the rail network.

What is in it?

- C.25 Half of all respondents (51%) were aware of the existence of assistance services available to them. However, they were not all able to specify particular types of support.
- C.26 Awareness of Passenger Assist (pre-booked travel) was even lower, with 54% of respondents having never heard of it.
- C.27 Finally, only 1 in 5 respondents knew about Turn up and Go, with most awareness by young adults travelling in the London area.

Key points for this review

- C.28 The biggest barrier discouraging disabled passengers for travelling is platform access issues. This comes as part of a wider theme of lack of access being the prominent thing to put off people travelling. The joint second barrier was getting on and off the train.
- C.29 The greatest request from passengers through Passenger Assist was for assistance with getting on and off the train, followed by help with luggage and changing platforms.

Research into passenger experiences of Passenger Assist

Document Name:	Research into passenger experiences of Passenger Assist
Author:	Breaking Blue
Commissioned by:	Office of Rail and Road
Date:	2017
Type:	Research



What is it?

- C.30** ORR wanted to investigate the extent to which Passenger Assist (PA) was meeting users needs and expectations. PA obliges station operators to provide free assistance to passengers to help them complete their journey, with the booking system managed by RDG. The scope of the research included the whole process from initial booking to after the journey had been made.

What is in it?

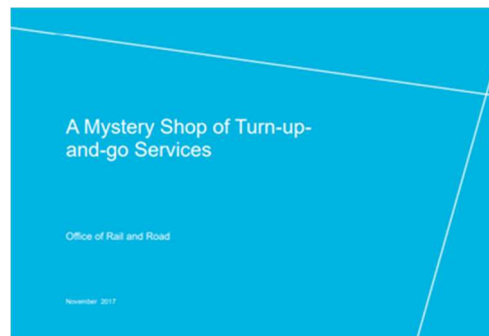
- C.31 PA is important to those who use it: 63% of respondents stated they couldn't have completed their journey without it; a further 35% would have had more difficulty.
- C.32 Satisfaction is high amongst users and most journeys are completed as planned. However, there are reliability issues when individual requests are analysed. A customer making a journey using two connecting trains may have to book six individual pieces of assistance.
- C.33 The research recommends more broader training for staff to improve their understanding of the process and issues passengers may have. This should be supported by better station facilities.

Key points for this review

- C.34 The most requested types of assistance can all be affected by the mode of operation of the train service. The top five requests are:
- Boarding / alighting the train (58% of respondents requested this)
 - Help with luggage (49%)
 - Getting to the platform (28%)
 - Provision of a ramp (28%)
 - Getting to a seat (25%)

A Mystery Shop of turn-up-and-go (TUAG) Services

Document Name:	A Mystery Shop of turn-up-and-go Services
Author:	Aecom
Commissioned by:	Office of Rail and Road
Date:	2017
Type:	Research



What is it?

- C.35 ORR undertook a mystery shopping exercise to provide insight into the quality of assistance that is being provided across the network via TUAG. The research objectives set out to investigate aspects of the passenger experience of TUAG, including station access, ticket buying facilities, staff helpfulness, information provision and the reliability of actual assistance provision.

What is in it?

- C.36 Results of the study showed many positive experiences of TUAG, demonstrating that, when implemented correctly, the scheme generally delivers good outcomes for users. Some Mystery Shoppers expressed how taking part in the study had given them the confidence to travel by train more often as their experience had demonstrated that their assistance needs could be met.
- C.37 However, results also highlighted areas for improvements, particularly the lack of communication between staff (and how this impacts upon reliability of the service), the need to improve staff attitudes and how staff engaged with passengers with hidden disabilities.

Key points for this review

- C.38 An interesting observation was that most (57%) of the assistance from station staff, came from ticket office staff. This should become less disruptive to other passengers as more TOCs are moving ticket office staff to the concourse to provide help with ticket machines.
- C.39 There is a specific section on DCO (5.2.2), with one of the key findings being that there was a general lack of uncertainty if a second member of staff was on-board or not.

D Operator-specific initiatives and differences noted in DPPPs

Northern

- Disability awareness training through partnerships with local charities
- Northern will be investing over £40m in station improvements
- Close working with Network Rail to support the delivery and development of Access for All schemes.
- Provision of 'Baby on board' badges and a Priority Seat Card scheme to make it easier for passengers to use Priority Seating areas.
- Creation of 10 'inclusive hubs' at stations which will provide high standards of accessibility for all passengers. At these hubs Northern will provide better signage and information (including Braille signs), provide obstruction free walking routes, accessible toilets, hand rails, automatic doors and other enhancements.
- Installation of 18 "Harrington humps" to reduce the stepping distances from platforms to trains and improve ease of using wheelchair ramps by April 2020
- BlueAssist, Orange Wallet, Bridges Card.
- By April 2020 all stations with more than 3,000 passengers per year will be fitted with Help points with induction loops, Customer Information Screens and Public Address systems.
- Priority seat card
- Conductors are trained to make announcements giving details of the next station in good time to allow disabled passengers to prepare to alight. They will also provide information on any service disruption. All Conductors have a smart device and are able to look up and pass on disruption information as well as details of connecting services, facilities at stations and train running. Conductors are trained to take into account the needs of visually impaired, deaf or hearing impaired people, as well as those with reduced mobility.
- Northern do not offer a seat reservations service. Conductors, who are on every train, will make every effort to help older and disabled passengers to find a seat. They will also take reasonable steps to ensure that the wheelchair space is available for wheelchair users when required.

South Western Railway

- Member of staff on every train to assist with boarding and alighting
- 24 hours notice required for booking assistance. From June 2018 this will improve to 12 hours, or 4 hours for travel between certain stations (listed in DPPP document and leaflet).
- For inaccessible stations, alternative accessible road transport to/from the nearest or most convenient accessible station provided at no additional cost
- Scooter card scheme

- Registered Assistance Dogs are welcome on all services. If travelling with an Assistance Dog and there are no standard class seats available, passengers can upgrade to first class for free.
- All trains have a member of staff on board who will provide assistance with boarding for passengers who are already on the platform before the train arrives, and they will help passengers alight from the train at their destination.

Govia Thameslink Rail

- Introducing new trains with improved accessibility by 2018
- Improving access, Blue Badge parking and interchange with other forms of transport
- Improving information on stations by giving staff tablets that are linked to the internet for up-to-the-minute information
- Local Accessibility Ambassadors, recruited internally, to monitor and improve assisted travel; including arranging 'try a train days' and working with local groups
- Travel Support Card is a useful communication aid, and can be filled in by the holder and shown to staff when requesting information or assistance. The Card is available to anyone on request from Customer Relations
- Priority Seating Card allows someone to discretely ask to sit down in the priority seating area.
- GTR advise that passengers give at least 12 hours' notice, and make contact at least the day before travel.
- In the following circumstances, GTR advise that passengers give 24 hours' notice, so they can ensure assistance is provided:
 - When making a journey involving other train operators
 - When travelling to or from unstaffed stations
 - If passengers need step-free access, but are travelling to or from a station which doesn't have this
- Arrival time: By arriving 20 minutes before the train is scheduled to depart, there will be enough time to assist passengers to the platforms before the departure time and ensure the assistance is not rushed. If passengers do not allow this time, they may have to take a later service.
- In certain parts of the network, many trains do not have a conductor on board. However, drivers are trained to make announcements to assist passengers wherever possible. Passengers may contact a member of platform staff or use the station's help points if they have any queries or issues.
- Most stations have help points, with hearing loops, on the platforms. These are directly linked with their control centre.

West Midlands Trains

- From April 2018, WMT will start trialling a new personalized journey planning service to arrange bus, rail or taxi travel (depending on needs) for those aged 65 or over. In addition the programme will seek to understand the needs of other passenger groups and introduce them into the trial.
- Priority Seat Card scheme assists passengers to obtain a seat and removes the need to explain why they need one. These are available to people who struggle to stand, pregnant women and those carrying small children.

- Imminent introduction of 'Cab&Go' service to and from 40 stations from April 2019, providing wheelchair accessible vehicles upon request at one hour's notice, either online or via a smartphone app
- Ongoing monitoring and evaluating the service provided, including the establishment of a Stakeholder Equality Group to review progress on accessibility
Online Panel, your mystery shopping programme and 'Customer shadowing' scheme all take into account the needs of passengers requiring assistance.
- All staff are trained in the procedures to be adopted in the event of an emergency on-board or at a station, including the evacuation of stations and trains. On-train staff and drivers are trained in emergency evacuation procedures. WMT policy is not to evacuate passengers with mobility impairments or wheelchair users until appropriate support is available from the emergency services, unless there is a life-threatening situation. The passenger will never be left on-board alone.
- Most trains have priority seating for older and disabled people which are clearly marked.

Chiltern

- A number of access improvement schemes have been completed over the last 12 months, including:
- New benches at all stations, to replace those which no longer complied with the DfT's standards
- A fully accessible brand-new station built in 2015 (Oxford Parkway)
- Two existing stations completely rebuilt to be fully accessible (Islip and Bicester Village, previously called Bicester Town).
- New and additional seating at all stations.
- New mobility assistance buggies purchased for Marylebone Station to enhance the customer experience.
- Accessible booking office window installed at Haddenham and Thame Parkway
- All future major projects at stations in conjunction with Network Rail will feature the "Inclusive Design for All" process at the development stage.

Grand Central

- Free wi-fi
- Grand Central does not manage any stations so Grand Central works with operators of the stations served to assist disabled passengers.

Virgin Trains

- Onboard staff will serve disabled customers food and drinks at their seat if they're unable to visit the shop.
- Accessibility improvements made at Virgin Trains stations:
 - A "Changing Places" toilet at Crewe station with a changing facility for disabled people who require special facilities such as hoists
 - Accessibility improvements at Carlisle, Birmingham International, Warrington Bank Quay, Lancaster, Coventry, Macclesfield, Wolverhampton, Preston, Oxenholme and Stafford

London Overground

- Commitment to a 'Turn Up and Go' service for assisting disabled and older passengers who wish to arrive and travel on London Overground services without booking in advance

- Commitment to carry out accessibility mystery traveller surveys in order to ensure the continuous improvement of your services.
- The TfL Contact Centre available 24 hours a day

TfL Rail

- ‘Turn Up and Go’ policy; customers can turn up at any TfL Rail station without pre-booking and staff will provide assistance, including assistance with luggage.

Arriva Train Wales

- ‘All new-build rolling stock taken on lease will be fully compliant with the PRM/TSI by 2020.
- Improvements Made at Stations to Assist Disabled Passengers:
 - Works at Machynlleth station to provide lift access between platforms
 - During 2016 lift access between platforms has been provided at both Llandaf and Radyr stations, and new lifts have been installed at Pontypridd station.
 - Ramped access between platforms has been provided at Severn Tunnel Junction station.
- Working with Assistance Dogs UK to improve access for passengers who travel with the aid of assistance dogs, including initiative which offers a reserved protected space in front of the adjacent seat, to ensure that the assistance dog can travel in safety and comfort.

Greater Anglia

- Commitment to introduce a customer satisfaction survey measurement tool which will call back 5% of users of the pre-booked assistance service to ensure that the service met their expectations
- Assistance dogs may accompany passengers anywhere onboard. Where practicable, and if space is available, the Conductor on the Intercity services may upgrade passengers to First Class.
- Priority Seat Card scheme which assists disabled passengers in obtaining a seat by removing the need for them to explain why they need a seat.
- Stakeholder Equality Group will review the content of staff training annually
- Rolling stock
 - Class 321: wheelchair spaces and accessible toilets are currently being installed to Class 321 trains used on commuter services from Essex and South Suffolk.
 - Intercity: all Mk3 carriages used on the Intercity services operating on the Great Eastern Main Line between Norwich, Ipswich, Colchester, Chelmsford and London have benefitted from a major refresh. This project sees all carriages benefiting from power points, new carpets, new seat covers, better lighting, upgraded toilets and an interior and an exterior re-paint.
 - All trains will be fully compliant with RVAR and PRM-TSI regulations by 2020
- Stations
 - A number of improvements across the network, including Roydon, Bishops Stortford, Chelmsford and Cambridge.
 - New fully accessible station at Lea Bridge

Virgin Trains East Coast

- Commitment to provide a free upgrade to the first class wheelchair space, if available, for the passenger and a companion when a standard class wheelchair space is not available to book.
- Onboard staff will also be happy to serve disabled customers food and drinks at their seat if they're unable to visit the shop.
- Examples of accessibility improvements made at Virgin managed stations:
 - Installing RNIB 'Maps for All' at Virgin managed stations to improve independent wayfinding both within the station and from the station to key points of interest
 - Installed dropped kerbs and a raised safe crossing outside Peterborough station
 - Installed additional perch seating at a number of stations
 - Installation of three additional customer information offices that provide weather proof waiting facilities for customers waiting for staff assistance, low level information counters covered by audio induction loops and are accessed through automatic doors.

Hull Trains

- Commitment to survey a minimum of 5% of customers that use assisted travel service in order to get feedback
- Commitment to the Blue Assist scheme
- Accessible Travel Group, which consists of regular travellers, rail user group representatives and disability group members and meets twice yearly to discuss performance in delivering accessible travel and the steps to be taken to improve services and trains.

Cross Country

- At-seat catering on some services

Merseyrail

- No accessible toilets available on any trains
- Plan to have new trains on the network by the early 2020s and the procurement process is underway.
- Recommendation for passengers to give only 1 hours' notice for assistance bookings when travelling on Merseyrail services
- Commitment to record the number of unbooked assistances delivered
- All Merseyrail stations now benefit from a Customer Information System (CIS).
- Installed accessible toilet facilities at 52 stations across the network.
- Lifts have been installed at Bootle Oriel Road, Sandhills, Hooton, Fazakerley, Waterloo, Orrell Park, Birkenhead North and Formby.
- Help points with induction loops are available on all platforms.
- Major refurbishment undertaken at Liverpool Central including improved waiting facilities, accessible toilets and improved access to the lift.
- Installed easily accessible ticket counters at 38 stations.
- By December 2016, all five underground stations will have undergone major refurbishment, making them cleaner, lighter and less cluttered so improving the customer experience. All platforms and passageways have been improved, with new flooring, brighter lights, new signage and seating.

c2c

- Dedicated accessibility helpline available 24 hours a day
- Recommendation for passengers to give only 4 hours' notice for assistance bookings when travelling on c2c services
- Commitment to provide compensation of twice the cost of a passengers' ticket for their journey, if c2c fail to provide assistance booked through the Passenger Assist service
- Commitment to provide 'Turn Up and Go' assistance where assistance has not been booked in advance
- The c2c Live app which allows passengers to book assistance in advance and notify the assisted travel team when they have arrived at the station.
- 'Turn Up and Go': All c2c stations are staffed from before the first train runs in the morning until after the last train has departed at night. c2c will, therefore, provide assistance at any of their stations, even if this has not been booked in advance. This assistance may not be available immediately (due to staff undertaking other duties), and so passengers are advised to book ahead if they require a specific train or connection. c2c will always try to provide assistance as soon as reasonably possible, and will give a clear reason for any delay.

Southeastern

- Recommendation for passengers to give 12 hours' notice for assistance bookings when travelling on Southeastern services
- 'Recite Me' app on Southeastern website, that gives better access to the information by including a screen reader as well as the ability to increase the font size and change the background colours to suit the users requirements
- Priority seat card initiative to allow disabled passengers to find seats
- 24-hour helpline
- Onboard toilets:
 - Mainline Class 375 and high-speed Class 395 trains, have two toilets, both with baby changing fold-down tables, one of which is wheelchair accessible.
 - Metro Class 465/9, 465/0 and 466 trains also have toilets with fold down baby changing facilities, but these are not wheelchair accessible. These units are going through a refurbishment programme and will all have accessible toilets when this is complete in 2020.
 - Metro service Class 376 trains do not have toilets on board.
- Investigating the use of roller ramps for accessing trains as it is believed they may benefit staff and improve confidence of passengers who use the ramps – evaluation is ongoing
- Introduction of 'scooter boxes' to many stations as an easy guide for passengers and staff to use to ensure that scooters are suitable for on-train use.

TransPennine Express

- Accessibility Consultation Forum
- BlueAssist
- Installation of 'changing places' toilets

Great Western Railway

- 'Guide Dog Travel Charter' to help ensure that guide dog owners can travel safely with no restrictions or extra cost
- Priority seat card scheme which makes it easier for passengers to get a priority seat

- Customer panels, including webinar pilot
- Deployed the passenger assistance app to all smartphones so that staff have easy access to the customer bookings
- If passengers want to buy snacks or drinks on their journey, but can't get to and from the buffet car easily, train crew will arrange for refreshments to be brought to the passenger at their seat.
- Improvement completed:
 - New bench seating at Newquay
 - Installed handrails on the footpath approach to the station footbridge at Montpelier
 - Replaced the previously non-compliant ramp with a new accessible ramp and steps at Looe
 - Installed new line markings and pedestrian walkways to the car park at Bodmin Parkway
 - Fitted new automated doors to the ticket hall, as well as a new counter, at Cookham station
 - Installed a new male, female and accessible toilets at Teignmouth
- Forthcoming improvements:
 - Install an accessible ticket desk at Penzance, Goring & Streatley and Twyford
 - Provide an accessible toilet on island platform at Newton Abbot
 - Improve disabled parking access at Clifton Down
 - Improve steps and install new handrails at Montpellier, Castle Cary, Bedminster and Mortimer
 - New waiting shelter on platform 1 at Oldfield Park

East Midlands Trains

- Recommendation for passengers to give only 12 hours' notice for assistance bookings when travelling on East Midlands services.
- Commitment to provide passengers with a full refund for their journey if booked assistance is not provided.
- 'Customer Voice' forum which allows passengers to meet the Senior Management team to discuss their views and help to develop a better service for customers.
- 15% off carrymyluggage.com for door-to-door transportation of luggage
- Scooter card scheme
- 24/7 customer contact team
- Installing customer help points with hearing loops at all stations

E Survey

Modes of Operation passenger questionnaire v1

RECRUITMENT

QA. Good morning / afternoon, I'm from Protel, a market research company and I'm undertaken a research study on behalf of the Department for Transport amongst passengers with a disability or who may wish to seek assistance to make their journey. Are you happy to answer a few questions? Thank you. (**Record reason for refusal**). Firstly, can I ask whether any of these apply to you: **Tick all that apply**

1. <input type="checkbox"/> Mobility impairment	2. <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing impairment
3. <input type="checkbox"/> Visual impairment	4. <input type="checkbox"/> Mental health condition
5. <input type="checkbox"/> Learning difficulty	6. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____

QB. I'd like to hear about your experiences based on a recent journey from this station. **Tick one only**

1. <input type="checkbox"/> Outward journey from this station earlier today
2. <input type="checkbox"/> Outward journey from this station made recently
3. <input type="checkbox"/> Journey to this station made recently (if no recent journey from this station has been made)
4. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____

A. SAMPLE JOURNEY DETAILS

QC. Please specify the station to which this questionnaire relates **Tick one only**

- 1 Aylesbury Vale Parkway
- 2 Dewsbury
- 3 Downham Market
- 4 Earlsfield
- 5 Earlswood
- 6 Harrowgate
- 7 Haywards Heath
- 8 Horley
- 9 Huddersfield
- 10 Southend Central
- 11 Tring
- 12 Winchester

Q1. Which stations did you use? **Write in stations they boarded or alighted at, including any where they changed trains**

Origin station _____

Destination station _____

Interchange station _____

Q2. How did you travel to the origin station? **Tick all that apply**

1. <input type="checkbox"/> Walk	2. <input type="checkbox"/> By car as the driver	3. <input type="checkbox"/> By car as the passenger
4. <input type="checkbox"/> By public transport (e.g. bus or tram)	5. <input type="checkbox"/> By taxi or cab or Uber	6. <input type="checkbox"/> Other

Q3. What was the **main** purpose of the trip? **Tick one box only**

1. <input type="checkbox"/> To / from work	2. <input type="checkbox"/> To / from education
3. <input type="checkbox"/> Visiting friends or relatives	4. <input type="checkbox"/> Shopping
5. <input type="checkbox"/> Leisure or entertainment	6. <input type="checkbox"/> Medical related
7. <input type="checkbox"/> Personal business	8. <input type="checkbox"/> Company business
9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other	

Q4. Who, if anyone, travelled with you? **Tick all that apply**

1. <input type="checkbox"/> No-one, travelling alone	2. <input type="checkbox"/> Friend, relative or colleague
3. <input type="checkbox"/> Helper	4. <input type="checkbox"/> Child 5-15
5. <input type="checkbox"/> Child under 5	6. <input type="checkbox"/> Other

Q5. In planning your journey did you use any of the following information services before starting this journey? **SHOWCARD Tick all that apply**

1. <input type="checkbox"/> National Rail Enquiries website	2. <input type="checkbox"/> Other website
3. <input type="checkbox"/> National Rail Enquiries telephone enquiry service	4. <input type="checkbox"/> Advice from friends or relatives
5. <input type="checkbox"/> Assisted Passenger Reservation Service	6. <input type="checkbox"/> Printed rail timetable
7. <input type="checkbox"/> NR Journey Assist App	8. <input type="checkbox"/> Help Point
9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other	10. <input type="checkbox"/> No, none of these

Q5a. If other, please specify: _____

Q5b. In planning your journey, were you aware of the opportunity to pre-book assistance, for instance through the Assisted Passenger Reservation Service?

1. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	2. <input type="checkbox"/> No
---------------------------------	--------------------------------

Q6. What ticket type are you using? **SHOWCARD Tick one box only**

1. <input type="checkbox"/> Single ticket	2. <input type="checkbox"/> Return ticket
3. <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly pass	4. <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly pass
5. <input type="checkbox"/> Annual season ticket	6. <input type="checkbox"/> Pay as you go Oyster Card or smartcard
7. <input type="checkbox"/> Other	

Q7. What type of railcard, if any, are you using? **SHOWCARD Tick one box only**

1. <input type="checkbox"/> Disabled Persons Railcard	2. <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Railcard
3. <input type="checkbox"/> Friends and Family Railcard	4. <input type="checkbox"/> 16-25 Railcard
5. <input type="checkbox"/> Two Together Railcard	6. <input type="checkbox"/> HM Forces Railcard
7. <input type="checkbox"/> Gold or Network Railcard	8. <input type="checkbox"/> A regional railcard
9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other	10. <input type="checkbox"/> None

Q8. How often do you travel by rail? **Tick one box only**

1. <input type="checkbox"/> Most days (5+ times a week)	2. <input type="checkbox"/> 1-4 times a week
3. <input type="checkbox"/> 1-3 times a month	4. <input type="checkbox"/> Every few months
5. <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 times a year	6. <input type="checkbox"/> Less often

B. ASSISTANCE AND EXPERIENCE

Q9. Thinking about making this journey, which help would you have liked to receive and which help did you receive **SHOWCARD** **Tick all that apply**

		Not needed	Needed and received from railway staff	Needed and received from companion	Needed and received from passenger	Wanted but did not received
a	Help finding the right platform	1	2	3	4	5
b	Help reaching the platform	1	2	3	4	5
c	Help getting onto the train	1	2	3	4	5
d	Help during the train journey	1	2	3	4	5
e	Help getting off the train	1	2	3	4	5
f	Other (specify)		2	3	4	5

Q9a. If you did not receive all the help you wanted, what impacts has this had on you and your future travel?

please specify: _____

Q10. Did you book travel assistance in advance?

- | |
|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes – ASK Q12 |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> No – ASK Q13 |

Q11. Why was that? **Tick all that apply**

- | |
|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> To make the journey easier / less stressful |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Have found the service useful in the past |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> So as not to rely on a companion / companion not available |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> I was advised to when booking my ticket |
| 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Recommended by friend / colleague / helper |
| 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Q11a. If other, please specify: _____

Q12. Why was that? **Tick all that apply**

- | |
|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Have no need to |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Journey was unplanned |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Haven't found the service useful in the past |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Wasn't aware that I could |
| 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Q12a. If other, please specify: _____

Q13. Using the scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is very poor and 5 is excellent, please give your impression of the rail journey *SHOWCARD*

Tick one box for each attribute

Element		Very poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	N/A
a	Providing the information that I need at the station in an appropriate format	1	2	3	4	5	6
b	Ease of moving around the station in	1	2	3	4	5	6
c	Availability of station staff to provide information and assistance	1	2	3	4	5	6
d	The helpfulness of station staff	1	2	3	4	5	6
e	Providing the information that I need on the train in an appropriate format	1	2	3	4	5	6
f	Ease of getting on or off the train	1	2	3	4	5	6
g	Availability of on-train staff to provide information and assistance	1	2	3	4	5	6
h	The helpfulness of on-train staff	1	2	3	4	5	6
i	Your overall experience during this journey	1	2	3	4	5	6

Q14. Are there any improvements you would like to see to make this journey easier?

Q15. Thinking about the on-train staff, as far as you are aware, aside from the driver were there any other staff? **Tick all that apply**

1. <input type="checkbox"/> No, no-one aside from the driver	2. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, a guard or ticket inspector
3. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, a customer service manager (or other members of staff who is not a guard or ticket inspector)	4. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, a member of British Transport Police
5. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, other	

C: PROFILING

Q16. Which age group are you in? *SHOWCARD* **Tick one box only**

1. <input type="checkbox"/> 14 – 18	2. <input type="checkbox"/> 19 – 24
3. <input type="checkbox"/> 25 – 34	4. <input type="checkbox"/> 35 – 44
5. <input type="checkbox"/> 45 – 59	6. <input type="checkbox"/> 60 – 64
7. <input type="checkbox"/> 65 – 74	8. <input type="checkbox"/> 75+
9. <input type="checkbox"/> Refused	

Q17. Are you currently... ? *SHOWCARD* **Tick one box only**

1. <input type="checkbox"/> Employed full time (30 hours or more per week)	2. <input type="checkbox"/> Employed part time (29 hours or less per week)
3. <input type="checkbox"/> Self employed	4. <input type="checkbox"/> Retired
5. <input type="checkbox"/> Long term sick or disabled	6. <input type="checkbox"/> Looking after home or family
7. <input type="checkbox"/> Full time education	8. <input type="checkbox"/> Part time education
9. <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed	10. <input type="checkbox"/> Other

11. <input type="checkbox"/> Refused	
--------------------------------------	--

Q17a. If other, please specify: _____

Q18. Are you registered disabled? **Tick one box only**

1. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	2. <input type="checkbox"/> No
---------------------------------	--------------------------------

Q19. Do you, or a relative, hold a Blue or Orange disabled parking badge? **Tick one box only**

1. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	2. <input type="checkbox"/> No
---------------------------------	--------------------------------

Q20. What is your home postcode (we don't need your full address, but the full postcode would be helpful for our analysis purposes only)

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

Refused

Q21. Would you be willing to take part in further research about rail travel? **Tick one box only**

1. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	2. <input type="checkbox"/> No
---------------------------------	--------------------------------

Q22. If Yes, please take contact details Name _____

Tel. no. _____

Q23. Interviewer record gender

1. <input type="checkbox"/> Male	2. <input type="checkbox"/> Female
----------------------------------	------------------------------------

Thank you for taking the time to take part in this survey. Give Thank you leaflet.

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE INTERVIEWER

With an Under 5 <input type="checkbox"/>	Shopping or bags <input type="checkbox"/>	Pushchair or buggy <input type="checkbox"/>	Walking stick or other aid? <input type="checkbox"/>	Luggage or suitcase <input type="checkbox"/>
Other hindrance <input type="checkbox"/>	Wheelchair user <input type="checkbox"/>	Visual disability <input type="checkbox"/>	Hearing disability <input type="checkbox"/>	Guide dog <input type="checkbox"/>
Date		Interviewers initials		
Time of interview				

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Effects of modes of train operations on passengers with disabilities - guidance note

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1 Executive Summary and Introduction

Overview

- 1.1 Research has been undertaken on behalf of the Department for Transport and Rail Delivery Group into the effects of different modes of train operation on passengers with disabilities; both on spontaneous travel, and using pre-booked assistance.
- 1.2 The research has led to the development of this guidance document, detailing the measures that need to be put in place to mitigate detrimental effects on disabled people's ability to access rail services, in accordance with the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.
- 1.3 This guidance document sets out several key principles, which are supported by good practice statements that train operators should consider as part of their service offer. These are particularly important when train operators are looking to change the mode of operation of any of their services.
- 1.4 The table below summarises the key principles from this document. The right-hand column reflects the main piece of research that has led to the principle. However, in many cases, multiple findings and views led to a general theme emerging.

Principles	Research
Information provided should be accurate, up to date, and available in a range of appropriate formats to meet the needs of passengers irrespective of any disabilities.	The <i>EC Rail Passenger Rights & Obligations</i> requires that passengers are provided with information concerning the accessibility of rail services and trains in appropriate formats. This is also a requirement of PRM-TSI
Disabled passengers should have a means of contacting someone if necessary and should be aware of all the options available. Passenger emotional wellbeing should be considered as well as their physical requirements.	The in-depth interviews found that having real-time updates on any delays or disruption can add a layer of security and reassurance for the passenger travelling. Personal interaction and reassurance is important.
Information relevant to disabled passengers concerning the facilities and services that are available, including the presence of staffing, should be made available prior to starting the journey.	The in-depth interviews found that extensive preparation was needed before the journey to make the travel experience as smooth as possible, including knowing the stops along the route and exact timings of arrival.

Principles	Research
The arrangements put in place should not put disabled passengers in a position where they have to rely on other passengers for assistance.	The in-depth interviews found that in situations where passengers with disabilities placed importance on receiving the assistance that they needed without having to rely on other passengers. Where no station or on-board staff is available interviewees felt a lack of accountability and security.
Good customer service should include consistent delivery of support to disabled passengers.	The <i>Passenger Assist Mystery Shop</i> highlighted a lack of consistency and quality in delivery.
All staff, including at the most senior level, should have appropriate training in disability awareness and this should be refreshed periodically.	The <i>Research into passenger experiences of Passenger Assist</i> recommends more broader training for staff to improve their understanding of the process and issues passengers may have.
Staff should be pro-active and aware of passengers in need of assistance.	The station surveys found that the need to improve staff attitude and willingness to provide assistance was important for passengers using both DGO and DCO services.
Disabled passengers have an equal right to travel as other passengers and to this end, all reasonable measures should be deployed to enable disabled passengers to travel	Both the <i>Equality Act (2010)</i> and <i>EC Rail Passenger Rights & Obligations</i> both require operators to take reasonable steps to ensure disabled passengers are not discriminated against. This principle is not a legal opinion on the legislation, but simply acts as a reminder to operators, particularly when altering the mode of operation to train services.
Policies used by TOCs should be transparent and should communicate clearly the offer to passengers.	The <i>EC Rail Passenger Rights & Obligations</i> requires that passengers are provided with information concerning the accessibility of rail services and trains and DPPP.
Delivery of service to disabled customers should be in line with the arrangements.	The <i>Passenger Assist Mystery Shop</i> highlighted a lack of consistency and quality in service delivery.
Disabled passengers should be made aware in a timely and appropriate manner of any relevant changes to the changes in accessibility support.	The in-depth interviews found that issues for passengers with disabilities currently arise mostly when trains are diverted from their normal timetable, and these are perceived to become a bigger issue under DOO.

Glossary

Term	Abbreviation	Meaning
Customer Information System	CIS	A system to present information to passengers on station. Whenever facilities allow, this should be done by both audio and visual means.
Driver Controlled Operation	DCO	A mode of operation where the driver is solely responsible for operation of the train but which has a SSM who undertakes customer service duties.
Driver and Guard ¹ Operation	DGO	A mode of operation where both the driver and the Conductor are involved in the operation of the train.
Driver Only Operation	DOO	A mode of train operation where there is no SSM on board.
Disabled Passenger	DP	Any passenger with a disability or reduced mobility.
Disabled People's Protection Policy	DPPP	A document setting out the arrangements and assistance that an operator will provide to protect the interests of disabled people using its services and to facilitate such use.
Passenger Assist	PA	A service offered by operators which provides assistance to disabled passengers or those needing assistance
Passenger Information System	PIS	A system to present information to passengers. Whenever facilities allow, this should be done by both audio and visual means.
Second Staff Member	SSM	A member of on-train staff other than the driver. The term includes Conductor but also other customer service roles such as Customer Service Manager. It does not include catering staff or staff solely concerned with revenue protection.

¹ The term Conductor is used in the text of the report as it is the industry standard term. However, when describing the mode of operation (for example DGO (G) or Driver / Guard Operation) the term Guard is used.

2 Information and communication

Key principles

- Information provided should be accurate, up to date, and available in a range of appropriate formats so as to meet the needs of passengers irrespective of any disabilities.
- Disabled passengers should have a means of contacting someone if necessary, and should be aware of all the contact options available.
- Information relevant to disabled passengers concerning the facilities and services that are available, including the presence of staffing, should be made available prior to commencing and during the journey.
- The arrangements put in place should not put disabled passengers in a position where they have to rely on other passengers for assistance.

Information when planning a journey

- 2.1 Useful information on station staffing is available from both National Rail Enquiries and TOCs. This helps passengers effectively plan their journeys and understand the impact on their accessibility requirements. A similar level of information on the staffing of individual train services would equally be helpful, enabling passengers to fully understand the level of assistance available for spontaneous travel. This should set out whether there is a possibility that the SSM may not be present when trains are operating DCO.
- 2.2 This information should be made available through journey planners and customer apps for the benefit of both disabled and non-disabled passengers. Where a train is only scheduled to have a SSM for part of the journey being planned this should be made clear.²

Information at the time of travel

Exceptional absence of an SSM

- 2.3 In the exceptional event that a train that would normally have a SSM is either running without one or will not have one for a later portion of the journey, this information should be made clear at stations concerned by means of the customer information displays and announcements.
- 2.4 If the absence of an SSM for part of the journey is unplanned then it should be made known to passengers via passenger information systems. If passenger assistance is required, appropriate new arrangements should be put in place.

² It is recognised that modifications will be required to the train service database to support this information requirement.

Making passengers aware of the presence of an SSM on-board

- 2.5 When there is a SSM on the train, disabled passengers should be made aware of their presence through confirmation being given via the passenger information system, noting that this will be in a range of formats. In addition, regular patrolling of the train, if necessary over and above the requirements of revenue protection, will communicate the fact that there is an SSM on-board and will also provide opportunities for a disabled passenger to seek assistance if needed.
- 2.6 If a train does not have a through corridor connections and there is not a SSM in one section of the train, passenger information systems should be used to make this clear and specify which coaches are affected. If the SSM moves between portions then this information should be updated as the journey progresses.
- 2.7 Similarly, if the level of loading of a train prohibits the SSM from walking through the train, this should be made clear by means of passenger information systems and the location of the SSM should be identified.

Methods of communication other than with a SSM

- 2.8 Where there is no SSM, disabled passengers will want the reassurance that assistance can be requested by some other means. If the arrangements are that this is by means of the passenger communications apparatus then the signage of this apparatus should make it clear whether the equipment is intended only for emergency use or for more general assistance. In the latter case, labels such as “SOS” should be avoided as they discourage use by disabled passengers who are seeking information or assistance. Railway design standards define the requirements of the communication equipment, but consideration should be given to appropriate accessible design standards taking into account the need to provide:
- symbols in addition to the written word;
 - tactile or braille;
 - clear instructions regarding use; and
 - visual contracting information.
- 2.9 A passenger travelling with a Passenger Assist booking made in advance of the journey should have the ability to contact (by phone, text or app) somebody who has immediate access to their arrangements in order to be advised of any changes that have had to be made due to problems en-route. Wherever possible, the same means of communication should be made available to disabled passengers who have not made a request for Passenger Assist. TOCs should consider how this service is advertised or shared with passengers to ensure that everyone can access the service without declaring their disability.
- 2.10 Provision of means of communication that require the use of a mobile phone – either by a call for assistance telephone number or an ‘app’ are a useful complement to the use of train equipment. However, they should not be relied upon as the primary means of communication due to the lack of continuous mobile signal coverage. TOCs should be sensitive to the fact that many disabled passengers feel reluctant to use any form of help point, especially when their conversation can be overheard.

3 Staff knowledge, training and knowledge

Principles

- Good customer service should include consistent delivery of support to disabled passengers.
- All staff, to the most senior level, should have appropriate training in disability awareness and this should be refreshed periodically.
- All staff should be pro-active and aware of passengers in need of assistance whilst being sensitive to the wishes of disabled passenger who prefer to travel independently.

Training

- 3.1 In order to ensure that encounters with disabled passengers are positive and empathetic, all staff should be trained to understand the wide range of passenger needs and impairments.
- 3.2 Disabled passengers have a wide range of needs and consideration must be taken of all of them, including invisible and dual impairment. It should also make clear that disabled people may also have challenges of travelling with luggage or children. Training should address all of these issues.
- 3.3 Training should ensure that staff have an expectation of assisting as necessary all disabled passengers and not only those that have used the Passenger Assist service.
- 3.4 Training of drivers of DOO services in the making of announcements should include taking into account the particular needs of disabled travellers.
- 3.5 Staff making and writing the CIS announcements should be trained to ensure messages are clear for those who have hearing impairments or have audio sensitivity and therefore use ear defenders.
- 3.6 Relevant staff should be trained in operating assistance equipment, such as ramps. Staff should also be aware of where such equipment is stored.
- 3.7 Many journeys by disabled passengers involve more than one train and, often, more than one operator where the arrangements in place at stations and on trains is likely to vary. Staff should be given training and information to ensure that such complexity is taken into account in advising and assisting passengers. Where possible, information should be available to staff through hand-held devices.

4 Policies and Procedures

Principles

- Disabled passengers have an equal right to travel as other passengers and to this end, all reasonable measures should be deployed to enable disabled passengers to travel
- Policies used by TOCs should be transparent, communicating clearly the offer to passengers, and made available in a range of formats.
- Procedures should ensure a consistent delivery and enhanced confidence amongst disabled passengers.
- Any significant changes to accessibility arrangements should be subjected to a comprehensive risk assessment.
- Disabled passengers should be made aware in a timely and appropriate manner of any relevant changes to the arrangements in place for train operations.

General

- 4.1 Procedures should ensure that all reasonable measures are put in place to ensure that everyone can travel, or alternative arrangements will be made where necessary.
- 4.2 When a change to arrangements for train operations is being planned and progressed through industry mechanisms, active consideration should be given to the effects that they might have upon disabled passengers. These effects should be subjected to an appropriate analysis of risks affecting disabled passengers, taking into account both normal and disrupted operations.
- 4.3 It should be remembered that changes which could potentially affect disabled passengers include not only a change in the mode of operation, but other changes such as changing the operator of the services or the rolling stock used on a group of services.
- 4.4 In order to assess the success of implementation of changes that affect disabled passengers, monitoring exercises, such as passenger surveys, social media monitoring, or 'mystery traveller' surveys should be undertaken.
- 4.5 A means of enabling passenger feedback should be made available across a range of platforms in a variety of formats.

Train working

- 4.6 Where it has been brought to the attention of a SSM that a passenger requires assistance to disembark at a given station. A system must be established to ensure that this information is passed on.
- 4.7 The procedures for train dispatch must ensure that, when staff are present (on platform or on train) who are able to provide assistance, it is possible for them to see when a passenger is in need of assistance.
- 4.8 If a passenger requires assistance in disembarking and this has been brought to the attention of the SSM (either through booked Passenger Assist or on the day), the SSM should aim to

approach that passenger soon before arriving at the station concerned in order to give reassurance that they have not been overlooked).

Station working

- 4.9 Where the assistance at unstaffed stations or out of staffed hours is provided by means of mobile staff, the TOC should declare an indicative time that a spontaneous traveller will have to wait for assistance to arrive and this should be stated in its DPPP.
- 4.10 The arrangements put in place shall be adequate to ensure that if a station calls forward to a passenger's destination / connection station the call will be answered. If there are occasions on which disabled passengers are unable to board their intended service due to an inability to contact the destination station, TOCs should monitor this and act accordingly to address concerns.

Contingency processes

Failure of assistance

- 4.11 The arrangements put in place to assist a passenger involve a chain of events and it must be recognised that a break in this 'chain' will have consequences, potentially serious. Each TOC should have clear policies and procedures in place for how to respond to a failure to provide assistance where it has been requested. These should give particular attention to passengers overcarried, to ensure that they are conveyed safely to their destinations and not left unattended at unsuitable locations.

Procedures and training for disruption and emergency

- 4.12 When responding to disruption, procedures should ensure that its particular impacts on disabled passengers is taken into account and that necessary real-time information to support this is provided to staff and passengers.

Control Information

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