



INCLUSIVE / ACCESSIBLE TRAVEL POLICY

Guidance for Train and Station Operators

Draft of revised Guidance for consultation

Office of Rail and Road
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Drafting Key:

Amendments to 2009 Guidance

New Additions to 2009 Guidance

This document can be produced in an alternative accessible version upon request.

Section A: Introduction

1.1. Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policies

Each passenger train operator, and each station operator (train and station operators are henceforth referred to collectively as 'operators' in this document), requires an operating licence, issued by the Office of Rail and Road (ORR).

These licences include a condition entitled [Disabled People's Protection Policy](#), which requires each operator, including Network Rail in respect of the stations it operates, to establish and comply with an [Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy](#), stating how they will protect the interests of disabled [users of their trains and stations](#).¹

The licence condition also requires that, in establishing the Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy and in making any alteration to it, the licence holder shall have due regard to Design Standards for Accessible Railways: A Joint Code of Practice published by the Department for Transport [and Transport Scotland](#)¹.

The Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy must be established by an operator prior to the licence being granted and must be approved by the [ORR](#). Under the terms of the licence condition, the [ORR](#) can also instruct the licence holder to carry out a review of its Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy.

Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policies are the vehicle for operators to set out, for passengers and the [ORR](#), their commitments and standards of service provision, as well as relevant policies and practices, with regard to [disabled people](#) using the rail network. They will also provide an overview of the accessibility of the operators' facilities and services.

¹ Design Standards for Accessible Railway Stations: A Code of Practice, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/accessible-railway-stations-design-standards>

1.2. About this guidance

This guidance is the result of [to be completed for final guidance once consultation and engagement completed].

This version of the guidance has been derived from previous guidance issued by DfT in 2009. , Along with the Code of Practice, this guidance is designed to protect the interests of users of railway passenger services or station services who are disabled, in line with the Secretary of State's responsibility under section 71B of the Railways Act 1993 (as amended).]

This guidance sets out the criteria the ORR will normally adopt in exercising its function, under the 'Disabled People's Protection Policy' condition of the passenger and station licences², of approving each operator's Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy. In particular, it explains what an approved Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy 'must' contain as a minimum in order to comply with the licence condition. It is also intended to set out recommended good practice that an approved Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy 'may' contain. In addition, it provides an introduction to the relevant background material that licence holders will need to take into account when drawing up an Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy for the ORR's approval.

However, the guidance is not intended to tell operators how they should deliver commitments or what their policies should be. This is largely for operators to decide, and where appropriate the guidance requires operators to provide details of these policies and practices in their Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy.

1.3. Relevant legislation

Railways Act 1993³

The Act contains ORR's section 4 statutory duties which the ORR must take into account in exercising our economic functions. Section 4 includes a duty to have specific regard to the interests of persons who are disabled when undertaking its general duty to promote the interests of users of railway services.

One of the ways that ORR achieves this duty is by requiring licence holders to establish and comply with a Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy that states how they will protect the interests of disabled people that use their trains and stations.

Human Rights Act 1998

The Human Rights Act requires public bodies to act in accordance with the rights set out in the European Convention on Human Rights. As a transport provider, you should provide services in a manner that is compatible with the requirements of the Act.

² http://orr.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/2234/lic-passlic.pdf

³ S.71B of the Railways Act 1993 also imposes an obligation on the Department for Transport to prepare and revise a Code of Practice, after consultation with DPTAC that protects the interests of users of railway passenger services who are disabled. The document that currently fulfils that obligation is the Design Standards for Accessible Railway Stations; a joint Code of Practice. This is authored by the Department for Transport and Transport Scotland, after consultation with DPTAC and MACS respectively.

The rights provided by the Convention include a qualified right of protection from discrimination, which is set out in Article 14. Article 14 states that the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set out in the European Convention on Human Rights shall be secured without 'discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status'. This means that the protection provided by Article 14 only applies to matters which are covered within the Convention. The European Court of Human Rights has determined that 'other status' includes the grounds of disability'.

Equality Act 2010

The Act entered into force on 1 October 2010 and consolidated the previous anti-discrimination legislation into a single Act. The previous guidance referred to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 which is no longer in force.

The 2010 Act identifies nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Part 3 of the 2010 Act makes it unlawful for service providers or public authorities to discriminate against a service user on the basis of a protected characteristic. This Part applies whether the service is being provided by the public sector or privately, and whether that service is for payment or otherwise. Service providers have a legal obligation under section 29 of the 2010 Act not to discriminate against people on the basis of a protected characteristic. This includes by refusing to provide them with a service, by terminating a service provided to them, by not providing them with the service in the manner or on the terms which are usually offered to the public, or subjecting them to any other detriment concerning the service provided.

In respect of people with disabilities, there is an additional duty on service providers to make 'reasonable adjustments'. This applies where a provision, criterion or practice puts a person with a disability at a substantial disadvantage compared with a person who is not disabled. It also applies where a physical feature puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage in relation to a relevant matter in comparison with persons who are not disabled. Finally, it applies where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to persons who are not disabled if an auxiliary aid is not provided, to take reasonable steps to provide the auxiliary aid. There are a few exceptions to this duty and providers should familiarise themselves with the exact scope of the duty.

The test of what is a reasonable adjustment is by its nature an objective one and whether an adjustment is reasonable depends on all the circumstances including:

- a. how practical it is for the organisation to make the change;
- b. the cost of the change;
- c. the impact of the change on other service users;
- d. the organisation's resources and size;

e. whether financial support is available to help the organisation make it'.

In agreeing an Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy with an operator, ORR would expect to see evidence that the operator has broadly anticipated the requirements of persons with reduced mobility and reflected these in their policies, practices and procedures in accordance with Part 3 of the EA 10. In following this guidance to produce a DPPP, and following that DPPP thereafter, we expect that an operator will be able to demonstrate compliance with its duties under the EA 10. However, the onus is on the operator to ensure that they comply with the EA 10, as failure to do so could render them liable to civil court proceedings.

Operators should also make themselves familiar with Part 12, Chapter 3 of the EA 10 which deals with rail vehicle accessibility regulations.

Under Section 149 EA 10 ORR is required to have due regard to:

- eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (relevant protected characteristics are – age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation);
- fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share.

This is known as the Public Sector Equality Duty.

EC Rail Passenger Rights & Obligations (1371/2007)

The Regulation entered into force on 3 December 2009 and aims at establishing rights and obligations for rail passenger service users in order to improve the efficiency and attractiveness of rail transport for passengers. Full compliance by all Member States is expected by 2024.

Operators will need to be mindful of the requirements of the Regulation when developing their policies and practices. In particular, Articles 19 to 25 inclusive give certain rights to Disabled Persons and Persons with Reduced Mobility (DPRM). Passengers have rights to information, reservations and tickets, assistance, care and compensation in the event of delay or cancellation, free-of-charge assistance (for persons with disabilities and/or reduced mobility), compensation in the event of an accident, and a system of national enforcement bodies (NEBs) and complaint handlers.

On 27 September 2017, the European Commission adopted a Proposal to recast and modernise Regulation (EC) 1371/2007 on rail passengers' rights and obligations. The Proposal will be adopted under the ordinary legislative procedure and operators will need to be aware of the proposed changes and when they will take effect. The current domestic exemptions to 1371/2007 apply until December 2019.

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

The Regulations (commonly known as RVAR) aim to set standards designed to improve accessibility for disabled people on light rail passenger vehicles. This includes metro, underground and tram systems, which are not subject to the Railways (Interoperability) Regulations 2011 (and therefore PRM-TSI).

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.

DfT sets the target for all rail vehicles in Great Britain – both heavy and light rail – to be accessible by no later than 1 January 2020 (unless appropriate exemptions are in place). Operators should be mindful of the requirements of this legislation when developing their policies and practices.

Railways (Interoperability) Regulations (2011)

These regulations implement European Directives which have the purpose of establishing common operational standards and practices across European railways. They require new, upgraded or renewed structural subsystems or vehicles to be authorised, before they can be used on the mainline railway. Operators should be mindful of the requirements of this legislation when developing their policies and practices.

Persons with reduced mobility –PRM TSI (1300/2014)

PRM TSI relates to the accessibility of the EU's rail system for persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility. This does not include light rail or metros, which are covered by RVAR in the UK and which is outlined separately above.

The legislation provides the technical specifications 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.

Annex 2.2 contains the following definition: "Person with disabilities and person with reduced mobility' means any person who has a permanent or temporary physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective use of transport on an equal basis with other passengers or whose mobility when using transport is reduced due to age."

Consumer Rights Act 2015

The Consumer Rights Act 2015 provides to passengers a route to redress, and potentially a full or partial refund, should an operator fail to provide a service with reasonable care and skill and / or where information provided to a passenger before purchasing a ticket, whether oral or in writing, (and relied upon by the passenger in making the purchase) is not adhered to.

1.4. Maintaining this guidance

Assisted travel is a vital service for disabled people and others that may need assistance from railway staff to complete their journey. The ORR is committed to ensuring train and station operators, including Network Rail, comply with their obligations to provide this assistance to which rail passengers are entitled. Our vision is of a railway network where passengers can request assistance with confidence and ease: safe in the knowledge that it will be provided reliably, effectively and consistently by staff that have the training, knowledge and attitude to do so with confidence and skill – irrespective of train company or station operator.

Expectations of the service will continue to grow as rolling stock and stations become increasingly accessible, and as the use of smart technology to improve the passenger experience becomes more widespread. The ORR will keep this guidance on writing Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policies under more frequent review in the light of experience and regular consultation with licensed operators. This will enable substantive developments in operating practice, technology and good practice to be kept under review and reflected more quickly in the experience of passengers.

The ORR will consult on proposals for any substantive changes to the guidance. We will publish revised guidance, if appropriate, following the consultation. The ORR will continue to undertake monitoring and investigation of how Inclusive / Accessible Travel Policies are working in practice to ensure that passengers benefit from the commitments made by licensees in this area. Policies.

1.5. ORR contact information

We encourage operators, if they have any questions about any part of this guidance, to seek advice from the Consumer team at the ORR (contact details below).

E-mail: DPPP@orr.gov.uk

Consumer Policy Team
Office of Rail and Road
One Kemble Street
London
WC2B 4AN

Section 2: General requirements

2.1. Name, structure and format of Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policies

As set out in section 1.2 passenger train and station operator licences have an obligation for operators to produce Inclusive Travel Policies.

The 'Disabled People's Protection Policy' condition of passenger and station operator licences requires licence holders to:

Establish and thereafter comply with:

- (a) a statement of policy; and
- (b) a detailed body of arrangements, procedures, services and other benefits to be implemented or provided by the licence holder designed to protect the interests of people who are disabled in their use of trains of which the licence holder is the operator pursuant to this licence and to facilitate such use (together 'the Disabled People's Protection Policy').

In meeting the above licence obligation, operators must adhere to the two-document structure set out below when producing their Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy.

1. Passenger leaflet

This customer-facing document **must** be titled [to be determined following consultation]

It **must** be structured as follows (detailed guidance is in **Section 3**):

- Introduction
- Assistance: what is available and how to obtain it
- What to expect – our commitment to you
 - Before you travel
 - At the station
 - On the train
 - If things go wrong
- Where to get more information and how to get in touch

It **must** be produced as a DL-sized leaflet. It **must** also be provided in a range of alternative formats as set out in section CA2a.

It **must** be written in Plain English and achieve Crystal Mark accreditation⁴.

⁴⁴ Details on how to achieve Crystal Mark accreditation can be found here: <http://www.plainenglish.co.uk/services/crystal-mark/frequently-asked-questions.html>

2. Policy document

This policy document **must** be titled [to be determined following consultation]. It **must** be structured as follows (detailed guidance is in **Section 4**).

A. Commitments to providing assistance

- Booking and providing assistance
- Information provision
 - Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy documentation incl alternative formats
 - Stations and rolling stock accessibility information
 - Passenger journey information (online, at stations, on trains)
 - Train departures and arrivals
 - Connections and wayfinding
 - Delays and disruption
 - Information points, help points and contact centres
 - Websites
- Ticketing and fares
- Alternative accessible transport
- Scooters and mobility aids
- Delays, disruptions and emergencies
- Station facilities
- Redress

B. Strategy and Management

- Strategy
- Management arrangements
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Access improvements
- Working with disabled passengers, local communities and local authorities
- Staff training

It **must** be produced as an A4-sized document in both Word and PDF format. It **must** also be provided in a range of alternative formats as set out in section 4, paragraph A2.1.

For the purposes of this guidance, where these documents are referred to collectively, the term 'Accessible / Inclusive Transport Policy' will be used.

Where the document '[title to be inserted in final guidance]' is referred to, the term 'passenger leaflet' will be used.

Where the document '[title to be inserted in final guidance]' is referred to, the term 'policy document' will be used.

2.2. Approval and review of Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policies

All licensed operators **must** have an Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy compliant with this guidance.

Approval of Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policies

When submitting Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policies to the ORR for approval, operators should submit the documents electronically to DPPP@orr.gov.uk⁵. ORR will approve each operator's Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy. Operators are not expected to initially submit documents which are fully designed and ready for publication, to avoid potentially wasteful costs.

At the time of submission, operators **must** confirm that they have sought and incorporated feedback from local groups such as their passenger panel, accessibility forum and local user groups, as appropriate. Operators may also consult other stakeholders on their draft but ORR will formally consult with DPTAC (or MACS, as relevant for operators serving locations in Scotland), Transport Focus and (where relevant) London TravelWatch on the draft Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy documents during the approval process and collate a single set of comments to feed back to the operator.

New operators **must** obtain approval for their Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy prior to a licence being granted. Drafts should be submitted to the ORR as early as possible for initial comment and at least ten weeks before the intended start of operations. We aim to approve the documents at least two weeks prior to the start of operations, but this is dependent on the operator working with us to make the necessary changes to their draft Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy to ensure it complies with the guidance.

We will issue an approval letter to the operator, to which will be annexed a copy of the approved Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy. This will also be published on our website.

The final version **must** be published on the operator's website and notified to us and to DPTAC (and/or MACS) and Transport Focus (or London TravelWatch) by the operator by the start of operations. Hard copies of the revised Passenger Leaflet must be available to passengers at staffed stations within one month of the approval date. Where exceptional circumstances mean that these deadlines cannot be met for any reason, this must be agreed with ORR in advance.

If an operator has any questions about writing their Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policies or the approval process, they **may** contact ORR for advice.

Review of Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policies

Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policies **must** be reviewed by operators annually from the date of approval, or more frequently to ensure that they are as up-to-date as possible where there is a change in policy or procedure. ORR can also require the licence holder to carry out a review of the Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy or any part of it or the manner in which it has been implemented, with a view to determining whether any change should be made to it.

⁵ N.B. We will change the name of our e-mail inbox consistent with the new name for DPPPs: Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policies

As part of the review, operators **must**:

- Update their [Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy](#) to reflect any changes to policies that may have occurred since the last approval or review;
- Update station accessibility information where changes may have occurred;
- Refresh information provided about any accessibility improvements that have been or are being carried out, or that are planned;
- Provide details of any key actions they have identified to improve performance.

Operators **must** submit their Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy to the ORR for review at least six weeks before the anniversary of the date on which the Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy was initially approved. [The documents must be submitted electronically to \[DPPP@orr.gov.uk\]](#) with any proposed changes clearly marked.

At the time of submission, operators **must** confirm that they have sought and incorporated feedback from local groups such as their passenger panel, accessibility forum and local user groups, as appropriate.

If the operator is proposing significant or material changes to their Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy, ORR will undertake a review and approve the revised Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy. Significant or material changes are where policy or procedure changes may have a significant impact, positive or negative, on a number of passengers – this could include changes to the notice period for booked assistance or rolling stock accessibility, for example. It does not include updates to the station accessibility information to reflect improvement works.

ORR will consult with DPTAC (or MACS, as relevant for operators serving locations in Scotland), Transport Focus and (where relevant) London TravelWatch on any significant or material changes. ORR will issue an approval letter to the operator, to which will be annexed a copy of the approved Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy. This will also be published on ORR's website.

If the proposed changes are not material or significant, the operator **must** confirm this to ORR with a brief summary of the proposed changes. In these circumstances, ORR will not need to undertake a formal review and approve the changes.

The final branded version **must** be available on the operator's website, provided to ORR for publication on our website and notified to DPTAC (or MACS) and Transport Focus (or London TravelWatch) by the operator within one week of the approval or anniversary date, as relevant. Hard copies at staffed stations must also be refreshed within one month. Where exceptional circumstances mean that these deadlines cannot be met for any reason, this **must** be agreed with ORR in advance.

Section 3: Passenger Leaflet

To ensure that passengers understand what assistance operators can offer, in the **passenger leaflet** operators **must** provide an explanation of:

- how to book assistance;
- what assistance they can and cannot offer; and
- where to get further information.

The following structure and content **must** be adhered to:

3.1 Introduction

Introduces in Plain English the purpose of the leaflet (i.e. to inform people that require assistance or additional information to travel by rail of the help that is available and how to obtain it); and

3.2 Assistance: what is available and how to get it (see also section 4: A1, A3, A4, A5)

Explains that passengers that require assistance have two options

- A. For spontaneous travel, they can turn up at any station that is accessible to them and request assistance on to a train from a member of staff, via a help point or a freephone number – either this will be provided or, where reasonably practicable, alternative accessible transport offered at no extra cost to the passenger; this may explain that where assistance has not been booked in advance it may take a period of time to be provided; or
- B. Where travel is being arranged in advance, they can book assistance; this must explain that the maximum notice they need to provide is [XX] hours – licence holders that require less notice must clearly set out in what circumstances this is possible – and how passengers can book, including the relevant details for doing so online, by e-mail, over the phone, text relay, and video relay service (if applicable). It must make clear that assistance for any journey, including those with multiple connections using multiple train companies, can be booked using these channels. It must also ensure that passengers understand under what circumstances alternative accessible transport might be offered (e.g. when travelling to or from an inaccessible station); where an operator runs trains with no second person on-board to unstaffed or part-staffed stations, it **must** set out the extent to which assistance can be provided by on-board staff, station staff or mobile staff - where such working practices are routinely operated or can be accommodated.

Lists briefly the types of assistance that are available, to include:

- Journey planning
- Assistance with getting on and off the train

- Assistance around the station and to the platform, including when connecting between different train services, or from train to public transport / taxi / car park
- Purchasing tickets, making it clear that Advance fares can be booked at the same time as booking assistance via Passenger Assist
- Obtaining seat reservations and booking dedicated spaces (where applicable)
- Explaining what services and facilities are available on the train and at the station
- Help with luggage
- Boarding with scooters or other mobility aids (if applicable)

Briefly explain that staff are trained to assist passengers with both visible and hidden disabilities.

3.3 What to expect: our commitment to passengers at every stage of the journey (see section 4: A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6, A7, A8)

3.3a Before you travel

Commits to providing the information passengers need when planning their journey, irrespective of disability. This must set out briefly how passengers can obtain help with ticket purchase and journey planning and how to obtain information that is useful to passengers when planning their journey themselves, including:

- station and train facilities and accessibility information, including staff availability, disabled parking spaces and any temporary reductions in accessibility (including of toilet facilities)
- train times and routes
- details of delays, disruption and emergencies (including emergency or temporary timetables)
- how to purchase a ticket, including the details of any discounts (which must include the national discounts available to blind and visually impaired passengers travelling with a companion in England and Wales, blind persons in Scotland⁶, and to passengers who stay in their wheelchair during a journey⁷), and railcards (which must include the Disabled Person's Railcard); this must state that if disability prevents easy purchase of a ticket at the station where the journey starts then the appropriate fare (including discount if applicable) can be paid en route without penalty.

⁶ See: http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/times_fares/46500.aspx

⁷ See: http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations_destinations/44965.aspx

- any restrictions on the use of wheelchairs, powerchairs, scooters and other mobility aids (to include limitations on weight and dimensions), and (where applicable) how to obtain a scooter card, assistance card or priority card
- any useful mobile apps

3.3b At the station

Commits to assisting passengers at stations, irrespective of disability. This must briefly set out in general:

- what sort of facilities are available at stations to help passengers, including where to obtain useful information; and
- how assistance will be provided at the station (including with ticket purchase, boarding and alighting), and what steps the passenger do to make themselves known to staff - setting out the differences between stations that have staff and those that are unstaffed for all or some of the time; this may include how long before departure a passenger is recommended to arrive, details of any designated meeting points, and how to recognise the person that will be providing assistance.

3.3c On the train

Commits to assisting passengers on the train, irrespective of disability. This must briefly set out:

- what facilities are available on trains to help passengers, including aural and visual information, dedicated spaces for wheelchairs, priority seats, how companions and family members travelling with the passenger will be seated, and toilets;
- any assistance that may be expected on board;
- any restrictions, including maximum dimensions for wheelchairs, scooters and other mobility aids; and
- that when the train reaches its final destination, passengers will be assisted off within 5 minutes of arrival, where reasonably practicable.

3.3d If things go wrong

Commits to assisting passengers at time of disruption, delay or emergency and providing redress when assistance fails. This must briefly set out:

- what assistance will be provided when there is disruption, to include the provision of alternative accessible transport where appropriate;
- how passengers that have booked assistance in advance will be informed when there is disruption (which may include via social media);
- how passengers will be informed at the station and on the train when there is disruption (this may include the use of social media or alerts via apps);

- what assistance the passenger should expect in case of emergency, and any action the passenger should take;
- what redress is available when assistance fails and how to claim it; and
- how passengers can inform the operator that something has gone wrong.

3.4 Where to get more information and how to get in touch (see section 4: A2, B5)

Sets out where further information may be obtained and how to get in touch with the operator. This must include:

- how to obtain the passenger leaflet in alternative formats; this must set out in Large Print that Easy Read and Large Print versions are available at all stations with information points called at by their services
- a very brief explanation of what the policy document is and how to obtain it (including in alternative formats);
- where to obtain stations and rolling stock accessibility information;
- who to contact on the day of travel with any queries or issues;
- contact centre opening hours and contact details (to include a dedicated text relay number and, where offered, how to get in touch via video relay);
- the National Freephone Passenger Assist and Textphone Free SMS Passenger Assist Forwarding Service;
- how to provide feedback or make a complaint; this must set out that if the passenger is not happy with the way the complaint is dealt with, the passenger can contact the Rail Ombudsman (and provide the Rail Ombudsman's contact details);
- how to contact the operator via social media, including any Twitter accounts used for providing information to passengers; and
- how to get involved with the operator's work with disabled people to improve accessibility.

Section 4: Policy document

A. Commitments to providing assistance

In addition to commitments and information provided in the **passenger leaflet**, in its **policy document** each licensed operator must set out how it will provide assistance to disabled people as follows.

A1 Booking and providing assistance to passengers

Each licensed operator **must** set out its commitment to participate in a reservation system for disabled people whose journey begins at any of the stations at which that operator's trains are scheduled to stop. The current system is **Passenger Assist**. To ensure consistency for passengers, operators **must** use the name **Passenger Assist** when referring to the system using any of the channels with which they communicate to passengers (see section A2.5 W3C accessibility).

Operators **must** also **set how they will deliver** the following commitments:

- a. provide sufficient resource to maintain **Passenger Assist** and improve performance;
- b. not require passengers to give more than [XX] hours' notice when booking through **Passenger Assist**. For international rail journeys, operators must not require passengers to give more than 48 hours' notice when booking through **Passenger Assist**. Any reduction in the notice period below [XX] hours, due to a franchise commitment or for any other reason, **must** be clearly communicated to passengers.
- c. provide assistance, when booked in advance through **Passenger Assist**, at any station during the hours that trains are scheduled to serve that station, and ensuring that details of these times are available on the National Rail Enquiries website. When bookings are made via a contact centre and the journey involves a station with an accessibility classification A B, C or D (see Appendix B) the operator must ensure that relevant accessibility information on the National Rail Enquiries station web pages) (see commitment j. below) is checked and communicated to the passenger to ensure assistance can be provided at every stage of the journey.
- d. ensure that, where assistance has been arranged in advance, operators assist passengers off a train at its final destination as quickly as possible, and within a maximum of 5 minutes, wherever reasonably practicable;. passengers booking such assistance **must** be informed of this as part of the booking process (e.g. in a booking confirmation);
- e. provide a dedicated telephone number for every station that operators manage so that staff providing assistance to a passenger at the boarding station are able to call ahead to ensure they will be met by a member of staff at the alighting station; all operators **must** follow the Handover Protocol set out at Appendix C when deciding whether to call ahead;

- f. provide assistance to disabled people and people with reduced mobility who arrive at a station and require assistance to allow them to travel, but where assistance has not been arranged in advance, where reasonably practicable. Operators **must** provide clear and reasonable justification to passengers where assistance cannot be provided for any reason;
- g. make ramps that are fit for purpose, available at all staffed stations (either at the station or on board the train) to facilitate the boarding or leaving of the train by disabled people, whether assistance has been booked in advance or not; **in cases where assistance to board or alight from a train at an unstaffed station using a ramp is arranged, the operator must ensure that they make a member of staff with a ramp available to deliver the assistance.**
- h. when a passenger wishes to book assistance through Passenger Assist in advance to board from or alight to a part-staffed or unstaffed station, operators **must** consider the needs of the passenger and their intended journey; this **must** include consideration of the staffing levels on the train and at the station, the level of accessibility of the station to the passenger and the type of assistance being requested. The ORR will not approve an Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy that describes an inflexible policy of only providing alternative accessible transport to an unstaffed but otherwise accessible station; operators **may** wish to use on-board staff, station staff or mobile staff - where such working practices are routinely operated or can be accommodated - to provide the assistance required.
- i. work with other train and station operators, to agreed and established processes, to ensure that, where a disabled passenger's journey involves changes or connections with other operators' services, assistance can be arranged through **Passenger Assist** through a single point of contact. **This must ensure that the booking allows the passenger sufficient time to make their connections.** Where reasonably practicable, assistance **must** be provided when trains are re-platformed at short notice and where aural and visual announcements are made at short notice. This **may** include sighted guidance for visually impaired people, for example.
- j. make clear in their policy what assistance their staff can and cannot provide disabled passengers in connecting to other services operating from the station, such as light rail, buses and taxis. **This policy may include providing assistance to a taxi rank or bus stop that lies outside the station boundary.** Where access by Private Hire Vehicles to stations is regulated under contract with the station operator, the terms of the contract **must** include, from the earliest opportunity, the requirement for the taxi operator to provide wheelchair-accessible vehicles **and drivers trained in disability awareness.** Operators **must** make clear whether such arrangements are in place at any of their stations.⁸
- k. **ensure information on the National Rail Enquiries station pages is up to date and accurate, with the following fields populated for every station they operate:**

⁸ See section D1 of the Code of Practice

- i. Step-free access note (using the classifications in Appendix B)
- ii. Assisted Travel
- iii. Staff help available

i. **must** include both platform number and train direction (where possible) for station categories B/ C/ D. For category A stations, the text **must** state: “Step-free access to all platforms”; for category E stations the text **must** state: “We are sorry but there is no step-free access to platforms”.

ii. and iii. **must** include:

- unambiguous information on the availability of station and on-train staff to provide assistance, detailing times and capability (e.g. whether only boarding/ alighting assistance or e.g. station navigation assistance), and whether available on a turn-up-and-go basis – and if not, what notice period is required;
- Platform-train ramp availability, including whether available on a turn-up-and-go basis, and confirming that this is always available with prior notice; and
- Information for passengers requiring assistance on arrival at station, indicating where to report to staff and/or other instructions such as use of Help Points or attracting attention of on-train staff on the platform

Passengers who request assistance **must** be made aware of any limitations and/or temporary restrictions. This **must** include updating this information within [XX] hours of notification of any changes; for instance, whenever any short-term or unplanned changes are likely to have significant impact on passengers’ ability to complete their journeys and this would not be captured by the weekly Knowledgebase update. This **may** include directly updating the Station Journey Planner by contacting the help desk, as appropriate.

Operators **must** state that the following are included in this commitment:

- where stations have a physical constraint that prevents some disabled people from using it;
 - where significant temporary work that affects station accessibility is being carried out;
 - where there are changes to stations that would make them temporarily inaccessible (e.g. when facilities such as lifts and toilets at stations are out of order);
 - where facilities on trains that materially affect disabled passengers’ journeys are unavailable, including the use of inaccessible rolling stock on routes where stock is normally accessible, as far as this is reasonably practicable.
- i. consistent with the relevant sections of the National Rail Conditions of [Travel](#), provide details of their policy for assisting disabled passengers with luggage, including the points between which operator’s staff are able to provide help and

whether there is a charge for doing so. Where arranged in advance, operators **must** ensure that staff will be available to help.

- m. make every reasonable effort to ensure that disabled passengers can obtain a seat on a train, particularly where these are not reservable, and that wheelchair users are able to use wheelchair spaces. This includes clearly stating their policy on reserving priority seats. This **may** also include operating a priority seating card scheme. Operators **may** also consider how companions and family members (with a particular focus on children when travelling with a parent that has booked assistance) can obtain a specific seat on the train close to the disabled passenger. Where assistance has been booked, but a specific seat or wheelchair space has not been reserved, this **must** be made clear to the passenger at the time of booking to avoid misunderstanding.
- n. consistent with the relevant sections of the National Rail Conditions of Travel, commit to the carriage of assistance dogs; where a seat or wheelchair space can be reserved, operators **may** consider how the assistance dog can also obtain sufficient space to sit.

A2 Passenger information and promotion of Assisted Travel

Information that is accessible, accurate, relevant, consistent, up-to-date and easy to understand helps provide passengers with assurance and confidence at every stage of their journey, including when journey planning prior to departure. This is particularly true where their journey involves a change of train or transfer to another mode of transport.

A2.1 Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy documentation, provision and promotion

The **passenger leaflet** needs to be widely available so passengers understand what assistance is available and how to obtain it. Operators **must** set out how it will ensure that copies of this leaflet are:

- on display on leaflet racks and provided at ticket offices at all staffed stations called at by their services
- provided in Easy Read and Large Print versions at all stations with information points called at by their services (see section A2.4)
- available online as a PDF that is accessible using screen readers or other software with accessibility features, such as Adobe Reader
- provided in alternative formats, including audio, on request within seven working days
- available on request via the operator's website, phone and text relay
- available in prominent locations where public services are provided; this **may** include libraries, GP surgeries, job centres, Citizens Advice bureaux, hospitals, post offices etc.

Operators **must** also make their **policy document** (which **may** include alternative formats such as audio, British Sign Language video, Large Print, Easy Read, and

PDF that actively considers the needs of blind and partially sighted people) available to passengers:

- online
- by request within seven working days; this must be without charge.

Operators must ensure that at each station they operate there is a notice setting out how to obtain the passenger leaflet and policy document.

Operators calling at stations in Wales **must** provide their Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy information in Welsh.

A2.2 Stations and rolling stock accessibility information

Rolling stock and stations accessibility information must be kept up-to-date and made available to passengers:

- online, in a format that can easily be accessed using a personal mobile device; and
- as part of the policy document as per section A2.1, including in accessible formats.

Operators **must also** give a commitment to providing information about the accessibility of facilities and services at stations and on their trains on the National Rail Enquiries website (see section A1(i) for more information on the information that must be included). To ensure consistency of information for passengers and staff, the station accessibility classifications set out in Appendix B **must** be used when describing the extent to which a station is step-free.

Operators **must also** set out how they will ensure staff at stations have access to up-to-date station accessibility information and are able to provide this information to passengers on request.

Operators **may** choose to provide a 'Step-free' network map to help passengers understand which journeys are more accessible.

Rolling stock

Operators **must** provide as in their Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy an overview of the types of rolling stock [normally] used on their services, including information on the general accessibility of each type and details of the routes on which different types of rolling stock are normally scheduled to run. This **must** include information on whether the following is provided on each rolling stock type:

- Wheelchair space
- Scooter / mobility aid acceptance
- Accessible toilet
- Standard toilet
- Boarding ramp
- Priority seating
- Aural information
- Visual information

- On-train staff to provide assistance

Stations

Operators must also provide in their Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy details of services and facilities at both all of the stations they manage and other stations called at by their services, including relevant stations operated by Network Rail.

As a minimum, this must include information on the following for each station:

1. Staffing (indicating whether the station is staffed full-time, part-time or unstaffed).
2. Step-free access (categorising all stations A-E in accordance with the definitions used in Appendix B)
3. Designated disabled parking (indicating whether designated disabled parking bays are available at the station).
4. Seating (indicating whether there is seating at the station that is compliant with the Code of Practice, and details where this varies by platform) and heated waiting areas, indicating opening times.
5. Toilets (indicating whether standard and/or accessible toilet facilities are available and opening times).
6. Ticket sales facilities (indicating whether the station has ticket machines, smart ticketing readers, and ticket office counter(s)).
7. Passenger Assist meeting point (indicating whether the station has a designated Passenger Assist meeting point, with information as to where it is located).
8. Customer information systems (indicating whether this includes visual, aural or both types of information system).
9. Secure Station accreditation (indicating whether the station has Secure Station accreditation).
10. Catering (indicating the range and type of facilities available).

Operators are encouraged to define their understanding of these categories more clearly if appropriate. They may also wish to consider providing additional information that will be of use to disabled passengers, which might include:

- wheelchair availability;
- ramp for train access;
- induction loops;
- accessible set-down and pick-up point;
- automatic doors;
- platform-train stepping distance

A2.3 Passenger journey information

Many passengers that require assistance may only travel by rail infrequently; they may not know where or how to access important information. This may be

particularly acute during times of disruption, diversion and delay. As follows, operators **must** set out how relevant information will be communicated accurately, clearly and consistently to passengers, including those with mental, intellectual or sensory impairments, at every stage of the passenger journey - whether at home, online, on the move, at the station or on the train.⁹

- i **Train departures and arrivals information:** this **must** include a commitment to providing, wherever possible, clear and consistent aural and visual information: both at the platform and on the approach to stations. On the train, station announcements **must** provide sufficient time for passengers requiring assistance to prepare to alight.
- ii **Connections and wayfinding:** this **must** include how the operator will work with local authorities to ensure that stations are clearly and consistently signposted, and **may** also include working with mobile application developers and others to ensure disabled passengers and those with reduced mobility are able to navigate easily and confidently around stations – including on arrival (by connecting train service, taxi, car, public transport, cycle, on foot or in a wheelchair, scooter or using another mobility aid) when locating the ticket office, toilet and other facilities, and when navigating to the correct platform; this **must** also include how information about the availability of onward accessible transport from the station, such as accessible taxis, will be communicated, both prior to their journey and at the station.

When a passenger is travelling with more than one operator, assistance information for the entire journey **must** be relayed by the operator initiating the journey to passengers booking through Passenger Assist.

- iii **Delays, diversions and disruption¹⁰:** where passengers have booked assistance in advance through Passenger Assist that, because of service disruption (which may include, but not be limited to, planned industrial action or an emergency timetable), is no longer valid, operators **must** set out how they will contact passengers to inform them and discuss alternative arrangements. Operators **must** also set out:
 - how they will inform passengers, including those with mental, intellectual or sensory impairments on board trains and at stations when there is disruption, a diversion or delay with no advance warning, whether assistance has been booked or not; this **must** include how clear aural and visual information will be provided to direct passengers to accessible substitute transport;

⁹ Section A1 of the Code of Practice also provides standards on guidance on pre-travel information

¹⁰ N.B. Condition 4 of the passenger train operator's licence requires train operators to provide appropriate, accurate and timely information to enable passengers and prospective passengers to plan and make their journeys with a reasonable degree of assurance, including when there is disruption.

- the mechanism to allow passengers to inform the operator when there is a problem, particularly at unstaffed stations **but also on trains (such as an accessible toilet out of order)**; and
- when the level of accessibility of facilities at a station **or on a train** is less than that normally provided (e.g. as a result of the breakdown, alteration or removal of facilities) how details of the change to station **or rolling stock** accessibility, including a timescale for the expected return to the normal level of accessibility at the station, will be publicised. This **may** include providing notices on websites, appropriate signage at the station and on the route, as necessary, and ensuring that staff are kept informed. **In particular operators must consider how, where reasonably practicable, passengers will be informed when an accessible toilet is out of order, providing sufficient time for alternative travel options to be considered as required.**

A2.4 Information points, help points and contact centres

Passengers that require assistance **must** be able to get all the information they need at a station from **a single** source.

Operators **must** set out how they will provide the following clearly-marked information point's at all 'larger' stations¹¹, which:

- a. are designed and equipped to make it easy for disabled people to use, with timetables, posters, information leaflets and other materials placed so that both wheelchair users and standing passengers (who may be unable to stoop) can use them, wherever possible; It may be necessary in some circumstances to provide some or all of these at different heights to ensure that they can be accessed by everyone, where this is feasible
- b. are open whenever the booking office is open
- c. are clearly signposted and locating them in an obvious position close to, or on, the concourse
- d. have available up-to-date information on:
 - the facilities, services and accessibility of all the stations at which it calls
 - timetables
 - fares
 - connections
 - delays, disruption, diversions and emergencies
 - confirmation of any help arrangements that have been made through Passenger Assist, **including bookings by other operators**

¹¹ Larger stations are defined here as Network Rail category A, B and C stations; largest are defined here as Network Rail category A stations

- the services and facilities provided by other operators, as well as the accessibility of other transport available near the station. If staff are unable to provide information on the services and facilities of other operators, or the accessibility of other transport, they **must** be able to direct passengers to where such information can be found

Booking offices themselves **may** be used as information points if suitably marked and equipped. Operators **may also** consider:

- providing clearly marked designated meeting points at 'larger' stations for use by people that have booked assistance to meet station staff; and
- using dedicated staff to provide assistance at the 'largest' stations

Operators **must** set out how they will ensure that, where reasonably practicable, at every station it is clearly indicated how passengers are able to speak to a human operator that is able to provide assistance: this **may** be in person, via a help point or, where there is sufficient mobile phone coverage, a Freephone number. Service information available at the station must be obtainable via these channels. At unstaffed stations, easily accessible information **must** be provided regarding the nearest staffed station.

Operators must state their commitment to ensuring that all telephone services include providing a text relay number; they **may also** provide a video relay service.

A2.5 Websites

Operators **must** commit to working towards achieving the industry-recognised W3C standards. Where relevant operators **may** wish to highlight the accessibility of their website and provide information on how the website will work with screen readers, magnifiers, voice over software and in-browser accessibility functions.

To help achieve consistency for passengers operators **must** use the term Passenger Assist when referring to assistance booking services and **must** include an Assisted Travel icon or hyperlink on their homepage that displays that information. Operators **must** provide all necessary information on Assisted Travel on one page, which **must** include:

- a summary of Passenger Assist and its services in a clear and concise manner, using plain English and avoiding the use of industry jargon;
- the necessary contact information and provisions for passengers to book assistance and purchase a ticket to travel (including details of any national discounts available to disabled passengers or persons with reduced mobility);
- information of on-board facilities and station information, including accessibility information, staff availability, contact centre opening hours, disabled parking spaces.
- information relating to any temporary reductions in accessibility and details of any delays and disruptions to facilities and services where relevant;
- information to advise passengers of any restrictions on the use of wheelchairs, power chairs, scooters and other mobility aids and (where applicable) how to obtain a scooter card, assistance card or priority card;

- a link to enable passengers to access the passenger document and details of how to obtain it in an accessible format; and
- instructions for passengers on how they can provide feedback or make a complaint, and include details on the availability of redress for when assistance has not been delivered as booked.

Where information is located elsewhere, operators **must** provide a hyperlink to it on the Assisted Travel page.

A3 Ticketing

Operators **must set out how** they will ensure that, where disabled passengers are unable to buy a ticket at a station before their journey, they are able to buy a ticket without penalty on the train or at their destination.

Operators must ensure that:

- where automatic ticket machines are provided at stations, they have the facility to issue tickets at the reduced rate to holders of a Disabled Persons Railcard and to the holder's companion ; and
- where a station has automatic ticket gates or manual gates, where these are unstaffed, or staff are not in attendance, they must be locked open¹².

Where advance tickets are available for purchase (via any of the available channels, including online, at the ticket office or via telecommunications), the operator **must** ensure that passengers are unable to, or warned against, purchasing tickets they cannot make use of on the operator's services e.g. due to the accessibility of rolling stock (e.g. when purchasing first class tickets, passengers should be warned if there is no wheelchair space in first class).

Operators **may** also consider, when reasonably practicable to do so, updating the ticket booking section of their website and, where necessary, their contact centre call handling procedures, so that when passengers indicate they have a Disabled Persons Railcard during ticket purchase they are asked whether they require assistance with any aspect of their journey.

Standards and guidance on ticket sales points are provided in section N2 of the Code of Practice.

A4 Alternative accessible transport

Operators **must** ensure that passengers who require assistance are able to make as much of their journey by rail as possible. However, there are circumstances under which alternative accessible transport **may** be offered instead. Operators **must** consider the assistance requirements of the passengers, the relative journey times involved, the accessibility of the rolling stock and stations that may be used and the planned staffing levels on board the train and at the station, including the potential for the flexible deployment of staff to the station, in order to ensure that the full range

¹² See section N3 of the Code of Practice.

of options can be considered. Operators **must**, where reasonably practicable, offer an option that most resembles the service provided to passengers not requiring assistance.

For the circumstances under which alternative accessible transport is offered, operators **must therefore set out how they will** provide, without extra charge, an appropriate alternative accessible service to take disabled passengers to the nearest or most convenient accessible station from where they can continue their journey:

- a. where a disabled passenger or passenger with reduced mobility is unable to travel from a station because the station is inaccessible to them (e.g. because of a physical constraint);
- b. where, for whatever reason, substitute transport is provided to replace rail (e.g. because of planned engineering works, **industrial action or a replacement timetable**) that is inaccessible to disabled passengers;
- c. where there is disruption to services at short notice that, for whatever reason, makes services inaccessible to disabled passengers.

Standards and guidance on the provision of substitute transport (both pre-planned and emergency) are provided in section B1 of the Code of Practice.

For transparency, operators **may indicate what alternative accessible transport is usually provided** - noting that, when providing taxis for disabled people, this will not always require an 'accessible' taxi. The need for 'accessible' taxis will depend on the specific needs of the individual passenger, which should be discussed with the passenger before taxis are arranged.

The accessibility requirements for buses and taxis is set out in separate legislation to that referenced in section 1.3 of this guidance¹³; the accessibility of these services is neither monitored nor regulated by the ORR. However, in cases of delay, disruptions and emergencies, operators **must** consider how the rail replacement services and taxis provided are as accessible as possible. Operators **must** also make reasonable endeavours to ensure drivers of rail replacement bus services and taxis have received appropriate training to provide assistance to rail passengers.

A5 Mobility scooters and mobility aids

Operators **must set out** their policy regarding the carriage of mobility scooters and other mobility aids for mobility-impaired people on their trains. Operators **must** make the reasoning behind their policy clear, particularly with regard to any policy excluding the carriage of some or all mobility scooters and **mobility aids**. Any exclusion **must** only be as a result of an evidenced safety or physical restriction on carriage of scooters and other mobility aids.

Operators **may** offer a scooter card scheme which allows passengers to apply for a permit for the carriage of their scooter based on its dimensions and other relevant information reasonably requested by the operator. However, this **must** not preclude

¹³ Public Service Vehicle Accessibility Regulations 2000 (PSVAR)

the carriage of scooters and other mobility aids in cases where passengers have not applied for the scheme and been rejected, provided they are within the safe dimensions and limits set out in the operator's mobility aids policy. Rejection of an application **must** be explained.

Where operators do carry scooters on trains, operators **must** clearly set out whether passengers are required to transfer to a seat, rather than remain seated on their scooter while on board the train – **and ensure passengers are informed**.

A6 Delays, disruption to facilities and services, and emergencies

Disruption to facilities and services can have a significant impact on both the accessibility of rail services to persons with reduced mobility and the confidence of persons with reduced mobility in travelling on the railway. Where disruption does occur, operators **must** do everything possible to ensure that, wherever possible, passengers are able to continue their journey and are not left stranded.

Operators **must** provide details of relevant policies and operational arrangements for meeting the needs of disabled passengers when dealing with the breakdown of facilities and services that can affect access to passenger trains and stations.

This **must** include details of the operator's policy with regard to assisting persons with reduced mobility in making connections when trains are re-platformed at short notice, as well as information on policies and procedures relating to the provision of accessible substitute transport. Where substitute transport is inaccessible to some disabled people, alternative arrangements **must** be made, as set out at [A4](#).

Where passengers have booked assistance in advance through Passenger Assist that, because of service disruption, is no longer valid, operators **must** set out how they will make alternative arrangements (such as re-booking assistance). Operators **must** also provide details of arrangements for assisting persons with reduced mobility when disruption occurs with no advance warning.

Operators **must** set how they will make reasonable efforts to provide, wherever possible, reasonable replacement facilities that are accessible when the level of accessibility of facilities at a station is less than that normally provided (e.g. as a result of the breakdown, alteration or removal of facilities). [Guidance on provision of information during disruption is set out in section A2.3](#).

[Operators **must** also set out how they will ensure assistance is provided to persons with reduced mobility at stations and on trains in the event of an emergency, including any relevant training given to staff.](#)

Operators are not expected to provide details about their plans for dealing with a range of specific emergencies.

A7 Station facilities

A7.1 Left Luggage

Operators **must set out**, where left luggage facilities are available to passengers, how these will be available to persons with reduced mobility, including wheelchair

users. This requires lockers of different sizes to be provided at various heights to suit the range of passengers who may wish to use them. Lockers **must** also have a mechanism that can be easily used by people with a visual impairment and/or limited strength or manual dexterity.

A7.2 Disabled Parking

Passengers that require assistance to travel by rail should be able to travel to the station by private car and park with confidence. When the provision is not compliant with section C of the Code of Practice, operators **must set out how they will ensure there are sufficient designated disabled parking bays within the station lease area, including those operated by contractors, and that these are only used by motorists that hold disabled parking badges.**

A7.3 Third party provided facilities

Operators **must set out how they will** ensure that services and facilities provided by third parties are as accessible as possible. Such actions might include ensuring that services and facilities provided by third parties are not located where they will cause an obstruction or, where operators have a contract with a third-party service provider, making accessibility a requirement of their contract. While it is recognised that third-party service providers have their own responsibilities under the [Equality Act](#), operators **must** make every effort to ensure that any services and facilities provided by others at their stations are accessible to disabled passengers and those with reduced mobility.

A7.4 Replacement facilities

Operators **must** commit to making reasonable efforts to provide, wherever possible, reasonable replacement facilities that are accessible when the level of accessibility of facilities at a station is less than that normally provided (e.g. as a result of the breakdown, alteration or removal of facilities).

A7.5 Station entrances

Operators **must** give a commitment that they will not permanently close station entrances or gates if this will lead to a reduction in accessibility for disabled passengers to any platform or facility at that station, unless operators have first consulted with the DfT (or Transport Scotland in Scotland), Transport Focus (and London TravelWatch, where appropriate) and local access groups, and the changes to access have been approved by the DfT (or Transport Scotland in Scotland).

Operators **must** consider the needs of disabled people when restricting or temporarily closing access points at stations. Section F2 of the Code of Practice sets out mandatory standards regarding unobstructed progress during building works.

For any permanent closure of an entrance or gate, an application for a minor modification determination would need to be made to the Department under sections 34 and 35 of the Railways Act 2005. The Department has issued an operational

guidance note on minor modifications that is available to view on the Department's website.¹⁴

A8 Redress

When assistance has been booked but has not been provided as confirmed by the operator, the operator **must** provide appropriate compensation to the passenger. The form and value of this compensation **may** be determined on a case-by-case basis to allow operators to consider the circumstances of the case. Operators **must** set out an overview of the claim process and commit to promoting this to passengers, including on their website, via social media and in their passenger leaflet.

Nothing in this section is intended to affect the obligations of operators to provide redress under the Consumer Rights Act (see section A3).

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/minor-modifications-operational-guidance-note>

B Strategy and Management

In addition to the commitments to providing assistance to passengers, set out in section 4, operators must also set out how they are:

- embedding the provision of services to disabled people within its business and project planning
- continuing to improve access to the railways for disabled people and those with reduced mobility
- ensuring their staff have the resources, skills and confidence to deliver assistance to passengers; and
- measuring the success of their Inclusive Travel Policies.

The following sections must be included:

B1 Strategy

Operators **must** include in their policy document details of their strategy regarding accessibility. This **must** include a commitment to the continuous improvement of services and facilities for disabled people, details of the operator's strategy for the implementation of plans and policies for improving access and services in the coming year, as well as any other information about how operators take the needs of disabled people into account as part of their day-to-day operations and longer-term planning. Operators **must** also include information on any relevant franchise commitments and investment plans.

B2 Management arrangements

The provision of services to disabled people must be considered an integral part of planning and delivering rail services. In order to demonstrate this, operators are expected to allocate overall responsibility for the Inclusive Transport Policy to a director of the licence holder's company and should provide details of the following:

- a. how their DPPP is integrated into both business and project planning, and how the needs of disabled people are taken into account;
- b. the senior management reporting arrangements that are in place for the implementation of their DPPP;
- c. how managers and staff are made aware of their responsibilities to disabled passengers;
- d. what systems are in place to ensure that services and facilities for disabled passengers are provided according to the operator's DPPP and the Department's Code of Practice;
- e. whether systems are in place for assessing the return on investment of improvements for disabled passengers.

B3 Monitoring and evaluation [to be updated in final guidance]

[The monitoring and evaluation of performance in delivering services and facilities to disabled passengers, and acting upon the results, are crucial in ensuring that the standards of service committed to in DPPPs are being met, as well as delivering on the commitment to continuous improvement (see section D1).

Operators are therefore required to monitor and evaluate their performance in meeting the standards and commitments in their DPPP. They must set out in their DPPPs what mechanisms they have in place to monitor and evaluate performance, which should include the use of measurable criteria where appropriate. Where operators have a commitment in their franchise agreement to monitor and evaluate performance in providing booked assistance, they should include details of the processes in place for doing so.

Operators should identify and set out in their DPPP the range of information that they use to monitor and evaluate performance. It is expected that this will largely depend on sources of data that are already available and be integrated with operators' existing arrangements for performance management, although operators are encouraged to seek more information where this would be helpful.

As part of annual reviews, operators are expected to provide the Department with details of any key actions they have identified to improve performance.]

B4 Access improvements

Operators **must** state their commitment to comply with PRM-TSI and the Code of Practice when installing or refurbishing rolling stock and facilities at stations. This should include a commitment to applying for derogations against the PRM TSI and/or dispensations against the Code of Practice when necessary, after every effort has been made to comply with the relevant requirements.

Operators **must** provide details about any specific access improvement schemes, including any relevant franchise commitments and investment plans. This **may** include:

- a. identifying relevant schemes delivered since the last review (or, in the case of an initial DPPP, delivered in the previous twelve months);
- b. reporting on the progress of ongoing schemes currently being delivered by the operator, including estimated timescales for delivery/completion;
- c. providing information on the progress of key ongoing schemes being delivered by other parties, including estimated timescales for delivery/completion where possible;
- d. details of any firm plans for future access improvements, including information about any priorities for future improvements that have been identified;
- e. details of any plans for other station or rolling stock works, how accessibility improvements are being incorporated and how the needs of disabled people have been taken into account. This includes identifying where stations and rolling

stock are being brought into line with the Joint Code of Practice and the PRM TSI.

When providing details on the above, operators **may** be pragmatic in deciding what information, to what level of detail, should be included. Operators **may** wish to make it clear, if necessary, that information (for example on timescales for delivery of schemes) is estimated and/or subject to change.

B5 Working with disabled passengers, local communities and local authorities

As set out in section B2.2, it is vital that Inclusive Transport Policies are developed with the input of disabled passengers themselves. Operators **must** operate a regular forum of disabled passengers, to include users of assisted travel, with whom they consult on accessibility issues, such as options for and prioritisation of access improvements, raising awareness of assisted travel and developing new initiatives under the Inclusive Transport Policy.

Operators **must** actively promote the availability of **assisted travel**, with a particular focus on the **passenger leaflet**. As well as ensuring that this leaflet is available at staffed stations, in prominent locations where public services are provided, and online, as required in section CA2a, additional promotion of the **assisted travel service** **may** include, for example, advertising at stations, on train services and via social media. Operators **must** work with specific charities, local authorities, local service providers and local or regional access groups to promote the benefits of assisted travel; this **may** include using online forums to test ideas, producing and providing video testimony of positive experiences, and offering accompanied journeys to prospective users. This **may** also include taking part in schemes that help passengers with hidden disabilities, such as cognitive and intellectual impairments, more easily travel by rail.

Operators **must** provide an annual report to ORR on the activity and outputs of their work with disabled passengers, local communities and local authorities as set out in this section (see section CB2).

Operators **may** also provide in their policy document (as an appendix if preferred) a list of key organisations (including, for example, any partnerships, local authorities and local access groups) that they consult with about accessibility issues.

B6 Staff training

Operators **must** make the following commitments in their DPPP in relation to staff training:

- a. All staff will receive relevant disability awareness training or disability equality training, including senior and key managers, to ensure that they are made aware of their responsibilities to disabled passengers;
- b. The disability awareness training or disability equality training must include 10 key elements as set out in Appendix D by [insert date – maximum of two years]

- c. All staff must receive refresher training in disability awareness or disability equality training by [insert date], to include elements [number to number] set out in Appendix D;
- d. Until [date by which training package must be updated] operators must ensure that, as a minimum:
 - Frontline staff who may, at any time, need to assist passengers receive appropriate training in the use of equipment provided to assist people with disabilities, such as ramps, wheelchairs and induction loops.
 - Any staff who may, at any time, deal directly with passengers receive appropriate training to help them communicate with people with different disabilities.
 - Any staff who answer telephones are trained in communicating clearly with people who may have difficulty speaking, hearing or understanding.
- e. Staff must receive refresher training within 2 years of receipt of disability awareness training, and every 2 years thereafter;
- f. Disability awareness training or disability equality training must be delivered in the classroom. Practical training may also be provided at stations;
- g. Operators must make reasonable efforts to include disabled people in the delivery of disability awareness training or disability equality training;
- h. Where reasonably practicable, agency staff and staff contracted on a temporary basis must receive a condensed version of the disability awareness training or disability equality training, to include the following elements as a minimum: communication, providing safe assistance.

Operators must confirm at the time of submitting their Accessible / Inclusive Travel Policy for review that all statistics, legislation and language used in training are up to date.

[ENDS]

Appendix A: References

[Blank - To be included in final guidance]

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Appendix B: Station accessibility classification system

- A. This station has step-free access to and between all platforms, at all times trains are running, via level access, lifts or ramps (in accordance with new-build standards re gradient/length). Additional station entrances or walking routes not meeting the Cat. A criteria are permitted providing the additional walking distance to avoid these is no more than 100m.
- B. This station does not meet the Cat. A criteria, but has step-free access likely to be usable by many PRMs. Access may be via ramps, up to 1:10 gradient (any length). Short end-of-platform ramps may be up to 1:7. Access between platforms may be via the street, no more than 400m. Access via level crossings is permitted (if full barrier). Access routes may be via car parks, or short access roads without pavements, but otherwise routes via the street must include a pavement. Additional entrances/ walking routes not meeting the Cat. A or B criteria are permitted providing the additional walking distance to avoid these is no more than 400m.
- C. This station has step-free access to all platforms, but major barriers exist which are likely to restrict the ability of some PRMs to use the station. Step-free routes do not meet the Cat. A or B criteria (e.g. long ramps steeper than 1:10, or the step-free route between platforms is greater than 400m). Any station with an ungated or half-barrier level crossing between platforms is in Cat. C or lower. Any station where step-free access is only available at certain times, or only to certain passengers, is in Cat. C or lower (e.g. because lifts are switched off when the station is unstaffed).
- D. This station has step-free access to fewer than the total number of platforms.
- E. No step-free access to any platform

Appendix C: Handover protocol

SCENARIO	Passenger name	Disability	Assistance requirement	Train head code	Location on the train	Other*
Booked (incl. seat reservation)	✓ NO CALL	✓ NO CALL	✓ NO CALL	✓ NO CALL	✓ NO CALL	WHERE APPLICABLE
Booked (no seat reservation)	✓ NO CALL	✓ NO CALL	✓ NO CALL	✓ NO CALL	CALL AHEAD	WHERE APPLICABLE
Unbooked assistance	CALL AHEAD	CALL AHEAD	CALL AHEAD	CALL AHEAD	CALL AHEAD	WHERE APPLICABLE

*Other covers any substantive deviation from the booking record e.g. passenger also has additional assistance need on the day which was not in original booking.

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Appendix D: Mandatory training elements

1. Understanding Disabled People and their everyday challenges

Explaining the term disability covers a wide range of different people with different impairments, which may or may not affect the way they travel by train.

- a) Dispelling misconceptions about disabled people and disability
- b) (the relationship between) Disability and age
- c) What is meant by physical barriers?
- d) Attitudinal barriers
- e) Social, economic and reputational benefits of inclusive railway

2. Equality Legislation

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination against people with specified protected characteristics, one of which is disability.

- a) What does the Equality Act 2010 do?
- b) Accurate /current disability statistics
- c) The duty to make reasonable adjustments*¹⁵
- d) The impact of discrimination on the disabled person and the industry?
- e) Luggage assistance

3. Defining Disability

A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

- a) How is disability defined in the Equality Act 2010?
- b) Definition of disability fully explained. E.g.
 - I. Effects of treatment/ medication?
 - II. Disfigurement, Progressive/ intermittent conditions
 - III. Conditions not covered
- c) Language guidelines
- d) The Social Model of disability

4. Recognising passengers who need assistance

Recognising that not all impairments are physical and that some people may look lost or confused.

¹⁵ Passenger assistance is one of the ways the railway makes reasonable adjustments for disabled people but there are many other ways to make adjustments. For example: -Reading someone's ticket aloud or helping with shopping or luggage. Offering a hand or arm to help someone who may be unsteady or just giving directions are all adjustments too.

- a) Hidden Disability¹⁶
- b) Sensory impaired people Including Visually impaired and blind people and Deaf, deafened and hearing-impaired people
- c) Cognitive impairment
- d) Learning difficulties
- e) Physical impairments

5. Railway Regulatory Framework

The railway is a heavily regulated industry and explaining how other legislation and regulation also requires licensees to offer disabled people assistance.

- a) RVAR
- b) PRM TSI (European law)
- c) Company Policies from operator DPPP
- d) Other operator (TOC and NR) policies.
- e) GDPR and Passenger Assist

6. Passenger Assistance (disabled passenger experience)

Describe Passenger Assist, how it works for disabled passengers.

- a) What assistance do disabled passengers need/want
- b) How does Passenger Assistance work?
- c) Booking assistance / TUAG
- d) Destination/interchange at accessible/ staffed stations (operator), at the station and/or on the train?
- e) Informing train on board staff/Advising destination station

7. Communication

Treating disabled passengers with respect and consideration. Patience, optimism, and a willingness to find a way to communicate.

- a) The importance of voice tone, pace and body language
- b) Visual impairment
- c) Deaf and hearing-impaired passengers
- d) Passengers without speech or with speech impairment
- e) Physical impairments (Including wheelchair users)
- f) Dementia
- g) Learning Difficulties

¹⁶ Hidden disabilities include Depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, Attention Deficit-Disorder or Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD/ADHD), Learning Disabilities (LD), Traumatic Brain Injury and Neurodiversity, Epilepsy, HIV/AIDS, Diabetes, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, Cystic Fibrosis. etc.

8. Accessibility in stations

Knowing if the station has an accessible ticket window, accessible toilet, is the toilet locked?

- a) Accessible Toilets on station (RADAR keys)
- b) Seats
- c) Ticket offices
- d) Tactile Paving
- e) General information (station)

9. Providing safe assistance

It is the railways staff member's duty to ensure that both staff and passengers remain safe at all times.

- a) Which ramp to use?
- b) How to deploy a ramp
- c) Safe ramp use (RSSB guide)
- d) Station wheelchair use (opening, closing, pushing and brakes)
- e) How to guide a visually impaired person

10. Disabled People Involved in course development/delivery

- a) Involving Disabled People
- b) Course delivery
- c) Impairment specific additional training