

ORR Consumer Expert Panel

13 March 2019, 13.00-16.30

One Kemble Street, London



Agenda

13.00-13.10	Welcome & Introductions
13:10-13.30	Consumer Team Update
13.30-14.15	Market review into rail compensation claims companies
14.15-15.15	Which? input into Williams Review
15.15-15.30	Break
15.30-16.15	Transport Focus Workplan 2019-20
16.15-16.30	Meeting Summary & Close

Welcome & Introductions

Anne Heal welcomed the panel and outlined the meeting agenda. Apologies were noted from Claire Whyley and Stephanie Tobyn. Carol Brennan, Trisha McAuley and Bryan Little joined the meeting via Skype.

Consumer Team Update

ORR's Consumer team have been largely focused on their investigation¹ into had GTR and Northern's provision of information to passengers during and after the May 2018 timetable disruption. ORR agreed to circulate information to the panel following the publication its decision and would provide an update on this at the next meeting.

Research into passenger information, more generally, is also ongoing to identify good practice and areas of weakness. The research includes case studies with four operators to enable performance to be benchmarked across the industry. The team advised that they will present the findings of the research to the panel once the research has concluded.

ORR published a statutory licence modification notice to mandate membership of the Rail Ombudsman. Responses from licence holders are due by 26 March 2019.

On Assisted Travel, the consultation on changes to guidance for train and station operators on Disabled People's Protection Policy (DPPP) has closed and ORR are reviewing the responses before undertaking a programme of stakeholder

¹ <https://orr.gov.uk/rail/consumers/inquiry-into-may-2018-network-disruption>

engagement. ORR will discuss the conclusions and next steps with the panel at a future meeting.

On complaints and the Rail Ombudsman, the panel noted the work being done in aviation to emulate what has already been done in rail, in relation to passenger charters and alternative dispute resolution.

Market review into rail compensation claims companies

Members of ORR's competition team provided with the panel with an insight into its market review into rail compensation claims companies to better understand the role these companies play in Delay Repay compensation and if/to what extent their increased participation in the market could impact passengers and Train Operating Companies.

The panel discussed the review and noted that delays on one-off occasional journeys are as important to consider as the delays to commuter journeys. The panel also suggested that any research as part of the market study should look at regional differences and the impact on different types of consumer (e.g. vulnerable consumers).

The panel noted an opportunity for the industry to introduce automatic compensation to help increase public use and confidence. The panel also noted the importance of empowering passenger to make their own claims for delay to their journeys.

Which? input into Williams Review

Dan Brown updated on the Williams Review², outlining the process and ORR's involvement, as well as noting Which?'s draft discussion paper prior to submission to the Review.

In advance of the meeting ORR shared a draft discussion paper produced by Which? The panel agreed that the discussion paper was extremely useful and noted the importance of knowing what the public wants from the railway.

Transport Focus outlined its use of focus groups to understand what customers want from the industry. Findings from the surveys formed part of a report entitled 'What do passengers think about the railway?'³

The panel were in agreement that the Review quite rightly is looking at accountability but in doing so, the industry must be mindful of the passenger vulnerability that currently underpins the railway.

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/the-williams-rail-review>

³ <https://www.transportfocus.org.uk/research-publications/publications/williams-review-passengers-think-structure-railway/>

Dan Brown noted that the Review had commissioned papers on accessibility and compensation. Dan Brown agreed to return to the panel at its next meeting to provide an update.

Transport Focus Workplan 2019-20

The panel reviewed Transport Focus's draft workplan for 2019-20. The plan focuses on three key campaigns and aims to deliver improvements on a number of themes on boosting the user voice, focusing attention on the smooth running of transport networks and making sure things are put right when they go wrong.

The panel noted the importance of the use of data in order to be able to address systemic issues and feedback results to passengers and stakeholders. Transport Focus explained that they were looking to change their focus to include shorter, more app-based survey collection alongside the traditional tracker surveys. The panel also noted the importance of Transport Focus being evidenced based and recognised the impact of the Rail Ombudsman impacting on front-end contact to Transport Focus on appeals.

Meeting summary and Close

ORR provided the panel with a forward plan of future meetings which will include, amongst other topics, discussion on the Williams Review, GTR/Northern investigations, research on passenger information, and Assisted Travel.

The panel were notified that discussions are ongoing with Highways England to identify a date for a meeting to discuss customer satisfaction following an action at the last meeting in December 2018.

END