



OFFICE OF RAIL AND ROAD

# Improving assisted travel



What do you think?

Changes to the rules for train companies

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# Introduction



This document explains how the **Office for Rail and Road (ORR)** wants to change how it makes train companies help disabled people to travel by train.



The **Office for Rail and Road (ORR)** is the government organisation that makes sure that train companies do their jobs properly.



One way train companies help disabled people is called **Assisted Travel**.



**Assisted Travel** is where you can ask for someone to meet you and help you to get on or off the train, carry your bags or provide other help.



You can book in advance or ask when you get to the station.

There is no extra cost for assisted travel.



Our research found that:

- 7 out of 10 disabled people had not heard of assisted travel.



- 6 out of 10 disabled people said that they would use assisted travel if they knew about it



**We want to know what you think.**

Please read through this document and tell us what you think by answering the questions.

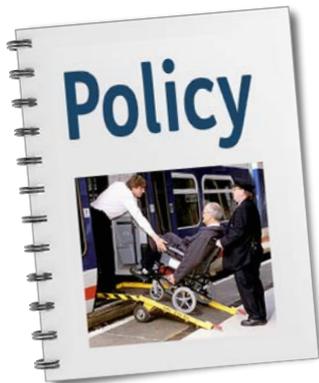


We need your answers back by Friday 18th January 2019.

# A new name



The ORR has to make sure that train companies help disabled users to travel by train.



We do this by making train companies write a policy called a Disabled People's Protection Policy.



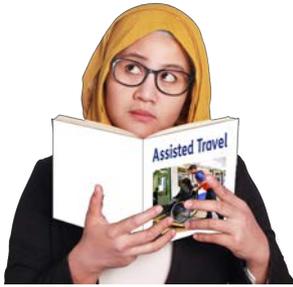
We want to change the name of the policy to either:

- Inclusive Travel Policy, or
- Accessible Travel Policy

**Question 1:** What is your preferred option for changing the name of the policy?



# Passenger leaflet



People say that they want to find out about **Assisted Travel** by a leaflet or booklet.



Rail companies have different types of leaflets.

Some are hard to understand.

Some have too much information.

Many are hard to find.

We think there should be a new simple leaflet with these headings:



- Introduction: What the leaflet is and who it is for
- Assistance: what it is and how to get it
- What disabled passengers should get:
  - Before travelling
  - At the station



- On the train
- If things go wrong
- Where to get more information



The leaflets train companies have now are called 'Making Rail Accessible: helping older and disabled people'

**Question 2:** What do you think about the ideas for this leaflet? Is there anything else that should be included? Do you think the title needs to be changed?



# Policy document



The ORR says that each train company should have their own policy document.



These must give details of how their trains and stations are accessible to disabled people.



People can ask for a copy of the policy document or find it on the internet.



They can get accessible versions of the policy documents.



Many companies have been putting a lot of detailed information about how their trains and stations are accessible into their leaflets.

This makes the leaflet very long. Information can easily get out of date.



We think they should put the details in the policy document and only have the most important bits of information in the leaflet.

People would still be able to get this detail on the internet

**Question 3:** What do you think about putting non customer friendly information in the policy document rather than the leaflet?



# Checking the policies



We want train companies to have to talk to local disabled people when they write their policies about assisted travel.

**Question 4:** What do you think about this change? Are there any other things we could do to make it better?

# Reliable services



When we asked, people said that:

- Generally they liked the Passenger Assist Service, but
- 1 in every 5 people did not get all the help that they had booked



This section looks at:

1. Ways to make it easier to understand how accessible a station is
2. Ways to make sure that when you book assistance you get the information you need
3. Ways to make assistance to work better at the stations



# 1. How accessible is the station?



We want train companies to use the same easy way of explaining how accessible a station is.

We think there should be 5 categories: A, B, C, D and E.



A. There are no steps. You can get anywhere in a wheelchair



B. There are good ways to get to all platforms in a wheelchair



C. There are some ways to get to all platforms by wheelchair



D. You can get to some platforms by wheelchair - but not all



E. You can't get anywhere in a wheelchair

**Question 5:** Do you think that these categories are helpful?



## 2. Booking your assisted travel

People book their assisted travel either:

- By telephone
- By email
- On a website



In each case a member of staff takes your information and makes the booking.

We want to change the instructions to these members of staff so that:

- They always have to check the accessibility of the stations that you want to use
- They have to tell you what to expect at stations and how to make sure you get the help you need





**Question 6:** What do you think about making members of staff check the accessibility of stations when you book an assisted journey?



**Question 7:** What do you think about making members of staff tell you what to expect at stations and how to make sure you get the help you need?

### 3. What happens at the station

When you are getting assistance to travel from one station to another, the station staff at the first station need to pass information to the staff at the second station to make sure there is someone there to give you the help you need.



We want to create some rules so that staff know what information must be given.

The information might be:

- The passengers name
- What type of disability
- What help they need
- Information about the train



- Where the person is on the train

**Question 8:** What do you think about these rules?



A large, empty rectangular box with rounded corners and a blue border, intended for writing an answer to the question.

# A separate telephone line



We are thinking about making sure train companies have separate telephone lines, that stations can use to communicate about people using assisted travel.



This would be just for train company staff.

It would help information to quickly get through to the right person at each station.

**Question 9:** What do you think about having a separate telephone line just to communicate about people using assisted travel?



# Better training



Many people think there should be better training for railway staff.



We think that train companies should include these things in their staff training:

- Understanding disabled people and their everyday challenges



- The law about being fair to disabled people



- More information about disability



- How to recognise passengers that need assistance



- The law and rules about helping disabled people to use the railways



- What it is like for a disabled person to use Assisted Travel



- How to communicate with people



- Accessibility in stations



- Making sure that people are safe all the time



- Disabled people should be involved in running the training.



We think that train companies should:

- Have 2 years to update their training programme
- Provide refresher training to all their staff



We are not sure whether the focus of each company's refresher training should be areas that are a problem:

- In most train companies, or
- In just that train company?



**Question 10:** What do think about these ideas for staff training?



**Question 11a:** Do you agree that train companies should:

- Have 2 years to update their training programme
- Provide refresher training to all their staff



Yes  No



**Question 11b:** Do you agree that the first areas for people to get refresher training should be areas that are a problem:

A. In most train companies, or

B. In just that train company?

A.  B.

# Telling people about assisted travel



We want more people to know about assisted travel.

We also want train companies to:

- Give a leaflet about assisted travel to everyone who applies for a Disabled Person's Railcard
- Ask everyone who clicks 'Disabled Person's Railcard' when they buy a ticket on a train company's website if they want any assisted travel



**Question 12:** What do you think about these ideas?



# Working with local organisations

We think that train companies should give more information about assisted travel by:



- Working with local community groups
- Working with groups of disabled people
- Have their own group of disabled people to help them to understand more
- Working with local services, such as doctors and post offices



We also want them to write a report to us every year so we know what action they have taken.

**Question 13:** What do you think about these ideas?

# Accessible website



Accessible websites mean they work properly with devices like screen readers.



We want to update the rule that train companies must make sure that their websites are accessible and passengers can get all the information they need.

**Question 14:** What do you think about a new rule that train companies websites should be accessible and give good information?

# When to book your assisted travel



It takes some time for train companies to organise assisted travel for you.



Mostly people book their assisted travel well before they want to go on the journey.



We are thinking of changing the rules for when you can book your assisted travel – so that instead of having to book 24 hours before travel you can leave it nearer the time.



**10 pm**



**6 hours**



**2 hours**

We are suggesting you must book:

**Option1:** before 10pm on the day before you travel

**Option2:** at least 6 hours before you travel

**Option3:** at least 2 hours before you travel



The less time we give train companies to prepare for your arrival at the station, the bigger the challenge for them.



**Question 15:** What do you think about these options?



**Question 16:** How should the new rule be set up? How long should train companies have before they have to start this?

# Different types of trains

Your journey may use some different types of trains. These may be:



- Trains which only have a driver. No guard



- There may be a ticket inspector or on-board supervisor, but no guard



We think that train companies should:

- Make sure that people know whether there is someone to help them on board the train or at the station, or not



- Think about how they give assistance where they use different sorts of trains that may have no guard



- Have plans for dealing with a situation where a disabled person is in danger of not getting the assistance they need

**Question 17:** What do you think about these ideas?

# Compensation



We want to bring in some new rules about what train companies should do if the assisted travel does not happen properly.



The new rules should include:

- Train companies must pay compensation when the assisted travel does not work properly
- Train companies should tell passengers that they can get compensation if the assisted travel does not work properly



**Question 18:** What do you think about these new rules?

# Text relay



Text relay is a new way to communicate which helps people who are deaf or have difficulty with hearing.



The user types the message to a 'relay assistant'.

They speak the words to the person you are calling.

The relay assistant types the reply so you can read it on a display.

**Question 19:** Do you think that all train companies should be able to use text relay?

# Rail replacement buses



If the train can't run the companies will provide rail replacement buses.



If a station is not accessible, you may have to travel by taxi instead.



We want to change the rules so that train companies have to:

- Look into providing more accessible buses



- Look into making accessible taxis more available



- Write reports to the ORR about accessible rail replacement bus services



- Make sure that the drivers of buses and taxis that are provided instead of trains have had training in helping disabled people

**Question 20:** What do you think about these new rules?

# Contacting staff at a station



Not all stations have staff on hand to help.



We want train companies to make sure that people know how they can contact a member of staff to get help.

**Question 21:** What do you think about this new rule?

# Scooters



Many disabled people are using scooters and other mobility aids to get about independently.

We want the rules to change so that train companies have to:



- Carry the powered wheelchair or scooter where it fits on the train and can be used safely at the station



- Include rollators in their scooter policies



- Consider offering scooter cards and making sure staff know about them



- Tell passengers clearly what the rules on carrying scooters and other mobility aids are

**Question 22:** What do you think about these rules?



Are there any other changes to companies policies on scooters and mobility aids we should think about?



# Warning you that a train is not accessible



We want a new rule which says that train companies have to tell you that a section of the train is not accessible before you buy the ticket - for example First Class.

**Question 23a:** What do you think about this rule?

## Accessible toilets



We want a new rule which says that train companies have to tell people that an accessible toilet is not working before they get on the train.

**Question 23b:** What do you think about this rule?

# Good practice



We are also looking at some other good things that train companies should be doing to help disabled passengers.

These include:



- Assistance cards which help people with a hidden disability to explain the help they need

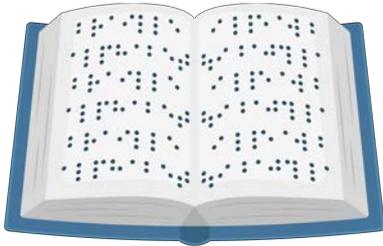


- Priority seat cards, which help disabled people to get a seat on very busy trains
- Assistance staff at big stations all the time
- Space for assistance dogs
- Seats for companions





- Video relay services. This is a way of communicating with people who use British Sign Language



- Ways to help disabled people to get around stations

**Question 24:** Do you have any comments on these good ideas? Are there any other things we should be aware of?

# Thank you



Thank you for your views.

We will take your ideas into account when we make the final rules for train companies.



Please now send your answers back to:

Email: **DPPP@orr.gov.uk**



Post:

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



We need your answers by Friday 18th January 2019.

Easy read by [easy-read-online.co.uk](http://easy-read-online.co.uk)