



Office of Rail & Road

24<sup>th</sup> May 2018

David,

#### **GTR Accessibility – approach to managing dwell times**

Further to our meeting and your email of the 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2018, we understand that you have been contacted regarding concerns about perceived changes, with particular emphasis on the 'call ahead policy' and whether there has been any change to the way assistance is provided to passengers as a result of the document's approach to managing dwell times.

GTR place a high priority on making our services accessible to all and actively encourage people with restricted mobility to use our trains. Our policy remains the same, which is to offer assistance to all passengers to help them with their journeys.

With respect to the key points, GTR would like to confirm that;

- GTR continues to offer assistance to all passengers who need help with their journeys and this policy remains unchanged, including;
  - If a train should arrive late, then passengers who need assistance to board will continue to be given that assistance. There has been no change to this.
- The suggestion of changes arose from the publication, in isolation, of an internal process flow document; a quick reference guide for station teams that just covers the few minutes before dispatch. The processes within are to be followed with any passenger to prevent a train running on time, whether disabled or not, to avoid knock-on delays and cancellations to other services and this wider adverse passenger impact.
- I would also highlight that;
  - The document includes long-standing principles, many being industry ones (including the 'call ahead' approach). There has been no change to these.
  - Whilst the principles pre-date this, the title 'Pit Stop' a document with the same wording has been in place since May 2017.
  - The document has been reported in isolation of the wider training and coaching the teams receive around managing dwell times and dispatch, plus the wider disability awareness training all GTR front-line station teams receive and role-specific training.
  - The document covers the basic dispatch principles which are consistent across GTR routes (e.g. DCO, DOO and services which run with a second person).
  - The document does not replace local staff route protocols e.g. staff at Southern stations where assistance is provided and a second person is on board continue to advise the conductor or OBS of the boarding assistance and destination station. This is unchanged.

#### **Govia Thameslink Railway**

Monument Place, 24 Monument Street, London, EC3R 8AJ

Registered in England under number: 7934306. Registered office: 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, 41-51 Grey Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 6EE



- We continue to ask all passengers to give themselves plenty of time to arrive ahead of a train's departure as we aim to ensure each service leaves on time for the benefit of all our customers.

Whilst there has been no recent change to assistance support in the minutes before a service departs (dwell time), to avoid any further misinterpretation or misunderstanding the wording has already been revised on the page in the document and GTR is in the process of recalling and re-issuing a revised version. For clarity, I append copies of the original and amended page from the document to this letter.

GTR are committed to making services more accessible and supporting all customers, including those who may need assistance on their journey, to have more confidence to travel on our services not less. We have therefore been concerned that the perception created from recent media could create unnecessary concern and worry for our passengers and therefore from last Thursday GTR have been proactively contacting stakeholder groups, passenger bodies, our Access Advisory Panels, the ORR, the DfT and contacting individual charities / groups who have re-tweeted third part tweets to offer to discuss and provide them with reassurance.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have further queries.

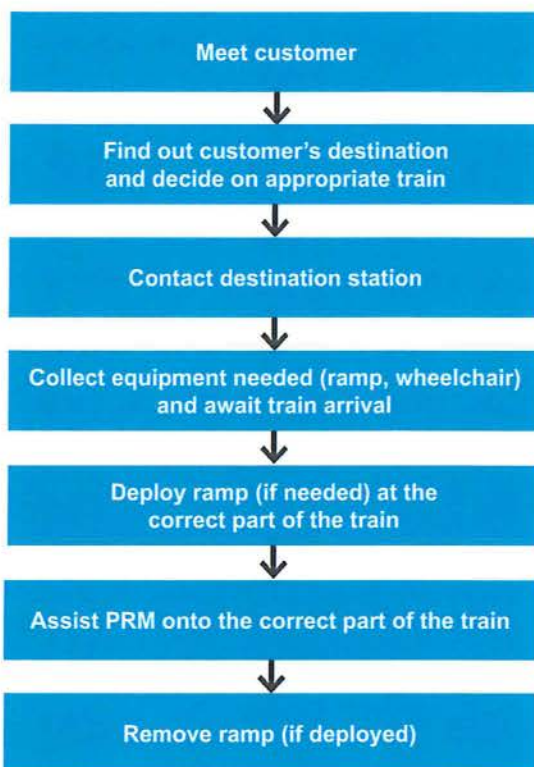
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# Assisting Persons of Reduced Mobility (PRM)

## Station on to train



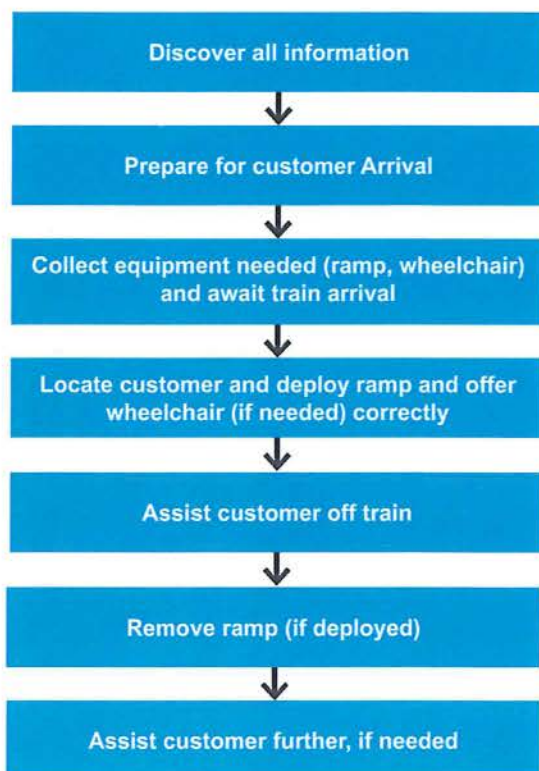
If the destination is unstaffed, customer should be sent to nearest station and assisted into a taxi.

Inform destination which carriage customer is in.

DO NOT attempt to place customer on train if there is a possibility of delaying the service.

Re-confirm all information with staff at destination.

## Train on to Station



Gather all information from origin station:

Train headcode

Type of assistance needed

Travelling alone or with companion

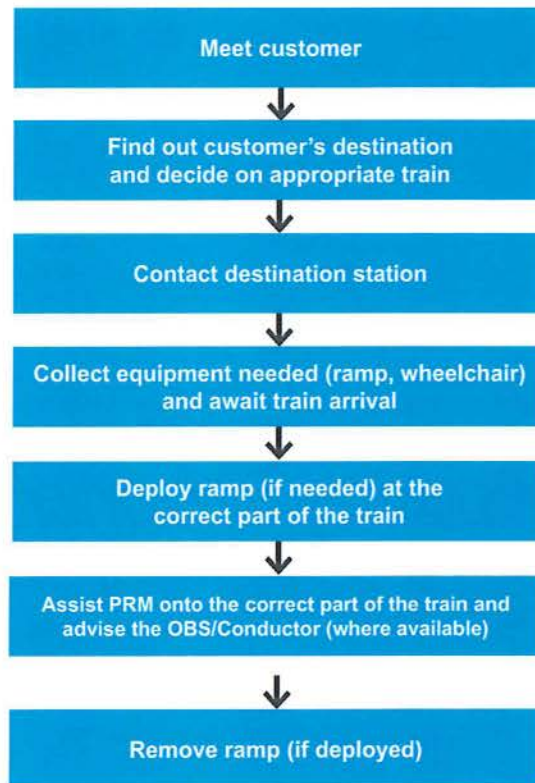
In which carriage travelling (4th or 5th car in an 8 car 700 unit, 6th or 7th car in a 12 car 700 unit)

Ensure you are in the correct location before the train arrives to keep dwell time and delays to a minimum.



# Assisting Persons of Reduced Mobility (PRM)

## Station on to train



We should do all we can to allow customers (PRMs) to board their desired service. We ask PRMs to arrive with a reasonable amount of time to allow you to safely board them. If the PRM has not allowed a reasonable amount of time, you should not delay the train.

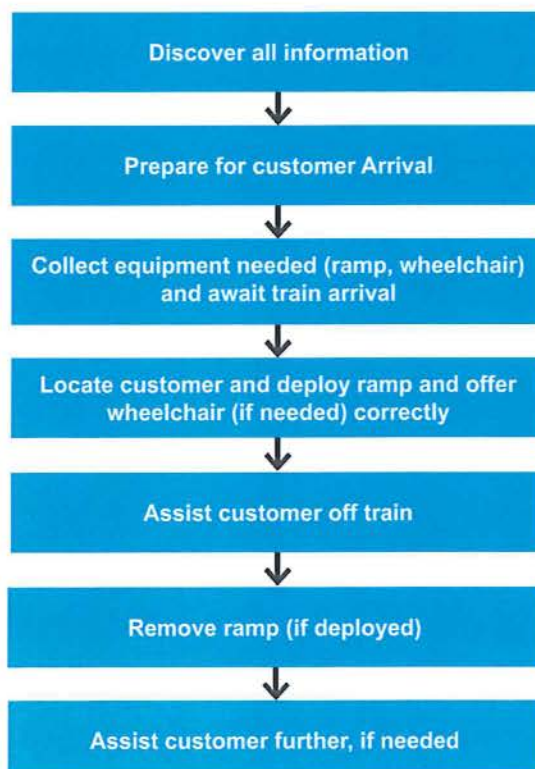
If the destination station is unstaffed or inaccessible, the PRM should be assisted to the nearest staffed, accessible station and an accessible taxi organised to the destination station.

Inform staff at the destination station which carriage the PRM is in. If unable to contact the destination station before the train departure time, assess the situation based on factors such as;

- Journey length
- Normal station staffing at the destination
- Availability of OBS/Conductor
- Next available train

Re-confirm all information with staff at destination.

## Train on to Station



Gather all information from origin station:

Train headcode

Type of assistance needed

Travelling alone or with companion

In which carriage travelling (4th or 5th car in an 8 car 700 unit, 6th or 7th car in a 12 car 700 unit)

Ensure you are in the correct location before the train arrives to keep dwell time and delays to a minimum.

