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Dear Graham

Managing Change – Measuring passenger satisfaction

I am writing to set out changes to the way in which we measure passenger satisfaction in our scorecards, in particular how we will be using the online Wavelength survey managed by the Rail Delivery Group (RDG). We have engaged with your team whilst we have developed the proposals and explained the rationale for change. This letter now sets out the reasons more formally and requests ORR's opinion on this change.

As we have discussed with your team previously, ORR's Managing Change Policy is not explicit regarding which comparison scorecard changes would be considered relevant (the Policy only references CRM-P, FDM-R and CSI). We therefore did not initially identify this matter as a level 3 change. However, in our discussions with your team to update the joint Managing Change Protocol, which provides more clarity on practically applying the Policy, we have jointly agreed that changes to any comparison scorecard measure should be treated as a relevant, level 3 change under the Policy, therefore we are retrospectively applying the Policy for changes to the Passenger Satisfaction measure.

Rationale for the change

Wavelength surveys a panel of passengers on their experience of journeys. Wavelength is an industry-wide programme, designed to drive improvements to data about the customer experience¹ and it now features in all Department for Transport rail contracts.² Wavelength measures both functional and emotional aspects of the experience by monitoring touchpoints throughout different stages of the journey (including pre-journey, the departure station, on the train, the arrival station, appraisal). Wavelength provides a wider range of data to Network Rail on a periodic basis, compared to the twice-yearly nature of the National Rail Passenger Survey. Wavelength was not available as a measure through development of CP6 scorecards during PR18 therefore we were not able to use this survey tool until now. Given Wavelength's increased frequency and range of reporting and following future planned development, we are of a view

¹ [The user experience of the railway in Great Britain: an evidence paper \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

² [Wavelength - improving the customer experience | Rail Delivery Group](#)

that this survey will be able to supply a more frequent measure of passenger satisfaction across multiple journey touchpoints which is consistent with Putting Passengers First.

We understand that Transport Focus is developing proposals for surveying passengers and we are currently supporting Transport Focus with these proposals in our managed stations. We would be happy to discuss the supporting data we are using for internal monitoring in this area if this would be helpful to ORR's monitoring.

Our 2020/21 scorecards included the following metrics:

- passenger satisfaction: the percentage of passengers surveyed by the National Rail Passenger Survey (NRPS) who were satisfied with their overall journey.
- passenger satisfaction at managed stations: the percentage of passengers surveyed by the NRPS who were satisfied with service at the stations managed by Network Rail.

The NRPS was conducted by Transport Focus in two waves, in the spring and autumn of each year. As you will be aware, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, fieldwork for the spring 2020 wave was curtailed and the autumn 2020 and spring 2021 waves were not conducted. As a result, we considered other options to reflect passenger satisfaction on our scorecards.

The Department for Transport was extremely supportive of moving to Wavelength and the Rail Board indicated it was their preferred option in terms of handling the absence of NRPS.

Following discussion across the business and with relevant industry stakeholders (including RDG), we have included the following metrics on our 2021/22 scorecards:

- passenger journey satisfaction (Wavelength): this is reported as a mean score of all responses to the question "Overall, how satisfied were you with this particular journey on a scale of 1-10?" ranging from 1 (poor) to 10 (excellent). We adopted this as an interim measure whilst NRPS is not being conducted. Each region has set its own target for passenger journey satisfaction as measured by Wavelength, which has been assured by our central analysis team to reach a consistent level of challenge.

In 2021/22 this metric is included in the national scorecard; regional comparison scorecard; the region scorecards for North West & Central, Scotland's Railway, Southern and Wales & Western; and the System Operator scorecard. Passenger journey satisfaction is included in the route-level scorecards in Eastern region. The year to date overall scorecard achievement from those scorecards are included as lines within the Eastern region scorecard. I have attached for reference a copy of the Period 3 scorecards for the regions and the route-level scorecards for Eastern region. (Region and route level scorecards are supplied to ORR each period, as set out in the data protocol agreed between Network Rail and ORR).

- passenger satisfaction at managed stations: this metric is unchanged from 2020/21. There is no suitable replacement for this metric within the available Wavelength data and we currently intend that this metric will remain on the scorecards for 2021/22 as we hope that there will be output from NRPS in the current year (2021/22) that we can utilise to report this metric. In the event that there is no output from NRPS during the current year then we will need to discuss alternative options for this year, but we have no specific details about alternatives which we can share at this time. However, we will contact you again in the event that discussion on alternative options is needed.

In 2021/22 this metric is included in the regional comparison scorecard and the region scorecard for North West & Central.

Please note that Wavelength does provide insight on some aspects of the station experience which we are currently using to support our internal monitoring in this area. However, Wavelength does not provide the ability to drill down to a specific station level as this is an industry-wide measure within Wavelength and respondents specifically at managed stations remain too low to report using data from Wavelength. Pending any output from NRPS in 2021/22, we are working with Regional teams to identify interim measures to measure passenger satisfaction at managed stations, including use of Viewpoint devices currently in place across all of our stations. These devices provide passengers with an additional way of answering surveys. We have also introduced a social media report which provides a Passenger Sentiment Score for our stations and we are exploring further options such as mystery shopper in the interim until NRPS/Wavelength can provide the relevant passenger satisfaction data.

Impact of the change

In line with ORR's Managing Change policy, as clarified through the Managing Change Protocol, we have determined that this change is a level 3 change because it impacts the calculation of a metric on the regional comparison scorecard. We are therefore seeking ORR's opinion on this change.

In relation to this measure, ORR's Final Determination also required that Network Rail reports NRPS results for passenger satisfaction in comparison to previous years. We will continue to report this in our Annual Return data tables when data is available from Transport Focus and will engage with your teams if there is any risk to providing this. For the avoidance of doubt, this change does not impact safety.

Please contact me if you have any questions about this letter or require any further information.

Yours sincerely,



Caroline Murdoch
Director, Corporate Communications