Benchmarking operators' performance in rail passenger assistance: 2025 report

2. Benchmarking operators' Delivery performance

Reliability and passenger satisfaction with assistance and staff

2.1 Table 2.1 ranks operators' performance in delivering assistance over the last three years (weighted in favour of the most recent years), using the methodology described in Chapter 1. Operators are ranked based on the reliability of assistance provided.

Table 2.1 Weighted assessment of assistance delivery, 2022 to 2025

Operator	Reliability (proportion receiving none of the assistance booked)	Satisfaction with assistance received at station	Satisfaction with staff knowledge and proficiency at station	Overall delivery score
Southeastern	8%	95%	94%	93

Operator	Reliability (proportion receiving none of the assistance booked)	Satisfaction with assistance received at station	Satisfaction with staff knowledge and proficiency at station	Overall delivery score
London North Eastern Railway	8%	96%	95%	94
Network Rail	8%	94%	93%	93
Avanti West Coast	9%	94%	94%	92
Govia Thameslink Railway	10%	93%	95%	92
Great Western Railway	10%	95%	95%	92
Chiltern Railways	10%	90%	92%	91

Operator	Reliability (proportion receiving none of the assistance booked)	Satisfaction with assistance received at station	Satisfaction with staff knowledge and proficiency at station	Overall delivery score
ScotRail	11%	93%	93%	91
Greater Anglia	12%	94%	95%	91
East Midlands Railway	12%	92%	92%	90
TransPennine Express	12%	94%	94%	91
Transport for Wales	14%	93%	93%	89
West Midlands Trains	14%	92%	92%	89
South	15%	92%	92%	89

Operator	Reliability (proportion receiving none of the assistance booked)	Satisfaction with assistance received at station	Satisfaction with staff knowledge and proficiency at station	Overall delivery score
Western Railway				
Northern Trains	16%	93%	93%	88

Figures are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Figure 2.1 Weighted assessment of assistance delivery, 2022 to 2025

Operator	Reliability (proportion receiving none of the assistance booked)	Satisfaction with assistance received at station	Satisfaction with staff knowledge and proficiency at station	Overall delivery score
Southeastern	8%	95%	94%	93
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Network Rail	8%	94%	93%	93
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Govia Thameslink Railway	10%	93%	95%	92
Great Western Railway	10%	95%	95%	92
Chiltern Railways	10%	90%	92%	91
ScotRail	11%	93%	93%	91
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East Midlands Railway	12%	92%	92%	90
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West Midlands Trains	14%	92%	92%	89
South Western Railway	15%	92%	92%	89
Northern Trains	16%	93%	93%	88

Figures are rounded to the nearest whole number.

2.2 This assessment shows a picture of high satisfaction with assistance received at the station, and with staff knowledge and proficiency, across all operators. Where assistance was delivered, it was almost always delivered well.

2.3 However, there is a more mixed picture in terms of the reliability of assistance delivery across operators.

2.4 We have ranked operators based on reliability as the key metric for Delivery because the scores for the two satisfaction metrics placed all operators in a narrow performance band.

Strongest performers

2.5 The three strongest performers in terms of reliability are **Southeastern**, **London North Eastern Railway (LNER)** and **Network Rail**, closely followed by **Avanti West Coast**.

2.6 There is less variation between operators in terms of the two satisfaction measures. **Great**

Western Railway, Govia Thameslink Railway, Greater Anglia and TransPennine Express join Southeastern, LNER, Network Rail and Avanti West Coast in achieving the highest scores on these two measures.

2.7 In 2026 we will consider the opportunities for all operators to learn lessons from any good practice shared by these higher-ranking operators.

Weakest performers

2.8 The operators with the lowest reliability are Northern Trains, South Western Railway (SWR), West Midlands Trains (WMT), and Transport for Wales (TfW).

2.9 For SWR and WMT this now represents a pattern of sustained poor performance. As a result, we decided to undertake full Capability to Improve assessments, examining their organisational capacity to manage and enhance the delivery of passenger assistance. The findings from these assessments are included in this benchmarking report in Chapters 3 and 4 respectively, along with our recommended next steps.

2.10 In contrast, East Midlands Railway (EMR) and TfW were also informally challenged on their performance last year, when we wrote to them as operators with some of the lowest reliability scores in our 2023 to 2024 survey, and responded constructively. Both operators voluntarily developed and shared improvement plans with us, and our monitoring suggests that these are starting to drive better reliability. Given these proactive steps, we have not assessed their Capability to Improve formally, as doing so would likely have added limited value and placed an unnecessary burden on the operators. We will continue to monitor their performance to ensure that improvements are sustained

2.11 We requested a formal improvement plan from Northern following the 2023 to 2024 survey, in which Northern recorded the lowest reliability of all operators. Northern has now delivered all actions in its plan and we are now monitoring for sustained improvements in the reliability of assistance offered to passengers. We did not conduct a capability to improve assessment at this stage, as we believed it would not provide additional insight. Instead, this report includes in Chapter 5 an update on Northern's progress against its Improvement Plan.

- ← Previous 1. Introduction
- → Next 3. SWR Capability to Improve: assessment and next steps