

Benchmarking operators' performance in rail passenger assistance: 2025 report

6. Good practice

Introduction

6.1 We gave all operators the opportunity to provide examples of good practice for the benchmarking descriptors set out in Annex A. Four operators responded: **East Midlands Railway (EMR)**, **Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR)**, **Greater Anglia (GA)** and **Southeastern**. We have highlighted below a selection of case studies from these operators for the benefit of other operators wishing to improve the reliable delivery of good quality assistance

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

Case studies

Monitoring and reporting

6.3 **Greater Anglia** considers a wide range of data sources to capture information, feedback and insight on issues that impact reliability of assistance delivery, including complaints.

Greater Anglia – dashboard data

GA's dashboards are designed to provide comprehensive insight into accessible travel including assistance performance. This insight predominantly comes from passenger assistance data but

also includes data from other sources such as complaints, Office of National Statistics, its e-learning platforms, its customer relationship management system, its customer survey data, ORR and the Rail Data Marketplace. GA has indicated its intention to expand the use of passenger assistance data for developing station-level insights, depending on upcoming changes to how assistance outcomes are recorded and the availability of more accurate data.

6.4 GTR provided an example of using data to generate performance reports, regularly reviewed by management.

Govia Thameslink Railway – insight reports

GTR has adapted its safety management system to investigate cases where passengers are not provided the assistance that they should have received. GTR's insight reports highlight how many failed assists are recorded at key stations; this data is then fed into key governance groups, failures are investigated and outcomes tracked.

6.5 Southeastern is developing a good, evidence-based understanding of the usage profile for its mobile assistance service.

Southeastern – mobile assistance recording

Southeastern Mobile Assist Staff (MAS) provide support at stations and onboard train services across the Southeastern network, which can sometimes include travelling with a passenger. The MAS complete a separate record for each assistance to capture the support they provide, helping Southeastern to monitor demand and understand the types of assistance required. This information can be filtered by station and time of day, allowing Southeastern to identify patterns and ensure teams are scheduled appropriately. Southeastern continuously reviews this data so that any increases in demand are recognised, and additional resources can be allocated where necessary.

Engagement

6.6 EMR provided an example of how engagement with staff elicited feedback that drove a specific service improvement, and how the benefit to passengers was tracked and measured.

EMR – Assistance Boarding Points at unstaffed stations

Feedback from members of EMR's Accessibility and Inclusion Panel highlighted that assistance

users, and particularly those with non-visible disabilities, often faced challenges accessing both pre-booked and turn up and go (TUAG) assistance at unstaffed stations.

In response, EMR trialled bespoke assistance boarding point signage at Long Eaton and Belper stations. The design incorporated clear text, tactile symbols for visually impaired users, and included a QR code and WhatsApp number enabling customers to contact EMR's Control team directly. Locations were carefully selected near shelters and help points to ensure convenience and visibility.

The trial received positive feedback from passengers, who reported feeling more confident and reassured when travelling, and that assistance was delivered more promptly and reliably.

Passenger Assistance feedback provided by customers through the Passenger Assistance App has increased from 1.75/5 (star rating) for Belper and Long Eaton to 4/5, and EMR received no passenger assistance delivery complaints for these stations since the introduction of the meeting points.

Training

6.7 GTR staff are provided with the opportunity to hear from passengers with lived experience of disability and to discuss what they have heard.

Govia Thameslink Railway – in-person training

GTR has introduced face-to-face accessibility training sessions led by disabled trainers, focusing on real-life scenarios, language and terminology, to small cohorts of station staff. To date, around 240 staff have attended with further sessions planned. GTR has held similar sessions for its Control-based team who support customers remotely (via help points, freephone and text support).

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