

Benchmarking operators' performance in rail passenger assistance: 2025 report

7. Next steps

Northern, SWR and WMT: Monitoring improvements

7.1 WMT must commission an independent review of its passenger assistance and, based on this review, develop an Action Plan by the end of March 2026 that incorporates both its own recommendations and those set out in this report. We will monitor delivery and report on WMT's progress in our 2026 Benchmarking Report

7.2 SWR has already undertaken a review of its assistance capability and so we are requiring SWR to submit a detailed Action Plan, including clear deliverables and timelines, by the end of January 2026. We will monitor the implementation of this plan and SWR's passenger assistance performance through regular review points, with progress reported in our 2026 Benchmarking Report.

7.3 It is approaching 12 months since ORR accepted Northern's plan. We continue to monitor performance for sustained improvement to the reliability of passenger assistance delivery. Separately, in relation to 800 station and revenue protection staff that did not receive disability awareness training, we are opening a formal investigation into whether Northern contravened, or is contravening, Condition 5 of its Station Licence and GB Statement of National Regulatory Provisions (SNRP): Passenger.

Developing the 2026 benchmarking framework

7.4 Looking ahead, we are evolving the benchmarking framework to include additional data sources and performance measures.

7.5 From 2026, we will report on the percentage of passengers who feel more confident to travel with an operator following assistance, as well as the proportion of eligible staff who have received induction or refresher training within the past two years. Operators have been reporting against new outcome categories since April 2025, and we will consider integrating this data once quality is assured. In partnership with RDG, we are exploring ways to measure the reliability of turn up and go (TUAG) assistance and to incorporate feedback from the Passenger Assistance app into satisfaction metrics.

In addition, throughout 2025 to 2026, we will identify opportunities for all operators to learn from good practice demonstrated by higher-performing peers.

-  Previous 6. Good practice
-  Next Annex A: Capability to Improve benchmarking descriptors