

Annual rail consumer report 2025 to 2026

Passenger information

We want passengers to have accurate and timely information about their travel options, so that they can plan and make journeys with confidence, including during disruption.

Rail replacement buses

Planning and making a journey when rail replacement services are in use should be as easy for passengers as when travelling by train. In 2023, we set out what operators need to do to improve passenger information for journeys that involve planned rail replacement services. In 2024, we reviewed progress and published our findings. We wrote to operators again in July 2025 recognising progress and have been providing ad hoc bilateral feedback to operators to support ongoing improvements for passengers.

We have continued to observe a mix of good and poorer practice. We have, for example, seen some rail replacement buses providing passengers with information about intermediate stops and destinations with automated announcements and digital screens. This is best practice and consistent with the requirements of the Public Service Vehicle (Accessible Information) Regulations 2023. DfT are working with the rail and coach industries to help deliver full compliance with these regulations for planned rail replacement vehicles. The regulations are enforced by the Driver and Vehicles Standards Agency (DVSA) with whom we have regular engagement.

Building on the findings in our first report, the industry's Smarter Information Smarter Journeys Programme (SISJ) is continuing to support operators in trialling provision of real time information to passengers on planned rail replacement services, via journey planners and customer information screens. SISJ has also made welcome progress towards establishing an enduring approach that would support wider adoption of real-time journey information for rail replacement

services, which we hope to see progressed.

Protecting passengers when trains are stranded

We want to see passenger safety and welfare placed at the heart of the industry's response to stranded train incidents.

Following a series of high-profile incidents, we published a report jointly with Transport Focus in August 2024, calling for a greater focus on the experience of passengers who are stranded on trains.

We hosted an industry event to explore how industry can embed best practice and, in April 2025, set the industry a series of challenges and next steps. To ensure that momentum was being maintained we followed up with a second industry event, co-hosted by ORR and the Rail Delivery Group, in October 2025.

The industry has made significant progress in ensuring organisational readiness to plan for and respond to stranding incidents, keeping passengers at the heart of the decision-making process. There is still more to do and we welcome the establishment of a Stranded Passengers Industry Working Group by the Rail Delivery Group that will provide an ongoing focus on progress against the challenges we set out.

Explaining to passengers the reasons for delay

Delays will always be unwelcome for passengers but a clear and timely explanation of the reasons for delay can help to mitigate frustration. The National Rail Communications Centre (NRCC, part of National Rail Enquiries) monitors the accuracy and completeness of operators' passenger information, including provision of delay reasons, and reports findings weekly to operators so that they can identify where they need to improve, ORR and Transport Focus.

Delay reasons has been one of the areas of focus for the RDG's Customer Information Group (CIG) this year. We were pleased to observe that many operators responded positively and proactively, and we observed significant improvements with the industry now meeting its target of 80% of trains delayed more than 10 minutes having a reason. However, three operators continued to perform poorly in providing passengers with reasons for delays and so we initiated bilateral engagement.

Encouraging cross-industry collaboration

We continue to support cross-industry collaboration that enables network-wide improvements to the provision of passenger information.

We previously challenged the industry to develop a single, transparent strategy to deliver improvements in passenger information. In response, the industry established the SISJ programme, which is jointly led by the RDG and Network Rail. The SISJ programme plays a central role in enabling change that requires cross-industry collaboration. Alongside, CIG focuses on supporting operators to deliver for passengers every day.

We engage actively with both SISJ and CIG in recognition of the value that they bring in enabling improvements in the passenger experience.

Regulatory framework for passenger information

We hold operators to account against requirements set out in the Passenger Information licence condition, under which operators have adopted the Customer Information Pledges as their regulated Code of Practice.

The Pledges must be reviewed annually to drive continuous improvement. The licence requirements complement wider requirements in consumer law and the Railway Interoperability Regulations.

Our priorities for April 2026 to March 2027

We will

- Follow-up our review of online information about station facilities, to drive improvements for passengers
- Continue to assess operator compliance with the Customer Information Pledges, particularly during disruption, providing bilateral feedback to operators.
- Continue to engage and influence across the breadth of the SISJ and CIG work programmes, in recognition of the value they have demonstrated in enabling improvements for passengers across the whole network

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