

Electronic Handover – Phase 2 proposal

13th May 2025

Introduction

Avanti West Coast, following authorisation from ORR, started a trial of Electronic Handover at Preston, Wigan North-Western and Lancaster as an alternative to the industry standard telephone handover. The trial started on 3 February 2025 and has been running for nearly three months. The below proposal is for Phase 2 of the trial which includes expanding the stations involved to include Crewe and Stafford, helping to embed the electronic handover process further and collect more data.

Proposal

We view the trial as largely positive so far and a good first step towards adopting electronic handover. We believe that a small trial was best for new functionality of an important process.

ORR are asked to approve the proposal below for Phase 2.

Phase 2

We propose to continue the trial at Preston, Lancaster and Wigan North Western. We propose the extended period of the trial at these original three stations would continue until 30 September 2025.

We also propose to expand the trial to include two more stations on the route, Crewe and Stafford.

We have picked these two stations as they are along the same route, increasing the amount of assistance requests available. Both Crewe and Stafford both have a strong adoption of the Passenger Assistance Staff Mobile App meaning staff already have a lot of the processes embedded.

Assuming approval is at the start of June, we envisage enabling the functionality at Crewe and Stafford by the 30th June. We propose the period of the trial at these stations would be until 30 September 2025.

We would also like to work collaboratively with ORR to make changes if needed during the trial (e.g. add additional stations). Any change proposal would be sent to ORR with expected dates, rationale and outcomes.

Training

The training and briefings will be similar to the first phase but with more emphasis on why this process is needed. Our Accessibility team has expanded in recent weeks enabling increased station visits. This would include station visits to the Crewe and Stafford as well as re-engaging teams at Lancaster, Preston and Wigan.

With each station working slightly differently with regards to specific roles (e.g. a couple of stations have dedicated assistance resource but some do not), we would work with each station to create a process flowchart. This will also help engagement with the station teams and increase buy in.

Phase 3 – Electronic Handover outside of our network

We are aware of other operators starting the process to gain approval for usage of Electronic Handover. We have had regular meetings with Northern to discuss their proposed trial and share best practice from our trial.

Northern have proposed their trial at Blackpool North, Harrogate, Leeds and Manchester Victoria. Blackpool North in particular has a large amount of assistance request interactions with our stations. For example, at Preston, with electronic handover enabled with our expanded list and Northern stations, approximately 25-30% of assistance requests would be able to be handed over electronically. Inter-operator assistance and ensuring consistent processes is vital and we see this as a huge part of the electronic handover rollout.

Within the Passenger Assistance system, the options for electronic handover are for “Within own network” meaning just between Avanti West Coast stations, and “Across all Networks”, enabling it for all stations who also have this enabled.

We will continue to work with Northern, embedding processes in both organisations. This includes reviewing data and outcomes with the aim to enable electronic handover between relevant stations.