Experiences of Passenger Assist

Research report 2018-19

Office of Rail and Road

September 2019

BREAKING BLUE

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1. Executive summary

Background

Passenger Assist is a free service offered by rail companies providing passengers with disabilities or anyone else who may require help, with assistance to enable them to make their journey. Rail companies' participation in Passenger Assist is mandated through their regulatory requirement to have a Disabled People's Protection Policy (DPPP)[1] approved by the Office of Rail and Road (ORR). The intent of Passenger Assist is to make rail travel accessible to everyone.

Passengers can request assistance by booking it in advance of their journey. Train and station operators can require bookings to be made at least 24 hours prior to travel. Passenger Assist is open to anyone who needs assistance; this could be due to a disability or long-term health condition, a temporary health issue or old age, and no proof is required to demonstrate eligibility to use the service. Assistance can take various forms – from being assisted into the station and help getting on and off the train, to help with luggage and while moving around stations. The responsibility for the assistance at each station is with the designated operator of each station, known as the Station Facility Operator (SFO).

In 2017, Breaking Blue undertook research to investigate the extent to which Passenger Assist was meeting users' needs and expectations overall and how well individual operators were performing in terms of meeting their Passenger Assist obligations. The results informed ORR's Improving Assisted Travel consultation published in November 2017[2]. ORR commissioned a second wave of this research to cover the period 2018-19, the results of which are set out in this report.

Methodology

When booking assistance, a record is created in the Passenger Assist database for each assist rather than for each journey, journey leg, or passenger. A record is created for each type of assistance booked in advance by the passenger. Each station a passenger is travelling through where they require assistance has a record created for each type of assistance they have booked. In order to ensure our sample was representative of the rail industry as a whole, interview targets were set for each SFO based on the proportion of total assist bookings received in 2017-18.

The Rail Delivery Group (RDG), who manage the Passenger Assist booking system, provide Breaking Blue with assistance records on a fortnightly basis during the survey period, segmented by each booking method. All files are de-duplicated to ensure each participant only appears once in the file, and when new sample is received passengers who have previously been contacted are removed. To maximise participation the research consists of a combined approach of online and telephone

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[1] Now known as Accessible Travel Policy: https://orr.gov.uk/rail/licensing/licensing-the-railway/accessible-travel-policy
[2] https://orr.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/25981/improving-assisted-travel-consultation-november-2017.pdf

interviews. In total, for the 2018-19 fieldwork period Breaking Blue achieved 4,968 interviews[3]: 1,835 by telephone; 3,133 online.

Significance testing was conducted at a level of +/- 95 per cent and where there are differences between sub-groups with a large enough sample size and/or difference in results to be significant, these have been reported.

Who we spoke to

We spoke to passengers requiring assistance themselves (78 per cent) and companions travelling with someone requiring assistance (22 per cent).

Most people using Passenger Assist had used the service before (72 per cent) and passengers are most likely to use the service once or twice a year or more frequently (84 per cent). The most common reason for travelling is for leisure (81 per cent) rather than business or commuting to work or study.

The majority of people who receive assistance are female (70 per cent). Most people who receive assistance are aged 65 or older (65 per cent), and a similar proportion are retired (67 per cent).

The most common type of disability that people who receive assistance have is physical (58 per cent). A smaller proportion have a long-term illness (22 per cent), visual impairment (14 per cent) or hearing impairment (14 per cent). A further 14 per cent do not have any disability or long-term health condition. There has been a significant increase this year in the number of passengers with mental health problems booking assistance (six per cent compared to four per cent in 2017-18).

Importance of Passenger Assist

Almost three in five passengers (59 per cent) stated they could not have completed their journey without Passenger Assist. Just over a third (38 per cent) could have completed their journey, but it would have been more difficult for them without Passenger Assist.

As in 2017-18 passengers with mental health problems are most likely to agree that they could not have completed the journey without Passenger Assist (73 per cent).

What assistance are passengers booking?

Passengers can request a range of assistance depending on their needs. The most common type of assistance requested is help boarding the train (57 per cent) followed by help with luggage (55 per cent) which is significantly higher than in 2017-18 (49 per cent). More passengers this year are booking assistance to get to the platform (37 per cent compared to 29 per cent in 2017-18). However,

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[3] Data provided to ORR by RDG shows that for 2018-19 there were 122,877 unique users of Passenger Assist across the entire GB network.

fewer passengers this year requested provision of a ramp (26 per cent compared to 28 per cent in 2017-18).

Passengers are booking more assists per journey leg this year than in 2017-18 with 19 per cent booking five or more types of assistance compared to just 10 per cent in 2017-18. The average number of assists booked per journey leg this year is 3.24, an increase from 2017-18 where it was 2.61 (an increase of 24 per cent year on year). This increase could be partially explained by the change in the questionnaire since boarding and alighting the train was one code in 2017-18 but split into two codes in 2018-19. However, having investigated this further, only a small proportion (eight per cent) booked both boarding and alighting the train in 2018-19 so it seems there has also been a genuine increase in the number of assists being booked. Note: this data relates to the assistance required at a single station; the total number of assists requested on a typical journey will be a multiple of these numbers. For example, a journey from Glasgow Central to York via a change at Edinburgh Waverley could reasonably involve five to ten different types of assistance being requested overall to complete the journey in each direction.

Around one in four (26 per cent) mentioned they have in the past arrived at a station and asked for assistance without having booked it prior to travelling[4]; of these people the vast majority received the assistance they requested (90 per cent).

Experience of booking Passenger Assist

Passenger Assist can be booked by telephone, by email or via the web. The majority of the people we interviewed had booked via the telephone, although there has been a significant decrease from 2017-18 to 2018-19 (82 per cent to 76 per cent) with a shift towards booking via email (22 per cent this year compared to 12 per cent in 2017-18). A small proportion book via the web (2 per cent). Booking assistance by telephone takes on average 8 minutes 35 seconds[5].

Just over two in five (41 per cent) are asked when booking if they would like assistance with luggage. Those booking by telephone are more likely to be asked this (46 per cent) compared to those booking by email (28 per cent) or via the web (17 per cent). Almost two in three (63 per cent) do not book assistance at the same time as booking a train ticket. The main reason for this is that most passengers have booked their train tickets before they book assistance. In addition, only a small number of operators currently allow passengers to book tickets and assistance at the same time.

There has been a significant increase in the number of passengers receiving a booking confirmation this year (82 per cent in 2017-18 increasing to 87 per cent in 2018-19). Despite this, there has been a decrease in passengers believing this confirmation to be accurate (97 per cent in 2017-18 compared to 96 per cent this year). The majority of those who receive a booking confirmation find the information about **when** to meet the staff easy to understand (86 per cent). However, there has been a significant drop in the number of passengers finding the information on **where** to meet staff easy to understand (83 per cent in 2017-18 decreasing to 80 per cent this year). Passengers are also less

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[4] This type of spontaneous assisted travel that is not booked in advance is most commonly known as 'Turn-up-and-go'.
[5] However it must be noted that the time taken to book assistance can vary significantly by passenger depending on the nature of their journey and assistance needs.

confident having made the booking that all of their requirements will be met (68 per cent compared to 72 per cent in 2017-18).

Satisfaction with the booking process overall (92 per cent) and in relation to the assistance arrangements (93 per cent) remains high. Although satisfaction with the helpfulness of staff when booking assistance is still high at 91 per cent, this is a significant decrease from 93 per cent in 2017-18.

Experience on the day of travel

The majority of passengers are met by staff as expected (78 per cent), although this has decreased significantly from 81 per cent in 2017-18. One in ten (10 per cent) are not met by staff and around another one in ten (10 per cent) are met, but after some delay.

Most Passenger Assist users book multiple types of assistance for each leg of their journey, but only three in four (76 per cent) received all of the assistance they had booked, which is a significant decrease from 80 per cent in 2017-18.

Although the number receiving all assistance booked has decreased, almost all passengers are still able to complete their journey leg as planned (95 per cent). Three per cent complete their journey leg but not as planned and just one per cent are unable to complete that leg of their journey at all.

Those with mental health problems are least likely to have been able to continue their journey as planned (91 per cent).

Satisfaction with journey measured

Although satisfaction with assistance on the leg of the journey measured remains high (88 per cent), there has been a significant drop (92 per cent in 2017-18). It is important to note that satisfaction with the journey was not asked of everyone booking assistance, only those who were met by staff. The majority of those who receive each individual type of assistance however are satisfied with it.

Satisfaction with the helpfulness and attitude of staff providing the assistance has decreased (91 per cent compared to 94 per cent in 2017-18) and how well staff understand passenger needs has also decreased (89 per cent compared to 93 per cent in 2017-18).

Passengers with social or behavioural issues and those with mental health problems are least likely to be satisfied with how well staff understand their particular needs (81 per cent and 85 per cent respectively). They are also less likely to be satisfied with staff knowledge and proficiency in assisting them (77 per cent and 82 per cent respectively).

Overall satisfaction with Passenger Assist

Overall satisfaction with Passenger Assist (82 per cent) has decreased significantly this year (from 85 per cent in 2017-18). Satisfaction with station facilities has also decreased this year (84 per cent to 78 per cent).

The Net Promotor Score (NPS; likelihood to recommend Passenger Assist) has also decreased, from 71 in 2017-18 to 66 in 2018-19.

Conclusions and recommendations

The proportion of passengers receiving all of the assistance they booked has decreased this year to just over three quarters. Overall satisfaction with Passenger Assist and satisfaction with assistance at the station on the day remains high for 2018-19 but is lower than 2017-18, as is the performance of staff in meeting passengers within an acceptable timeframe. Satisfaction with station facilities has also decreased.

Although satisfaction levels have decreased, as in 2017-18 only one per cent of passengers are unable to complete their journey leg. However, failure of individual aspects of assistance can be as high as twenty per cent. As mentioned in the 2017-18 report, the inconsistency between failure rates and the small proportion of incomplete journeys could be due to passengers managing by themselves, being helped by fellow passengers, or eventually being assisted by staff after a delay (e.g. assisted on to a later train).

There are a number of improvements to the service that would enhance passengers' experience. Staff training remains key, particularly when dealing with passengers with hidden conditions and complex needs as satisfaction is lowest amongst these passengers. Passengers mentioned the inconsistency in service from staff and want better consideration for their needs. They also mentioned a desire for better communication throughout the journey, in terms of reassurance to them as a passenger and passing on information between stations.

Communication by staff between stations should be also a key area of focus going forward; many passengers describe situations when they have been delayed on one journey leg, information has not been passed on to the next station, and therefore help was not in place on subsequent legs of the journey.

Station facilities remain considerably less satisfactory than other aspects of the journey. Passengers ultimately want to be less dependent on assistance and more accessible stations and trains will enable that in the longer term.

2. Introduction

The independent safety and economic regulator for Britain's railways is the Office of Rail and Road (ORR). A condition of the operating licences that ORR grants to mainline train and station operators requires them to establish and comply with a Disabled People's Protection Policy (DPPP). This DPPP sets out in detail the arrangements that an operator will put in place to support disabled passengers. A key aspect of ORR's regulatory work is to oversee that Train Operating Companies (TOCs) and Network Rail fulfil the commitments made to passengers in their DPPP[6].

A primary element of the DPPP is the requirement for train and station operators to participate in Passenger Assist, which obligates them to provide assistance free of charge to passengers with disabilities, and anyone else who may require help, to enable them to make their journey. Passenger Assist therefore plays a crucial role in making rail travel accessible to all irrespective of their circumstances.

In 2017-18 ORR commissioned Breaking Blue to investigate the extent to which Passenger Assist was meeting users' needs and expectations overall, and to explore how well individual operators were performing in terms of meeting their Passenger Assist obligations.

ORR commissioned a second wave of this research for 2018-19 to support its ongoing compliance monitoring in this area and build on the wider body of evidence about how well Passenger Assist is meeting user needs and expectations, the results of which are set out in this report.

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[6] See footnote one. DPPPs now known as Accessible Travel Policy (ATP) from August 2019.

3. Background and objectives

Passenger Assist allows passengers who need assistance to book it in advance of their journey. Train and station operators can require bookings to be made at least 24 hours prior to travel. Bookings can be made by email or online, although the majority of bookings are made by telephone using a Freephone number.
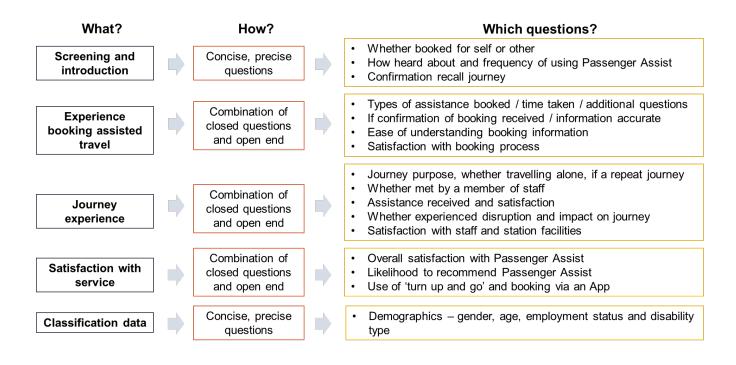
Passenger Assist is open to anyone who needs assistance; for example due to a disability or long-term health condition, temporary health issue or old age, and no proof is required to demonstrate someone's eligibility to use the service. The service can take various different forms – from being assisted into the station and help getting on and off the train, to help with luggage and while moving around stations. The responsibility for the assistance at each station is with the designated operator of that station, the Station Facility Operator (SFO). However, the provision of assistance in the station can be subcontracted, for example, from Network Rail to a TOC, or this responsibility can be shared between TOCs. Nevertheless, the SFO, from a regulatory perspective, remains responsible for the station and is accountable for any assistance provided within it.

Consistent with this, for the purposes of this research ORR decided that the assistance provided at each station would be allocated to the relevant SFO, regardless of which company the staff providing the assistance worked for. The results at company level are accordingly grouped and analysed by SFO. Since it may not be apparent to the passenger who the SFO is for a station, the assignment of results to SFOs is based on the Passenger Assist booking records, rather than by the passengers' recall of who they booked or travelled with.

The overall aim of this research is to explore passenger experiences of Passenger Assist across all aspects of the service, and to seek feedback on any potential areas for improvement. The specific research objectives are as follows:

- Profile assisted travel service users, including their demographic characteristics, impairment type, the journey purpose, frequency of use of the train and the assisted travel service;

- Evaluate a recent journey, from booking assistance through to the actual journey and experience on the day;

- Understand overall satisfaction when travelling by train using Passenger Assist and reasons for any dissatisfaction; and

- Gather feedback from Passenger Assist service users on ways to improve the service.

In 2017-18 ORR and Breaking Blue, with input from Network Rail and a number of TOCs (especially those TOCs with experience of using surveys to measure Passenger Assist satisfaction on their own services and stations), developed a quantitative questionnaire addressing the above objectives. For 2018-19 only minor changes were made to the questionnaire, ensuring it remains largely comparable to 2017-18.

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What?	How?	Which questions?
Screening and introduction	Concise, precise questions	• Whether booked for self or other • How heard about and frequency of using Passenger Assist • Confirmation recall journey
Experience booking assisted travel	Combination of closed questions and open end	• Types of assistance booked / time taken / additional questions • If confirmation of booking received / information accurate • Ease of understanding booking information • Satisfaction with booking process
Journey experience	Combination of closed questions and open end	• Journey purpose, whether travelling alone, if a repeat journey • Whether met by a member of staff • Assistance received and satisfaction • Whether experienced disruption and impact on journey • Satisfaction with staff and station facilities
Satisfaction with service	Combination of closed questions and open end	• Overall satisfaction with Passenger Assist • Likelihood to recommend Passenger Assist • Use of 'turn up and go' and booking via an App
Classification data	Concise, precise questions	• Demographics – gender, age, employment status and disability type

Clarifying the parameters of the research

At some stations, there is also a 'Turn up and Go' service whereby passengers can arrive at the station and request assistance that has not been booked in advance[7]. This type of unbooked assisted travel was <u>outside</u> the scope of this research. Nonetheless, a small number of questions regarding the use of 'Turn up and Go' have been included this year.

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[7] Rail operators are also required to provide assistance to passengers even if this has not been arranged in advance, where this is reasonably practicable. This type of unbooked assistance is commonly known as 'Turn up and go'.
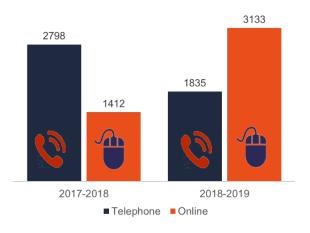
4. Methodology

When booking assistance, a record is created in the Passenger Assist database for each assist rather than for each journey, journey leg or each passenger. A record is created for each type of assistance booked in advance by a passenger for each station on the journey. For example, a passenger travelling from London Euston to Birmingham New Street who requested help with luggage, and assistance boarding and alighting the train would have a record created for each assistance type requested at each station (so there would be four records created for the outbound journey – two at London Euston and two at Birmingham New Street - and a further four for any return journey – two at Birmingham New Street and two at London Euston). At least one additional field for each journey leg is created showing any disability type, for example visually impaired, learning disability etc. To allow attribution of the results to a specific SFO, passengers are asked about assistance given at a particular station rather than across the entire journey (or indeed instead of their experience of the entire service).

In order to ensure that our sample was representative of the rail industry as a whole, interview targets were set for each SFO based on the proportion of total booked assists they received in 2017-18. These targets are shown in the adjacent table.

Some operators have a low target sample size due to the lower number of Passenger Assist bookings that they receive. These operators are c2c, Merseyrail, TfL Rail and London Overground. This means that for these operators there is a very limited number of passengers in the sample files we are able to contact to interview. Data for these operators is not available individually, although they are included in the overall sample.

SFO	Target no. of interviews
Network Rail	1,360-1660
Great Western Railway	650-790
Virgin Trains West Coast	425-520
London Northeastern Railway (LNER)	415-510
South Western Railway	275-340
ScotRail	240-290
Arriva Trains Wales/ Transport for Wales	230-280
East Midlands Trains	225-275
Govia Thameslink Railway	185-225
Northern	150-180
West Midlands Trains	140-170
Greater Anglia	135-165
TransPennine Express	100-125
Southeastern	100-115
Chiltern Railways	100
Other TOC/station operator*	As many as possible
TOTAL	**5,200**

Fieldwork was conducted between 30th April 2018 and 3rd June 2019[8]. The Rail Delivery Group (RDG), who manage the Passenger Assist system, provided sample from their database on a fortnightly basis during this period, which was segmented by each booking method. A combined approach of online and telephone interviews was used to give everyone the opportunity to participate in the manner they felt most comfortable with.

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The initial approach for all records containing an email address was by email. The telephone sample was drawn from those not supplying an email address at the time of the booking, those not completing the survey online, and those who indicated a preference to be interviewed by telephone.

The balance between telephone and online interviews changed in 2018-19 for a few reasons. Firstly, towards the end of the research in 2017-18, we trialled new email invite software which delivered a higher click-through than the previous software and made taking the survey online easier for passengers. Secondly, we no longer ask passengers in the email invite to let us know if they would rather take part via the telephone. Note some passengers did get in contact with us to say they would prefer to take part on the telephone and they were then phoned to arrange a time for the interview.

The sample files contained a record for each assist booking rather than each passenger, which meant they needed to be de-duplicated. To avoid sample bias, the following elements were randomly selected for each participant: the leg of the journey; the station (start, finish or interchange); and the type of assist. In addition, for each sample file, passengers who had been contacted previously were removed from the new sample. This means that each of the 4,968 interviews completed was by a unique individual.

This report details the findings overall and any differences between relevant sub-groups (such as age, disability type, and how the booking was made). Certain sub-groups are only reported for questions that are directly relevant to them. For example, differences between Network Rail (NR) Fully Managed and Managed Light stations[9] are only reported with respect to the assistance given by station staff, and not for the bookings process, which is the same for journeys via either type of station.

Significance testing was conducted at a level of +/- 95 per cent and where there are differences between sub-groups with a large enough sample size and/or difference in results to be significant, these have been reported. We have generally avoided reporting differences between sub-groups which are not statistically significant, however in a small number of cases we have done so (mainly where they are consistent with other data points which are statistically significant). If there is no mention of the sub-groups then this is because there are no meaningful differences to be reported.

Within the report, figures that have significantly increased this year are shown in green in the charts and tables, and figures that have significantly decreased are shown in red. Note that due to rounding, some totals may not correspond with the sum of the separate figures.

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[9] A Fully Managed Network Rail station means that all the assistance is provided by Network Rail staff. In a Managed Light station Network Rail sub-contract assistance provision to one or more TOCs. Regardless of the assistance provision arrangements in place, Network Rail remains responsible for all assistance provided in these stations as the station licence holder and SFO.
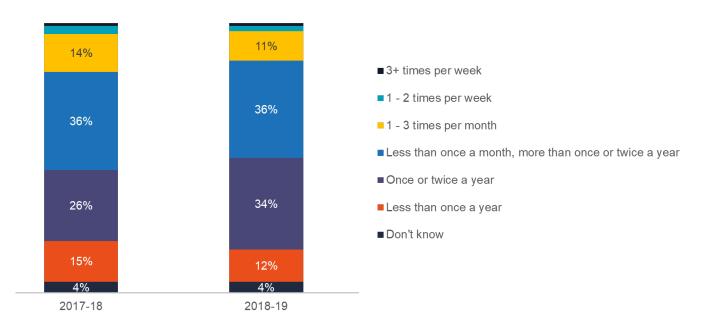
5. Who we spoke to

A total of 4,968 passengers were interviewed. Over three in four (78 per cent) of people we spoke to are passengers using Passenger Assist themselves, and just over one in five (22 per cent) are companions who accompanied someone using Passenger Assist.

SFO	No. of interviews
Network Rail	1,426
Great Western Railway	570
Virgin Trains West Coast	524
London Northeastern Railway (LNER)	495
Northern	291
West Midlands Trains	233
ScotRail	226
Arriva Trains Wales/ Transport for Wales	177
East Midlands Trains	171
South Western Railway	170
Greater Anglia	155
Govia Thameslink Railway	153
TransPennine Express	150
Chiltern Railways	100
Southeastern	83
Other SFOs	44
TOTAL	**4,968**

Frequency of use of Passenger Assist

Just under three in four passengers (72 per cent) had made the same journey before, a significant decrease from 75 per cent in 2017-18. The most common reason for passengers travelling is for leisure purposes (81 per cent).

Despite the high proportion having made the journey before, the majority use Passenger Assist infrequently; nearly half (46 per cent) use Passenger Assist no more frequently than once or twice a year whilst just over a third use Passenger Assist less often than once a month, but more often than twice a year (36 per cent).

Legend:
- 3+ times per week
- 1 - 2 times per week
- 1 - 3 times per month
- Less than once a month, more than once or twice a year
- Once or twice a year
- Less than once a year
- Don't know

2017-18: 14%, 36%, 26%, 15%, 4%
2018-19: 11%, 36%, 34%, 12%, 4%

A3. How often do you typically use Passenger Assist?
Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968)

Profile of users

While women continue to make up the majority of passengers receiving assistance (70 per cent), the percentage of men receiving assistance has significantly increased from 27 per cent in 2017-18 to 30 per cent this year. The gender split shown is representative of the sample file showing that a true difference between male and female users exists.

Women:
- 2018-19: 70%
- 2017-18: 73%

Men:
- 2018-19: 30%
- 2017-18: 27%

Prefer not to say:
- 2018-19: 1%
- 2017-18: 0%

Legend: 2018-19, 2017-18

F1. Are you…?
Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968)

The majority of people who require assistance are aged 65 or over (65 per cent), whilst a small proportion (six per cent) are aged 34 or under.

Age	2017-18	2018-19
16-24	4%	3%
25-34	4%	4%
35-49	9%	8%
50-64	20%	18%
65-74	20%	23%
75+	40%	42%
Refused	3%	3%

Legend: 2017-18, 2018-19

F2. How old are you?
Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968)

Reflecting the age profile, almost two in three people who require assistance are retired (67 per cent).

Retired
67%
65%

Not working
11%
13%

Working full or part time
11%
12%

Student
2%
3%

Other
6%
5%

Refused
3%
2%

■ 2018-19
■ 2017-18

F3. Which of the following best describes your current circumstances?
Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968)

Type of disability or condition

As was the case in 2017-18, the most common type of disability that people requesting assistance have is physical, and this has seen a small but significant decrease from 61 per cent in 2017-18 to 58 per cent this year.

The percentage of passengers with a visual impairment has also decreased significantly (from 17 per cent to 14 per cent), while the net percentage of those with a hidden condition (learning, concentrating or remembering, mental health problems, social or behavioural issues and/or communication disorder or disability) has increased significantly (from 11 per cent to 13 per cent).
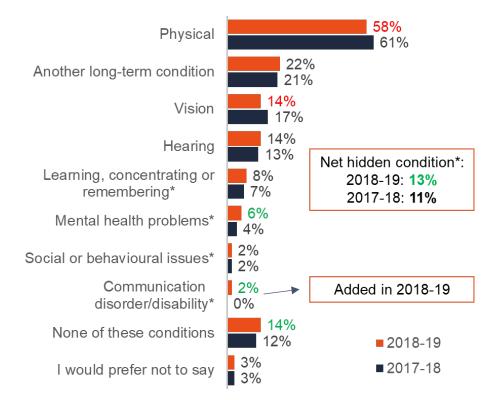
Around one in five (22 per cent) have a long-term condition, and although it is still a relatively small number of passengers, there has been a significant increase in the number who do not have a disability or long-term health condition this year compared to 2017-18 (14 per cent and 12 per cent respectively). Passengers who do not have a disability are more likely to be aged 65+ than under 65.

Condition	2018-19	2017-18
Physical	58%	61%
Another long-term condition	22%	21%
Vision	14%	17%
Hearing	14%	13%
Learning, concentrating or remembering*	8%	7%
Mental health problems*	6%	4%
Social or behavioural issues*	2%	2%
Communication disorder/disability*	2%	0%
None of these conditions	14%	12%
I would prefer not to say	3%	3%

Net hidden condition*:
2018-19: **13%**
2017-18: **11%**

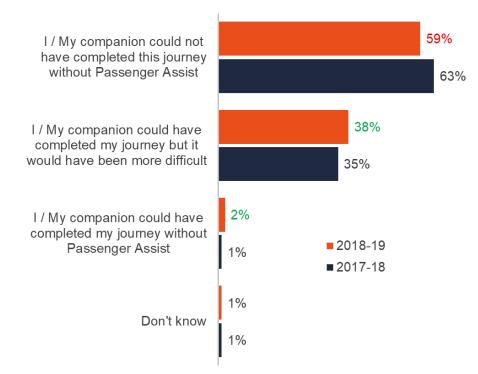Communication disorder/disability* — Added in 2018-19

F4. Do you have any of the following long-standing physical or mental health conditions?
Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968)

The incidence of disabilities and impairments is linked to the age of the passenger using Passenger Assist. A greater proportion of younger passengers using Passenger Assist have a physical disability, vision or hearing impairment or hidden disability, whilst a greater proportion of older passengers have a long-term condition or simply require assistance. The table below shows disability type or condition by age.

Disability or condition	16-24 (125)	25-34 (179)	35-49 (393)	50-64 (913)	65-74 (1,150)	75+ (2,079)
Physical	66%	65%	66%	70%	58%	52%
Vision	29%	24%	20%	17%	11%	12%
Hearing	10%	8%	9%	9%	9%	22%
Learning or concentrating or remembering	27%	20%	13%	11%	4%	6%
Mental health problems	22%	17%	19%	10%	3%	2%
Communication disorder or disability	14%	4%	3%	3%	1%	1%
Social or behavioural issues	15%	7%	4%	2%	1%	0%
Another long-term health condition	22%	20%	26%	22%	25%	21%
None of these conditions	5%	7%	6%	8%	14%	19%
I would prefer not to say	2%	0%	2%	1%	4%	3%
NET: Hidden condition	45%	31%	27%	18%	6%	7%

6. Importance of Passenger Assist

Passenger Assist is of extreme importance to those who use it; over half (59 per cent) indicate they could not have completed the journey without it. This has significantly decreased however, from 63 per cent in 2017-18. There has in turn been a significant increase in the proportion of passengers who say they could have completed their journey, but it would have been more difficult without Passenger Assist (from 35 per cent to 38 per cent).

D20. We are keen to know how helpful you found Passenger Assist in terms of making the train journey possible or simply more convenient. Which of the following best describes your experience?
Base: All met by staff (2017-18: 3,716, 2018-19: 4,402)

As was the case in 2017-18, more travel companions (62 per cent) than service users (59 per cent) agree that they could not have completed the journey without Passenger Assist, possibly because travelling with companions indicates a greater need for assistance than travelling alone.

Passengers requiring assistance getting to the wheelchair area and provision of a ramp are most likely to agree they could not have completed their journey without Passenger Assist (82 per cent and 80 per cent respectively). Similar to 2017-18, passengers with mental health problems are most likely to agree that they could not have completed the journey without Passenger Assist (73 per cent).

Half of those with no condition say they could have completed the journey but it would have been more difficult for them (51 per cent).

"Generally it's really good - I couldn't do without it. A few times, the train has been delayed and I have missed connections - when I have missed connections the staff have got me a taxi and generally the service is brilliant. There is no way you could travel on a train with a wheelchair without assistance - if they didn't have it, I wouldn't be able to go"
50-64, physical disability

"I'm very grateful that we have this service. As I'm partially sighted, I would struggle without it."
65-74, visual impairment
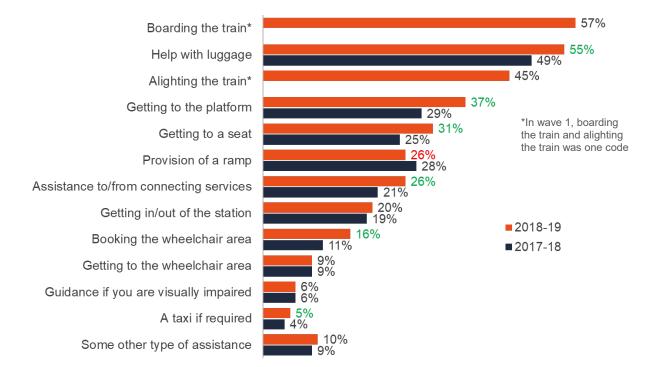
7. What assistance are passengers booking?

Type of assistance booked

At the assistance booking stage passengers are able to request a range of different types of assistance. While there is no centralised record of the mix of assists, the interview data allows us to make reliable inferences about their general composition.

Similar to 2017-18, the most common types of assistance booked are those that are the broadest in relation to the needs that they meet, and therefore not linked to specific disability types or conditions. The most common type of assistance booked is help boarding the train (57 per cent), followed by help with luggage (55 per cent), and alighting the train (45 per cent).

In 2017-18, boarding and alighting the train was included as a single option in the questionnaire but this has been separated in 2018-19. Significantly more passengers request help boarding the train than alighting the train (57 per cent and 45 per cent respectively). The second most common assistance booked, help with luggage, has increased significantly compared to 2017-18 (49 per cent to 55 per cent). This may be due in part to telephone staff now actively asking passengers if they need help with their luggage when they book their assistance.

Compared to 2017-18, significantly more passengers have requested help with getting to the platform (29 per cent to 37 per cent), assistance to or from connecting services (21 per cent to 26 per cent), booking the wheelchair area (11 per cent to 16 per cent) and a taxi if required (four per cent to five per cent). However, there has been a significant decrease in the number of passengers requesting the provision of a ramp (28 to 26 per cent).

*In wave 1, boarding the train and alighting the train was one code

■ 2018-19
■ 2017-18

C1 – Which of the following types of assistance did you request at <INSERT STATION>?
Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968)

Booking provision of a ramp remains highest amongst younger passengers (57 per cent aged 16-24 and 50 per cent aged 25-34). Booking this type of assistance decreases as age increases with just over one in ten (13 per cent) of those aged 75 or older booking provision of a ramp.

Booking help with luggage is highest amongst older passengers (68 per cent aged 75 or older and 58 per cent aged 65-74). This has increased from 2017-18 (62 per cent aged 75 or older and 53 per cent aged 65-74).

This further confirms that amongst older users of Passenger Assist it is not just those with physical disabilities and vision or hearing impairments who require help accessing the rail network, but a much wider group, including many passengers who require assistance with particular parts of the journey.

Those with a visual impairment are most likely to book assistance getting to a seat (46 per cent) and those with a hidden disability or physical impairment are most likely to book the wheelchair area (25 per cent and 22 per cent respectively) and provision of a ramp (39 per cent and 37 per cent respectively).

There are also some differences in the assistance booked depending on whether it is the passenger or travel companion booking the assistance. More passengers than travel companions' book help with luggage (57 per cent and 47 per cent respectively) but by a smaller margin than in 2017-18 (52 per cent and 38 per cent). This could indicate that when a Passenger Assist user is travelling with a companion, there are some things that the companion will help with rather than depending on rail staff.

Similarly to 2017-18, more companions than passengers book provision of a ramp (36 per cent and 23 per cent respectively), however by a smaller margin than last year (43 per cent and 25 per cent respectively). Companions are also more likely to book the wheelchair area itself (22 per cent) and help getting to the wheelchair area (13 per cent) compared to passengers (14 per cent and 8 per cent respectively). We hypothesise that this is because passengers needing wheelchair assistance are more likely to travel with a companion than other Passenger Assist users, meaning that a greater proportion of assists booked by companions would require wheelchair assistance.

Number of assists booked

Passengers and companions are requesting more assists per booking this year than in 2017-18. There has been a significant decrease in the percentage of those booking only one assist (33 per cent to 24 per cent) and two assists (25 per cent to 18 per cent), but a significant increase in those booking five (seven per cent to 11 per cent) and more than five assists (nine per cent to 19 per cent). The average number of assists booked per station in 2018-19 is 3.24, an increase from 2017-18 where it was 2.61. Note that this increase could be partially explained by the change in the questionnaire since boarding and alighting the train was one code in 2017-18 but split into two codes in 2018-19. However, having investigated this further, only a small proportion (eight per cent) booked both boarding and alighting the train in 2018-19 so it seems there has also been a genuine increase in the number of assists being booked.

It is important to note that this data relates to the assistance required at a single station; therefore, the total number of assists requested on a typical journey will be a multiple of these numbers. For example, this suggests a journey from Glasgow Central to York via a change at Edinburgh Waverley could, on a routine basis, reasonably involve around five to six different types of assistance being required overall to complete the journey in each direction.

C1 – Which of the following types of assistance did you request at <INSERT STATION>?
Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968)

There are no significant differences by whether a passenger or companion made the booking, or the passenger's age, disability type or condition or day of the week when they travelled, in the number of types of assistance booked.

BREAKING BLUE

8. Experience of booking Passenger Assist

How do people book?

Passenger Assist can be booked by telephone, by email or via the web. Booking records from the RDG show that the most common method for booking is via telephone. Consistent with this, over three in four of those we interviewed booked via the telephone (76 per cent). However, this has seen a significant decrease from 81 per cent in 2017-18, and booking records from the RDG show that significantly more passengers are now booking via email (12 per cent to 22 per cent). In addition to this, booking records from the RDG show that a smaller proportion have booked Passenger Assist via the web (seven per cent to two per cent) compared to 2017-18.

Average booking time:
8 mins 35 secs

Those booking by telephone took on average 8 minutes, 35 seconds[10] to book their assistance. Passengers with hidden disabilities took significantly longer than average to book assistance via the telephone. Passengers with learning, concentrating or remembering difficulties took 10 minutes, 10 seconds; passengers with communication disorders took 10 minutes, 6 seconds and passengers with social or behavioural issues took 10 minutes on average.

Additional help booked or offered

Over two in five (41 per cent) are offered help with their luggage when booking their assistance. Those booking by telephone are significantly more likely to be offered assistance with luggage than those booking via email (46 per cent and 28 per cent respectively).

When booking their assistance, around one in seven (15 per cent) ask for help planning their journey. Those with visual impairments and long-term illnesses or conditions are more likely to ask for this help (both 18 per cent).

Almost two in three (63 per cent) do not book assistance at the same time as booking their train ticket. When asked why this was, the majority of passengers said it was because they had booked tickets in advance. In addition, only a small number of operators currently allow passengers to book tickets and assistance at the same time. Around 10 per cent of those who do not book assistance at the same time as their ticket mention booking assistance by telephone.

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[10] However it must be noted that the time taken to book assistance can vary significantly by passenger depending on the nature of their journey and assistance needs.

Confirmation received

Significantly more passengers and companions received confirmation of their booking this year than in 2017-18 (increasing from 82 per cent to 87 per cent). Less than one in ten (nine per cent) did not receive a confirmation, a decrease from 12 per cent in 2017-18. As in 2017-18, the proportion receiving a confirmation when booking by email (95 per cent) is significantly higher than the proportion making their booking by telephone (85 per cent).

> *"It should be confirmed while booking online. We still have to call the GWR helpline for confirmation."*
> **35-49, physical disability**

> *"I am sometimes put in very stressful situations. Sometimes I don't get confirmation, but services happen as requested. Other times I get confirmation and no services happen."*
> **50-64, physical disability**

> *"The person who arranged the assistance for me was very good and listened to what I said. He checked everything with me before ending the call and the confirmation came through promptly, so I was not left unsure."*
> **65-74, physical disability**

Although the information in the confirmation is correct for the majority of those who receive it, this has significantly decreased from 97 per cent in 2017-18 to 96 per cent this year. There remains no significant difference by mode of booking for whether the information included is correct.

Booking confirmation received

2018-19:   87%
2017-18:   82%

Booking confirmation accurate

2018-19:   96%
2017-18:   97%

C3. Did you receive confirmation of the assistance booking? Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968);
C4. Was the information in the booking confirmation accurate? Base: All who received confirmation of booking (2017-18: 3,463, 2018-19: 4,314)

Ease of understanding

A small number of those who received a booking confirmation do not receive information about **where** (seven per cent) or **when** (five per cent) to meet the staff member.

Of those who do receive a confirmation, the majority find the information about **when** to meet staff easy to understand (86 per cent). The same proportion of passengers find instructions regarding when to meet staff easy to understand this year as in 2017-18 (86 per cent), however there has been a significant decrease in the proportion who find instructions about where to meet staff easy to understand (83 per cent to 80 per cent).

Ease of understanding instructions regarding <u>when</u> to meet staff

When

2018-19: **86%**
2017-18: **86%**

Ease of understanding instructions regarding <u>where</u> to meet staff

Where

2018-19: **80%**
2017-18: **83%**

C5. How easy to understand were the instructions within the booking confirmation about where to meet the staff member?
Base: All who received confirmation of booking (2017-18: 3,463, 2018-19: 4,314)
C5. How easy to understand were the instructions within the booking confirmation about when to meet the staff member?
Base: All who received confirmation of booking (2017-18: 3,463, 2018-19: 4,314)

Instructions regarding **when** to meet staff are easier to understand when the booking has been made via telephone (88 per cent) than by email (82 per cent). Those booking via telephone are significantly more likely to find instructions on when to meet staff easy to understand this year (increasing from 86 per cent in 2017-18 to 88 per cent).

Ease of understanding information about **where** to meet staff has significantly decreased for those who booked via email (80 per cent to 75 per cent), and telephone (84 per cent to 82 per cent). Although there has been a small decrease across all booking modes (three per cent decline), those who book via telephone are significantly more likely to find the instructions on where to meet staff easy to understand (88 per cent) than those booking via email (82 per cent) or web (80 per cent). Note there is a low base for booking via web.

Awareness of an app for booking

A Passenger Assist smartphone app is being developed for booking and tracking assisted journeys across the network but we understand some train operators may use their own apps currently[11]. The majority of passengers (87 per cent) are not at present aware of any app they can use to book assistance. Just over one in ten (12 per cent) have heard of such an app, although when asked most mentioned a specific train company app. A small proportion mentioned that they have heard of the Passenger Assist app suggesting communications regarding the development of the RDG app are filtering through to passengers.

Awareness and use of 'Turn Up and Go'

One in four passengers (26 per cent) have in the past asked for assistance at a station without having booked it in advance[12]. The majority of these passengers received the assistance requested (90 per cent). Passengers with mental health problems are most likely to ask for assistance on the day without having booked (40 per

"We asked for assistance and although the team were very busy and possibly short staffed, they managed to squeeze our assistance needs in and took care of everything"
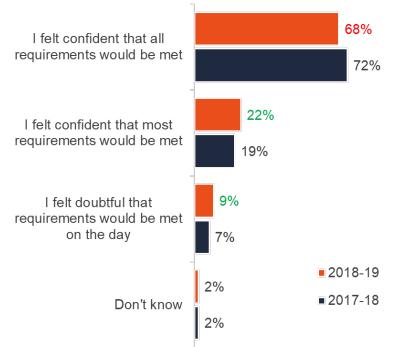**75+, hearing impairment**

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[11] The Passenger Assist app is being developed by RDG and Transreport on behalf of the rail industry.
[12] This type of unbooked assistance is commonly referred to as 'Turn up and go'.

cent) followed by those with social or behavioural issues (36 per cent) and visual disabilities (36 per cent).

Confidence in booking

Anecdotal comments from Passenger Assist users suggest that confidence that their bookings will be fulfilled is important to their overall experience of the journey. In 2017-18, almost three in four (72 per cent) were confident after booking that **all** of their requirements would be met on the day of travel. This has significantly decreased to 68 per cent with significantly more passengers saying they felt confident **most** (but not all) of their requirements would be met (22 per cent), or feeling doubtful their requirements would be met at all (nine per cent).

C6. Before we go on to discuss the actual day of your journey, please tell us which of the following best describes how you felt after making your booking?
Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968)

The proportion booking by telephone who felt confident that all requirements would be met (70 per cent) is higher than the other modes of booking, and significantly higher than those who booked by email (60 per cent). In 2017-18, confidence for those who booked by email was the lowest out of all the booking modes, and has further decreased in 2018-19 (69 per cent to 60 per cent).

Similar to 2017-18, older passengers are more confident than younger passengers that their requirements will be met. Those most confident are aged 75+ (71 per cent), although this has significantly decreased from 2017-18 (79 per cent) and 65-74, which although not significant has also seen a decrease (72 per cent to 70 per cent). Those with the least confidence are aged 16-24 (53 per cent), 25-24 (55 per cent) and 35-49 (57 per cent).

Those with social or behavioural issues and those with learning, concentrating or remembering disabilities are least likely to feel confident their requirements will be met (56 per cent and 57 per cent

respectively). Those with a hidden condition remain the most likely to feel doubtful (13 per cent), this is consistent with findings in 2017-18.

Satisfaction with the booking process

The proportion of passengers and companions either fairly or very satisfied with the overall booking process remains consistent at 92 per cent in both 2017-18 and 2018-19. Overall satisfaction with the booking process is significantly higher among those booking by telephone (93 per cent) compared to those booking by email (90 per cent).

The overall assistance booking process
- 2018-19: 92%
- 2017-18: 92%

The assistance arrangements that were booked for the journey
- 2018-19: 93%
- 2017-18: 93%

The helpfulness of staff when booking assistance
- 2018-19: 91%
- 2017-18: 93%

■ 2018-19
■ 2017-18

C7. Thinking about the booking process, how satisfied were you with… What score out of 5 would you give where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 very satisfied?
Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968)

While satisfaction with the arrangements and assistance that was booked for the journey remains unchanged from 2017-18 (93 per cent), satisfaction with the helpfulness of staff who dealt with the booking has decreased (93 per cent to 91 per cent).

> *"I would say that the young people that do the telephone bookings need to be taught about different disabilities and what people need."*
> **65-74, visual impairment, physical disability**

There are differences by disability type in terms of overall satisfaction with the booking process whereby those with a hidden condition are significantly less likely to be satisfied compared to the average (88 per cent compared to 92 per cent).

Satisfaction with the overall booking process

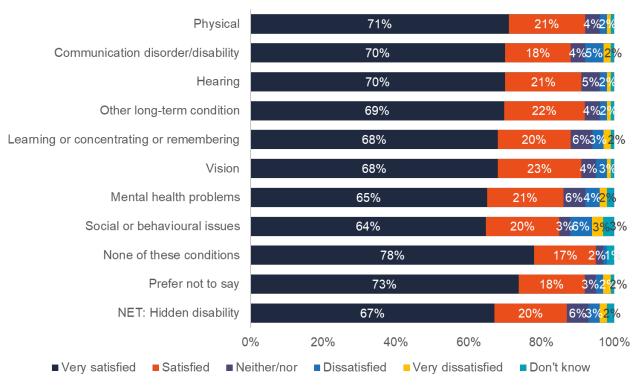|	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither/nor	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know
Physical	71%	21%	4%	2%		
Communication disorder/disability	70%	18%	4%	5%	2%	
Hearing	70%	21%	5%	2%		
Other long-term condition	69%	22%	4%	2%		
Learning or concentrating or remembering	68%	20%	6%	3%	2%	
Vision	68%	23%	4%	3%		
Mental health problems	65%	21%	6%	4%	2%	
Social or behavioural issues	64%	20%	3%	6%	3%	3%
None of these conditions	78%	17%	2%	1%		
Prefer not to say	73%	18%	3%	2%	2%	
NET: Hidden disability	67%	20%	6%	3%	2%	

C7. Thinking about the booking process, how satisfied were you with… What score out of 5 would you give where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 very satisfied?
Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968)

As shown in the below chart, satisfaction with the helpfulness of staff when booking assistance is also significantly lower for those with a hidden condition compared to overall (87 per cent compared to 91 per cent).

Satisfaction with helpfulness of staff

Condition	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither/nor	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know
Physical	76%	14%	4%			3%
Communication disorder/disability	75%	9%	7%			4%
Other long-term condition	75%	15%	5%			3%
Hearing	74%	15%	4%			5%
Vision	74%	16%	5%			4%
Mental health problems	71%	17%	5%			5%
Learning or concentrating or remembering	70%	15%	7%			5%
Social or behavioural issues	68%	10%	13%			6%
Prefer not to say	75%	16%	3%			4%
None of these conditions	82%	12%	2%			3%
NET: Hidden disability	72%	16%	6%			5%

■ Very satisfied ■ Satisfied ■ Neither/nor ■ Dissatisfied ■ Very dissatisfied ■ Don't know

C7. Thinking about the booking process, how satisfied were you with… What score out of 5 would you give where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 very satisfied?
Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968)

BREAKING BLUE

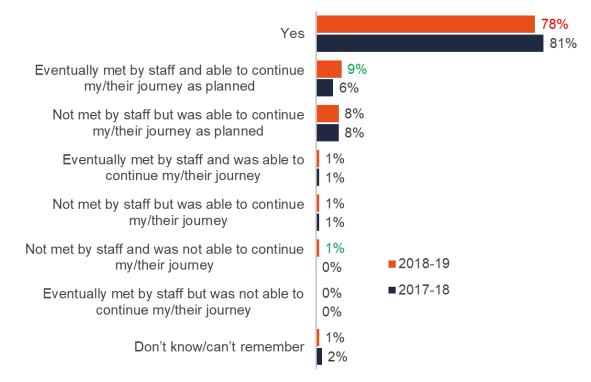## 9. Experience on the day of travel

Met by staff

Over three in four passengers (78 per cent) are met by rail staff in what they consider is a reasonable timeframe. However, this has decreased significantly from 81 per cent in 2017-18. Those with social or behavioural issues, mental health problems or learning, concentrating or remembering difficulties are less likely to say staff were there within a reasonable timeframe (73 per cent, 74 per cent and 75 per cent respectively).

Those requesting help with luggage are least likely to say staff were there to help within a reasonable timeframe (77 per cent).

Passengers this year are significantly more likely to say they were eventually met by staff and able to continue their journey as planned than last year (nine per cent compared to six per cent in 2017-18).

The proportion not being met by staff has remained consistent (nine per cent) although this group are still able to continue the journey (see journey leg completion later in this chapter).

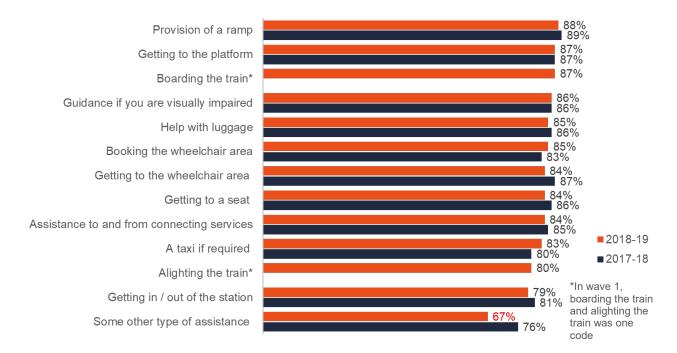| Category	2018-19	2017-18
Yes	78%	81%
Eventually met by staff and able to continue my/their journey as planned	9%	6%
Not met by staff but was able to continue my/their journey as planned	8%	8%
Eventually met by staff and was able to continue my/their journey	1%	1%
Not met by staff but was able to continue my/their journey	1%	1%
Not met by staff and was not able to continue my/their journey	1%	0%
Eventually met by staff but was not able to continue my/their journey	0%	0%
Don't know/can't remember	1%	2%

D4. Was a member of staff available to meet you within an acceptable time frame?
Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968)

BREAKING BLUE

Assistance received

The vast majority of assistance booked is received; for the assistance most commonly booked, boarding the train, 87 per cent of those who booked this assistance received it. Getting in and out of the station and 'other types of assistance' are the only categories scoring lower than 80 per cent, with 79 per cent of those booking help in and out of the station receiving this and 67 per cent of those booking 'other types of assistance' receiving this.

There are no significant variations by mode of booking for assistance types received. Passengers booking guidance if visually impaired are more likely to have received this assistance if they booked by email compared to telephone (93 per cent and 84 per cent respectively).

There are only small differences in completion rates by day of the week the journey was made, with the exception of assistance to and from connecting services with those travelling on a weekday more likely to receive assistance (85 per cent) than those travelling on a weekend (81 per cent).
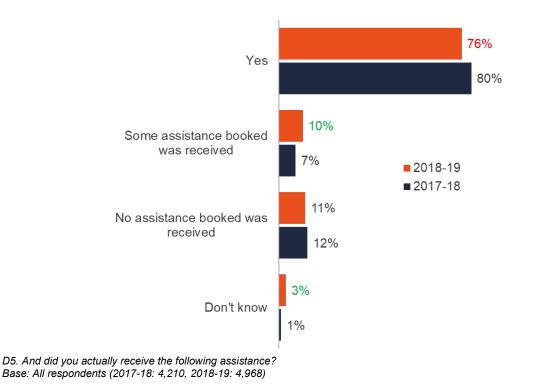
Assistance type	2018-19	2017-18
Provision of a ramp	88%	89%
Getting to the platform	87%	87%
Boarding the train*	87%	
Guidance if you are visually impaired	86%	86%
Help with luggage	85%	86%
Booking the wheelchair area	85%	83%
Getting to the wheelchair area	84%	87%
Getting to a seat	84%	86%
Assistance to and from connecting services	84%	85%
A taxi if required	83%	80%
Alighting the train*	80%	
Getting in / out of the station	79%	81%
Some other type of assistance	67%	76%

*In wave 1, boarding the train and alighting the train was one code

D5. And did you actually receive the following assistance?
Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968)

> *"They were on the station waiting for me when I got back to Paddington station which was excellent."*
> **75+, physical disability**

> *"If you book it, they should be there waiting for you. They should have more staff - if they don't have the staff, why are they offering the assistance?"*
> **50-64, physical disability, learning /concentrating/ remembering, mental health problems**

Amount of assistance received

As noted above, many passengers book multiple types of assistance for each journey leg. In total over three in four (76 per cent) receive **all** of the assistance they book; this is a significant drop from four in five (80 per cent) receiving all assistance booked in 2017-18.

D5. And did you actually receive the following assistance?
Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968)

There are no significant differences in assistance received between Network Rail Fully Managed and Managed Light stations[13], by day of the week or passenger type.

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[13] A Fully Managed Network Rail station means that the assistance is provided by Network Rail staff. At a Managed Light station the assistance is usually provided by train operator staff whose services depart from that station.

There are small differences by disability type or condition for whether the assistance booked is received. All assistance received is highest for people with a visual disability (77 per cent), followed by those with a communication disorder (76 per cent). Those with hidden conditions such as mental health problems and learning, concentrating or remembering difficulties are significantly less likely to receive all assistance booked (both 71 per cent). Again, this indicates a challenge around providing assistance for those with less visible disabilities.
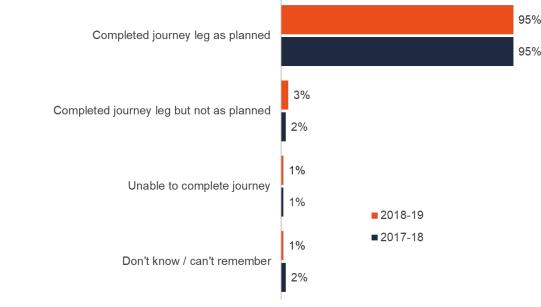
Condition	All assistance booked was received	Some assistance booked was received	No assistance booked was received	Don't know / unsure
Vision	77%	11%	10%	2%
Communication disorder/disability	76%	15%	8%	1%
Physical	75%	12%	11%	2%
Other long-term condition	74%	12%	11%	2%
Hearing	73%	12%	12%	2%
Social or behavioural issues	72%	10%	18%	0
Mental health problems	71%	13%	11%	5%
Learning or concentrating or remembering	71%	14%	12%	3%
None of these conditions	76%	8%	12%	4%
Prefer not to say	75%	9%	13%	3%
NET: Hidden disability	72%	14%	11%	3%

■ All assistance booked was received   ■ Some assistance booked was received
■ No assistance booked was received   ■ Don't know / unsure

D5. And did you actually receive the following assistance?
Base: All respondents (2018-19: 4,968)

Journey leg completion

In addition to asking whether staff met the passenger and if they received their assistance, passengers were also asked if they were able to complete their journey. By combining this with data on whether passengers were met by staff, this allows us to measure the proportion of those using Passenger Assist who completed their journey leg.

As in 2017-18 the vast majority (95 per cent) are able to complete their journey leg as planned and a further smaller proportion are able to continue their journey but not as planned (three per cent). Just one per cent are unable to continue their journey due to a lack of available staff.

D4. Was a member of staff available to meet you within an acceptable time frame?
Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968)

Those with mental health problems are least likely to have been able to continue their journey as planned (91 per cent). There are no significant differences by whether the passenger is travelling on a weekday or at the weekend, age or how the booking was made.

Alternative accessible transport provided

Train and station operators are obligated under the requirements of their DPPP to provide Alternative Accessible Transport (AAT) to passengers, usually in the form of an accessible taxi, when a station or train service the passenger wants to use is inaccessible to them. For example, if a passenger is a wheelchair user and their local station has no step-free access to the platform, then AAT should be provided to take the passenger to the nearest or most convenient accessible station to allow them to continue their journey.

For the majority of passengers using AAT, the vehicle arrived on time (79 per cent). This is a slight but not significant drop from 84 per cent in 2017-18. Vehicles are thought to be suitable by the vast majority of users, again scores decreasing only slightly from 93 per cent in 2017-18 to 91 per cent this year.

D11. Did the vehicle arrive on time? Base: All who used a taxi (2017-18: 300, 2018-19: 447)
D12. Was the vehicle suitable for you? Base: All who used a taxi (2017-18: 300, 2018-19: 447)

"The driver turned up promptly, was very helpful with the chair and drove in a manner that made my wife and I feel safe and comfortable"
65-74, no conditions mentioned

"The taxi did not arrive, and nobody informed me or checked if I could get to my destination"
50-64, physical disability, mental health problems
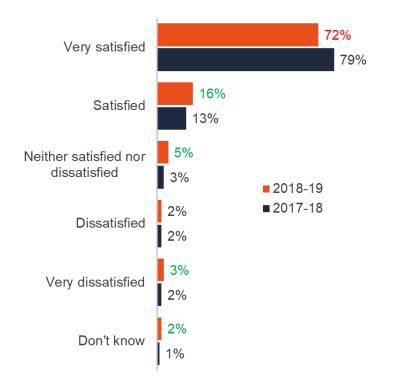
10. Satisfaction with assistance on journey measured

Overall satisfaction with assistance at the station

It is important to note that overall satisfaction with the assistance received on the journey leg measured was not asked of everyone who had booked assistance, but only those who were met by staff (89 per cent). The remaining respondents who were not met by staff were assumed not to have received the assistance they booked and therefore that the assistance had failed, meaning questions about their satisfaction with assistance received were not applicable.

The majority of passengers who receive assistance are satisfied, although there has been a significant decrease in overall satisfaction levels from 2017-18 (92 per cent) to 2018-19 (88 per cent).

There are no significant differences by disability type, day of the week (weekday and weekend both 88 per cent satisfaction), and only small differences by mode of booking or whether the respondent is a passenger or companion (passenger = 88 per cent, companion = 89 per cent).

Younger passengers aged 25-34 are significantly less likely to be satisfied with the assistance received at the station (78 per cent) compared to those aged 75+ (89 per cent).

	2018-19	2017-18
Very satisfied	72%	79%
Satisfied	16%	13%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	5%	3%
Dissatisfied	2%	2%
Very dissatisfied	3%	2%
Don't know	2%	1%

D7. And how satisfied were you with the overall assistance?
Base: All respondents met by staff (2017-18: 3,716, 2018-19: 4,402)

"Overall the service provided was exceptional. Staff were friendly, polite and extremely helpful at all times."
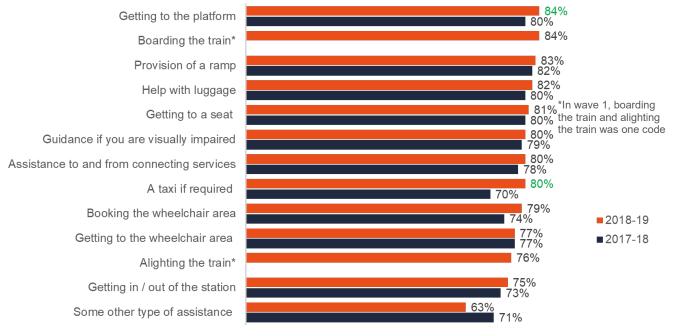**35-49, physical disability**

Overall satisfaction with each type of assistance booked

The majority of those who receive each type of assistance are satisfied with it. Satisfaction is highest among those booking assistance to get to the platform (84 per cent), which is a significant increase from 80 per cent in 2017-18.

Satisfaction levels are also high among those booking assistance to board the train (84 per cent), provision of a ramp (83 per cent) and help with luggage (82 per cent). Satisfaction with provision of a taxi has increased significantly to 80 per cent this year from 70 per cent in 2017-18.

Older passengers tend to be more satisfied with help with luggage; 84 per cent aged 65-74 compared to 65 per cent aged 25-34. They are also more likely to express satisfaction with assistance to and from connecting services; 83 per cent aged 75+ compared to 61 per cent aged 25-34.

Excluding 'other types of assistance', lowest levels of satisfaction are expressed by those receiving assistance to get in and out of the station (75 per cent) and those receiving assistance to alight the train (76 per cent).

	2018-19	2017-18
Getting to the platform	84%	80%
Boarding the train*	84%	
Provision of a ramp	83%	82%
Help with luggage	82%	80%
Getting to a seat	81%	80%
Guidance if you are visually impaired	80%	79%
Assistance to and from connecting services	80%	78%
A taxi if required	80%	70%
Booking the wheelchair area	79%	74%
Getting to the wheelchair area	77%	77%
Alighting the train*	76%	
Getting in / out of the station	75%	73%
Some other type of assistance	63%	71%

*In wave 1, boarding the train and alighting the train was one code

D6. And how satisfied were you with the assistance?
Base: All respondents (varies)

"My needs were totally met, and they couldn't be nicer. They met me and took my luggage on the train - it was very pleasant and I was very satisfied."
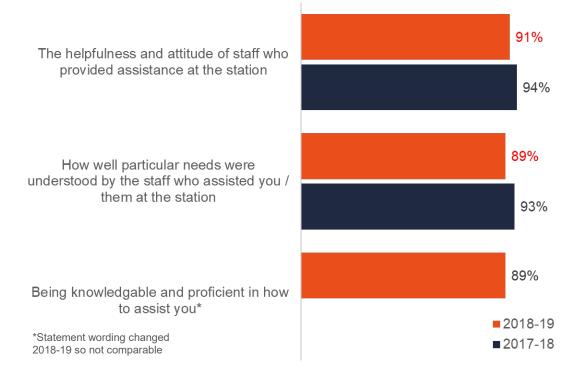**65-74, no conditions mentioned**

"Staff are not always there to help you alight. If trains are changed, assistance is not forwarded onto the next station"
75+, visual impairment, physical disability

BREAKING BLUE

Satisfaction with staff at the station

Satisfaction with the helpfulness and attitude of staff providing assistance at the station is high with over nine in ten satisfied (91 per cent). However, this has decreased significantly from 94 per cent in 2017-18.

Satisfaction with how well particular needs are understood by staff assisting has also decreased significantly from 93 per cent in 2017-18 to 89 per cent this year.

Passengers with social or behavioural issues and those with mental health problems are least likely to be satisfied with how well staff understand their particular needs (81 per cent and 85 per cent respectively). They are also less likely to be satisfied with staff knowledge and proficiency in assisting them (77 per cent and 82 per cent respectively). This suggests that further training is required in this area.
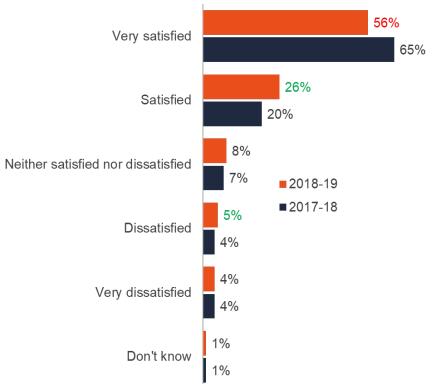
The helpfulness and attitude of staff who provided assistance at the station
- 91%
- 94%

How well particular needs were understood by the staff who assisted you / them at the station
- 89%
- 93%

Being knowledgable and proficient in how to assist you*

*Statement wording changed 2018-19 so not comparable
- 89%

■ 2018-19
■ 2017-18

D17. Thinking about the journey assistance at <INSERT STATION>, how satisfied were you with… Base: All respondents met by staff (2017-18: 3,716, 2018-19: 4,402)

"Thank you very much to the lovely staff. They went above and beyond! A credit to you!"
35-49, visual impairment, physical disability

"When the staff are alert and efficient, as they mostly are, it is a valued and appreciated service. Occasionally, staff are disinterested and uncaring and this shakes the confidence of disabled passengers."
75+, visual impairment, physical disability

BREAKING BLUE

11. Overall satisfaction with Passenger Assist, staff and station facilities

Overall satisfaction with Passenger Assist

Overall satisfaction with Passenger Assist based on all past usage has significantly decreased from 85 per cent in 2017-18 to 82 per cent this year. Although the proportion of those who are overall 'very satisfied' has decreased significantly (from 65 per cent to 56 per cent), the proportion 'satisfied' has increased this year (from 20 per cent to 26 per cent). The proportion saying they are 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' with the service has increased significantly from eight per cent in 2017-18 to 10 per cent this year.
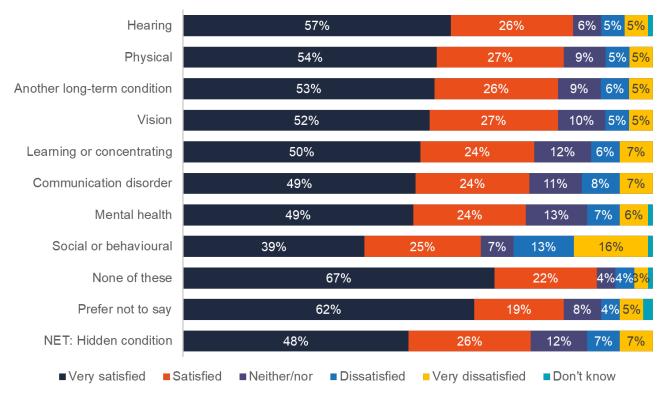

E1. Overall, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 very satisfied, how satisfied are you with Passenger Assist?
Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968)

"Overall, I am extremely satisfied with this service and the helpfulness and courtesy of the staff. I'm truly amazed that in this day and age such an excellent service can exist"
75+, visual and hearing impairments

"Passenger assist is an excellent service. We have used it many times, the staff are excellent. Without it my mother could not use the train."
35-49, hearing impairment, physical disability

Overall satisfaction with Passenger Assist ranges from 64 per cent among those with social or behavioural issues to 88 per cent of those with no disabilities.
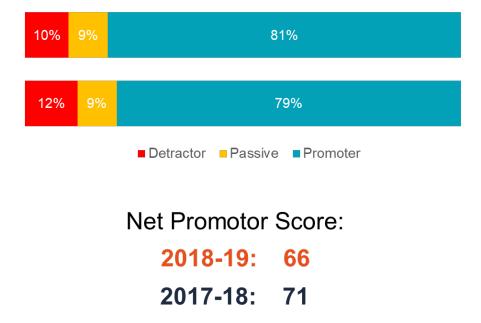
Those with social or behavioural issues are also the least likely to be very satisfied with Passenger Assist (39 per cent).

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither/nor	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know
Hearing	57%	26%	6%	5%	5%	
Physical	54%	27%	9%	5%	5%	
Another long-term condition	53%	26%	9%	6%	5%	
Vision	52%	27%	10%	5%	5%	
Learning or concentrating	50%	24%	12%	6%	7%	
Communication disorder	49%	24%	11%	8%	7%	
Mental health	49%	24%	13%	7%	6%	
Social or behavioural	39%	25%	7%	13%	16%	
None of these	67%	22%	4%	4%	3%	
Prefer not to say	62%	19%	8%	4%	5%	
NET: Hidden condition	48%	26%	12%	7%	7%	

E1. Overall, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 very satisfied, how satisfied are you with Passenger Assist?
Base: All respondents (2018-19: 4,968)

Likelihood to recommend Passenger Assist

The Net Promotor Score (NPS) is a customer loyalty score, ranging from -100 to 100, calculated by asking passengers one question: "On a scale from 0 to 10, how likely would you be to recommend Passenger Assist to a friend or family member who may require such a service?". The NPS for Passenger Assist has decreased from 71 in 2017-18 to 67 this year. This is due to both a smaller proportion of promoters and a larger proportion of detractors than in 2017-18. Passengers with social or behavioural issues are least likely to say they would recommend Passenger Assist (63 per cent) followed by those with mental health problems (69 per cent).
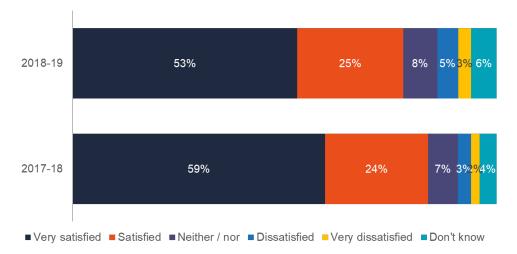
Likelihood to recommend to friends/family

10%	9%	81%

12%	9%	79%

■ Detractor ■ Passive ■ Promoter

Net Promotor Score:
2018-19:   66
2017-18:   71

E4. On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is very unlikely and 10 very likely, how likely would you be to recommend Passenger Assist to a friend/ family member who may require such a service?
Base: All respondents excluding don't know (2017-18: 4,144, 2018-19: 4,881)

Satisfaction with station facilities

Over three in four are satisfied (very satisfied or satisfied) with station facilities being suitable for their needs (78 per cent), although this has decreased significantly from 84 per cent in 2017-18.

Year	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither / nor	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know
2018-19	53%	25%	8%	5%	3%	6%
2017-18	59%	24%	7%	3%	2%	4%

D19. Thinking about your experience at <INSERT STATION> how satisfied were you in terms of the following…Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968)
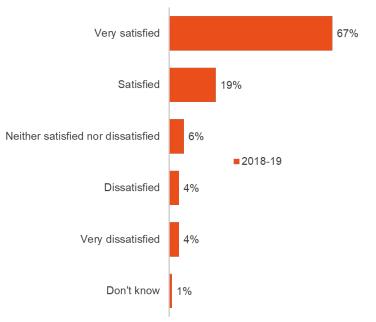
Passengers with mental health problems and social or behavioural issues are least likely to express satisfaction with station facilities (both 70 per cent).

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither/nor	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know
Learning or concentrating or remembering	54%	21%	8%	7%	5%	5%
Other long-term condition	53%	26%	7%	5%	4%	5%
Physical	52%	26%	8%	6%	4%	6%
Mental health problems	51%	19%	10%	8%	7%	5%
Hearing	51%	26%	8%	5%	3%	7%
Vision	49%	24%	10%	5%	4%	8%
Communication disorder/disability	48%	26%	9%	8%	5%	3%
Social or behavioural issues	42%	28%	11%	9%	6%	3%
None of these conditions	59%	21%	5%	3%	3%	8%
Prefer not to say	48%	26%	12%	5%	3%	7%
NET: Hidden disability	52%	22%	9%	8%	5%	5%

D19. Thinking about your experience at <INSERT STATION> how satisfied were you in terms of the following…?
Base: All respondents (2018-19: 4,968)

Satisfaction with the whole process – booking and assistance

The majority (85 per cent) are satisfied with the overall process from their initial booking to receiving assistance at the station.

Category	2018-19
Very satisfied	67%
Satisfied	19%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	6%
Dissatisfied	4%
Very dissatisfied	4%
Don't know	1%

QD21. Overall how satisfied are you with the whole process from booking the assistance to the assistance received at <INSERT STATION> on < INSERT DATE>? Base: All respondents (2018-19: 4,968)

Passengers with social or behavioural problems are least likely to express satisfaction with the whole process (70 per cent), followed by those with mental health problems (78 per cent). Please note this question was introduced in 2018-19 therefore no year-on-year data is available.

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither/nor	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know
Hearing	68%	19%	6%	3%	3%	1%
Other long-term condition	66%	19%	6%	4%	5%	1%
Vision	65%	20%	6%	3%	4%	1%
Physical	64%	20%	6%	4%	5%	1%
Learning or concentrating or remembering	63%	18%	7%	4%	7%	1%
Communication disorder/disability	62%	23%	6%	3%	5%	1%
Mental health problems	59%	20%	9%	4%	8%	1%
Social or behavioural issues	49%	22%	11%	7%	10%	1%
None of these conditions	74%	13%	5%	4%	2%	2%
Prefer not to say	66%	20%	5%	5%	4%	1%
NET: Hidden disability	62%	19%	7%	4%	7%	1%

QD21. Overall how satisfied are you with the whole process from booking the assistance to the assistance received at <INSERT STATION> on < INSERT DATE>? Base: All respondents (2018-19: 4,968)

12. Conclusions and recommended improvements to Passenger Assist

Conclusions

Passenger Assist plays a crucial role in making rail travel accessible, with three in five stating they would not have been able to travel without it. Passengers book a range of different assistance types, and are increasingly booking more assists per journey leg. The most commonly booked assistance types are help boarding the train, help with luggage and alighting the train.

The booking process works well, with more passengers this year receiving confirmation of their booking. However, the accuracy of booking confirmations has declined slightly. Passengers find information on where to meet staff less clear than when to meet staff.

Nonetheless, satisfaction with the overall booking process remains high, with approximately nine in ten passengers satisfied and over three in four very satisfied. There is, however, still a concern that only two in three passengers are confident that all elements of the assistance they have booked will be delivered on the day of travel. Anecdotal evidence suggests this could be due to previous bad experiences of assistance failures which can undermine users' confidence when making future bookings. Confidence in the booking arrangements, and a possible nervousness or uncertainty about what to expect for each leg of the journey can affect the quality of passengers' journeys, regardless of whether the assistance is eventually received.

Over three in four passengers are met by staff at the station within what they consider an acceptable time frame. For those met by staff either late or not at all, only a very small proportion are unable to complete their journey.

The proportion of passengers receiving all of the assistance they booked has decreased this year to just over three quarters. Considering the individual types of booked assistance, the majority of those booking each type of assistance receive it (all types of assistance except getting in and out of the station and 'other type of assistance' are received by at least eight in ten of those booking).

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the apparent inconsistency between these significant failure rates (between one in ten and one in five) and the very small proportion of passengers not completing their journey is due to being helped onto a later train by staff members, the passengers managing themselves or fellow passengers assisting them.

The importance of Passenger Assist to the passenger and the difference it makes in terms of enabling them to make a journey, means there are huge implications when Passenger Assist does not work well. Firstly, passengers who have bad experiences when using Passenger Assist may choose not to travel by train in future if the service has not met their needs or expectations, or in extreme cases not allowed them to complete their journey as planned, or indeed at all. A positive experience for Passenger Assist service users is crucial in building their trust and confidence in the service.

Secondly, there is an implication for train companies providing assistance if Passenger Assist does not deliver the outcomes expected. There is the potential for lost revenue if passengers either choose not to travel or choose to avoid travelling with train companies who do not provide assistance to a sufficient standard. The potential for lost revenue is heightened because the majority of passengers using Passenger Assist are travelling for leisure purposes and thus many journeys could be optional. In more serious cases where Passenger Assist users receive a particularly poor level of service, such

as being put on the wrong train or missing their stop because of an assistance failure, then there can also be significant reputational repercussions for the company responsible.

Overall, it is clear that the significance and importance of Passenger Assist working well for both passengers and the industry means it must be closely monitored, to ensure that it is delivering the level of service and outcomes intended.

> *"It works very well, when it works. However some of the people I work with, and other family members, have had experiences where they were let down with Passenger Assist. This has happened at London stations, and some stations in North Yorkshire. This has led to a loss of confidence in the service and unwillingness to travel independently. This, in turn, reduces their independence."*
> **75+, physical disability, another long-term condition**

When assistance is received, passengers are generally satisfied with the quality provided. Levels of satisfaction are high across all sub-groups, although there is some evidence of lower satisfaction amongst those with hidden conditions.

Satisfaction with rail staff providing assistance is relatively high but has decreased from last year. The vast majority are satisfied with the helpfulness and attitude of staff who provided assistance at the station and that they understood their needs. Again, passengers with hidden conditions are less likely to express satisfaction with staff understanding their particular needs.

Overall satisfaction with Passenger Assist based on all past usage has decreased from 2017-18, with over four in five satisfied. Satisfaction with the whole process for the journey leg passengers were interviewed about in detail is higher, with two in three very satisfied with the end-to-end experience of the booking process through to the assistance received at the station.

Satisfaction with the assistance received at the station on the journey measured has decreased from 2017-18 although is still relatively high with around seven in eight satisfied.

Whilst the majority of passengers are satisfied with station facilities, the proportion who are very satisfied is just over half, which suggests this could be an area for improvement.

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Suggestion for improvements

Staff training in understanding different passenger needs

As in 2017-18, we are still seeing some passengers (especially those with hidden conditions such as learning or concentrating difficulties, mental health problems and communication disorders) giving low satisfaction scores, suggesting that staff both during the booking process and when assisting passengers do not have enough knowledge to adequately help. In particular, passengers suggest deepening and widening

> *"Perhaps to make it have more awareness for hidden disabilities and visual aids."*
> **35-49, no disabilities mentioned**

staff training to give them a better understanding of the complexity of different disabilities and that passengers often need extra time and assurance that they are going to make their connection. Passengers would also like reassurance that once they are on a train they will be met at the next station and receive the assistance they requested.

Communication when there is disruption

Passengers who have booked assistance can find it particularly stressful if a train is delayed and they have a connection to make. Staff need to ensure that the connecting station staff are informed of the delay and assistance is still available to help the passenger even at a different time to that originally requested. Staff should then provide reassurance to the passenger once they are on the train that they will be met at the next station and receive the assistance they require.

> *"In times of disruption or stress on the rail network, Passenger Assist tends to break down at busy stations such as London Euston (I have, in the past, missed a train)"*
> **65-74, physical disability**

> *"When there is disruption to travel and unexpected changes are needed (which has happened in the past) the system falls apart and you end up left to your own devices"*
> **35-49, visual impairment**

Reassurance that alighting assistance will be there

It can be a particularly stressful time for a passenger when approaching a station; they are unsure whether assistance will be waiting for them. Passengers want reassurance that someone will meet them when they arrive and need to alight the train. This could be in the form of a member of staff clearly identifiable waiting on the platform or even a text message or message via an app ahead of arrival to confirm that assistance is waiting.

"Receiving a text to confirm that Passenger Assist is on its way."
65-74, physical disability

"I have used this service many times with varying degrees of success. I find that when alighting the train the assistant is nearby but doesn't come on the train therefore on many occasions I have had to ask fellow passengers for help"
65-74, visual and hearing impairments, long-term health condition

"I find getting off train rather difficult - I have arthritis of the spine and diabetes of the feet and left leg, so it's difficult at times. I would be very happy to see my helper visible at the door of the carriage when we pull into the station."
75+, learning/ concentrating/ remembering, communication disorder, long-term health condition

Easily identifiable staff

Passengers suggest that Passenger Assist staff at the station are very difficult to identify which can cause unnecessary stress. Staff could wear a specific Passenger Assist uniform, a particular jacket or badge to help passengers identify who they need to speak to.

"It might be easier if a badge could be supplied to the assistant as with all the uniforms it can be a bit baffling."
75+, physical disability

"I believe it would be useful to have a designated member of staff with a recognisable uniform or badge"
50-64, disability not disclosed

BREAKING BLUE

Recommended actions for ORR and the rail industry

In 2017-18, we recommended a metric measuring the percentage of all booked assists successfully delivered should be used to monitor performance. This has been implemented and the data is now published on ORR's website.[14]

Beyond measures monitoring performance, there are improvements to the service which would enhance passengers' experience. Staff training needs to be deepened and broadened, and communications skills improved; service users want staff to better understand the complexity of disabilities and appreciate challenges each person faces. Satisfaction is lowest on many measures for passengers with hidden disabilities so there should be a particular focus on training staff on understanding how to assist people who have hidden disabilities. Passengers mentioned the inconsistency in service from staff and want better consideration for their needs. They also mentioned better communication throughout the journey, in terms of reassurance to them as a passenger and passing on information between stations.

Station facilities continue to be considerably less satisfactory than other aspects of the journey. Passengers ultimately want to be less dependent on assistance and more accessible stations and trains will enable that in the longer term.

Additional qualitative research among non-users of Passenger Assist would enable a greater understanding of awareness and knowledge of the service and any reservations in using it. In particular, there is scope to understand reasons why fewer men than women use Passenger Assist.

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[14]ORR data portal: https://dataportal.orr.gov.uk/statistics/passenger-experience/passenger-assistance/

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Appendix 1 – Margins of error crib sheet

SFO	No. of interviews	Answer = 50%	Answer = 70%	Answer = 90%
Network Rail	1,426	+/-2.6%	+/-2.4%	+/-1.6%
Great Western Railway	570	+/-4.1%	+/-3.8%	+/-2.5%
Virgin Trains West Coast	524	+/-4.3%	+/-3.9%	+/-2.6%
London North Eastern Railway (LNER)	495	+/-4.4%	+/-4.0%	+/-2.6%
Northern	291	+/-5.7%	+/-5.3%	+/-3.4%
West Midlands Trains	233	+/-6.4%	+/-5.9%	+/-3.8%
ScotRail	226	+/-6.5%	+/-6.0%	+/-3.9%
Arriva Trains Wales/ Transport for Wales	177	+/-7.4%	+/-6.8%	+/-4.4%
East Midlands Trains	171	+/-7.5%	+/-6.9%	+/-4.5%
South Western Railway	170	+/-7.5%	+/-6.9%	+/-4.5%
Greater Anglia	155	+/-7.9%	+/-7.2%	+/-4.7%
Govia Thameslink Railway	153	+/-7.9%	+/-7.3%	+/-4.6%
TransPennine Express	150	+/-8.0%	+/-7.3%	+/-4.8%
Chiltern Railways	100	+/-9.8%	+/-9.0%	+/-5.9%
Southeastern	83	+/-10.6%	+/-9.9%	+/-6.5%
Other SFOs	44	-	-	-
TOTAL	**4,968**	**+/-1.4%**	**+/-1.3%**	**+/-0.8%**

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Appendix 2 – Key metrics by SFO and disability type

Satisfaction and assistance received by SFO (proportion satisfied or very satisfied)

SFO	All assistance received (D5)		Satisfaction with assistance at station (D7)	
	2017-18	2018-19	2017-18	2018-19
Network Rail	82%	76%	92%	89%
Arriva Trains Wales	73%	69%	87%	83%
Chiltern Railways	88%	80%	98%	85%
East Midlands Trains	73%	78%	90%	84%
Govia Thameslink Railway	79%	70%	93%	83%
Great Western Railway	81%	76%	93%	91%
Greater Anglia	76%	75%	89%	87%
West Midlands Trains	77%	79%	93%	90%
Northern	73%	64%	85%	76%
ScotRail	81%	76%	96%	84%
South Western Railway	76%	69%	91%	87%
Southeastern	76%	75%	88%	82%
TransPennine Express	83%	79%	93%	90%
London North East Railway	87%	79%	96%	91%
Virgin Trains West Coast	84%	78%	93%	91%
TOTAL	**80%**	**76%**	**92%**	**88%**

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On-station metrics by SFO (proportion satisfied or very satisfied)

SFO	Staff helpfulness (D17)		Station facilities (E3 now D19)	
	2017-18	2018-19	2017-18	2018-19
Network Rail	95%	92%	84%	79%
Arriva Trains Wales	89%	86%	79%	77%
Chiltern Railways	98%	89%	85%	81%
East Midlands Trains	90%	88%	81%	77%
Govia Thameslink Railway	90%	90%	71%	75%
Great Western Railway	95%	89%	85%	80%
Greater Anglia	90%	93%	83%	79%
West Midlands Trains	91%	92%	82%	73%
Northern	87%	80%	80%	65%
ScotRail	96%	93%	85%	79%
South Western Railway	93%	90%	81%	73%
Southeastern	88%	86%	76%	77%
TransPennine Express	95%	89%	88%	79%
London North East Railway	96%	93%	88%	83%
Virgin Trains West Coast	94%	93%	88%	81%
TOTAL	**94%**	**91%**	**84%**	**78%**

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Key metrics by disability type

Disability type	Satisfaction with booking (C7)		All assistance received (D5)		Satisfaction with assistance at station (D7)		Overall satisfaction (E1)	
	2017-18	2018-19	2017-18	2018-19	2017-18	2018-19	2017-18	2018-19
Vision (blindness or visual impairment)	91%	91%	79%	77%	91%	87%	81%	79%
Hearing (deafness or hard of hearing)	95%	92%	79%	73%	92%	89%	86%	83%
Physical (wheelchair user, mobility issues, amputee, dwarfism)	91%	91%	80%	75%	92%	88%	84%	80%
Learning or concentrating or remembering	88%	88%	75%	71%	90%	87%	82%	74%
Mental health problems	87%	86%	73%	71%	90%	85%	78%	73%
Social or behavioural issues	81%	84%	69%	72%	83%	84%	76%	64%
Communication disorder/ disability*	-	88%	-	76%	-	88%	-	74%
Another long-term health condition that doesn't fit any of the above	91%	91%	80%	74%	93%	86%	85%	79%
None of these conditions	95%	94%	82%	76%	95%	89%	89%	88%
Prefer not to say	94%	91%	78%	75%	94%	87%	87%	82%
TOTAL	**92%**	**92%**	**80%**	**76%**	**92%**	**88%**	**85%**	**82%**

*Communication disorder / disability added as an option in 2018-19

BREAKING BLUE

Appendix 3 – Questionnaire

Introduction

Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is _____ from Teamsearch. We are working on behalf of Breaking Blue, a professional research company. Breaking Blue are working with the Office of Rail and Road (ORR). ORR is the independent regulator of the railways, this means they check services are being provided to passengers to sufficient standards.

We understand that you recently booked assisted travel. [Pipe booking agent] and other train companies are working with the ORR to improve the way the assisted travel service works for passengers. The ORR has commissioned us to conduct research to find out how satisfied you were with your assistance on [DATE] and to gather your feedback on how the assisted travel service could be improved.

Please be assured that the survey is conducted under the terms of the MRS (ESOMAR) Code of Conduct. [Pipe booking agent] have advised you have given permission for your contact details to be passed on to us for research purposes only. We guarantee that your answers will be kept completely confidential.

Due to the nature of the survey topic, please be aware that we will be asking a question about your health. You don't have to answer this question if you would prefer not to. Your personal data will not be linked with your answer to this question when passed on to the ORR. We will also ask for your contact details, and if you give us these, they will only be used for back-checking (making sure our interviewers are doing a good job) and then deleted.

Our privacy notice explains your rights in more detail, including your right to change your mind if you do not want us to use your information. Please let me know if you would like the link emailed to you (https://www.breakingblueresearch.com/privacy-policy/ and <insert link to Teamsearch's privacy policy>)

Consent to all of the above must be recorded electronically (or on paper and then scanned) and retained as long as personal data is kept.

1   Yes

2   No

Permission to record must be obtained. Respondent must be told who will have access to the recording, and what it will be used for.

1   Yes

2   No

Before we continue – can I just confirm that you are over 16?

YES, 16 OR OVER – CONTINUE; NO, UNDER 16 – THANK AND CLOSE

And can you please confirm that you booked assisted travel recently?

YES, BOOKED ASSISTED TRAVEL – CONTINUE; NO, NOT BOOKED – THANK AND CLOSE

Would you have some time now to answer some questions? The interview will take approximately 15 minutes.

IF YES: Thank you very much for your valuable time. We will refer to the assisted travel service as Passenger Assist throughout the questionnaire.

IF WOULD LIKE MORE DETAIL: The MRS set out professional standards that all research practitioners must prove they work to. If you would like to contact MRS with any questions you can do so on 0800 975 9596.

IF NO: Is there a better time to call you back?

IF YES: INTERVIEWER ARRANGE TIME

IF NO: You can complete the interview online within the next week, and the link is: INSERT WEBLINK

BREAKING BLUE

Section A: Travel Habits

We would like to start by gathering some background information on your train travel.

ASK ALL

A1   Have you used Passenger Assist, either on your own or as a companion accompanying someone requiring the service?

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes (myself)   CONTINUE AS CUSTOMER
2. Yes (companion)   CONTINUE AS COMPANION
3. No   THANK AND CLOSE
4. Don't know   THANK AND CLOSE

ASK IF A1 = 2 (COMPANION)

A2   What is your relationship to the person you were travelling with? They are my…

SINGLE CODE

1. Wife
2. Husband
3. Partner
4. Son (including step-son and son-in-law)
5. Daughter (including step-daughter and daughter-in-law)
6. Mother (including step-mother and mother-in-law)
7. Father (including step-father and father-in-law)
8. Brother (including step-brother and brother-in-law)
9. Sister (including step-sister and sister-in-law)
10. Grandparent
11. Grandchild
12. Other relative
13. Friend
14. Neighbour
15. Colleague
16. Other (Please specify)

BREAKING BLUE

ASK ALL

A2b   How did you find out about Passenger Assist?

MULTI CODE

1. Called National Rail Enquiries/a train company
2. Looked online
3. Told by train/station staff
4. Told by a family member or friend
5. Saw an advert
6. Had used the service before
7. Other (Please specify)
8. Don't know/Can't remember

ASK IF A2b = 5 (SAW AN ADVERT)

A2ba   Where did you see the advert?

OPEN RESPONSE, PROBE FULLY

_____

_____

99   Don't know / can't remember

ASK ALL

A2c   What would be the best way of letting people know about Passenger Assist? Please tell us your first and second choices…

CODE 2 OPTIONS - ROTATE

1. Posters
2. Leaflets
3. Radio ads
4. TV ads
5. Online advertisements
6. Through social media
7. Direct mail
8. Inserts in magazines or newspapers
9. Information provided when booking a ticket
10. Other (Please specify)
11. Don't know

ASK ALL

A3 **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)**: How often do you typically use Passenger Assist?

(IF COMPANION AT A1): How often does your <ANSWER FROM A2> typically use Passenger Assist?

SINGLE CODE

1. Three or more times per week
2. One to two times per week
3. One to three times per month
4. Less than once a month, more than once or twice a year
5. Once or twice a year
6. Less than once a year
7. Don't know

Section B: Confirming journey details

We understand on **(FROM SAMPLE)** <DATE>, **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <you> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <your ANSWER FROM A2> made a journey via train. We are interested in the assistance you booked in advance for one specific part of the journey. We would like to ask what happened at **(FROM SAMPLE)** <STATION WHERE ASSISTANCE REQUIRED> station.

ASK ALL

B1 INTERVIEWER: Confirm that the respondent recalls this journey and feels able to answer about this. If not, thank and close.

SINGLE CODE

1. Continue
2. Thank and close

BREAKING BLUE

Section C: The booking process

ASK ALL BOOKING BY TELEPHONE (FROM SAMPLE)

C1a   Roughly how long did it take to book assistance?

Note: we are only interested in the time it takes to book <u>the assistance only</u>…do not include time for anything else e.g. booking a ticket

TIME BOX IN 5 MINUTE STEPS UP TO 55 MINS, THEN 1 hour, THEN LONGER THAN 1 HOUR

ASK ALL

C1   Which of the following types of assistance did you request at **(FROM SAMPLE)** <STATION WHERE ASSISTANCE REQUIRED> station?

MULTI CODE

1. Booking the wheelchair area
2. Help with luggage
3. Getting in/out of the station
4. Getting to the platform
5. Getting to a seat
6. Getting to the wheelchair area
7. Boarding the train
8. Alighting the train
9. Provision of a ramp
10. Assistance to and from connecting services
11. Guidance if you are visually impaired
12. A taxi if required (if the station you wanted to use was inaccessible to you)
13. Some other type of assistance (Please specify)
14. DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know/Can't remember   **THANK AND CLOSE**

ASK IF C1 = 2 (BOOKED HELP WITH LUGGAGE)

C2a   Were you asked when booking whether help was needed with luggage or did you request this?

SINGLE CODE

1. I was asked about help with luggage when booking
2. I requested help with luggage
3. Don't know/Can't remember

ASK ALL

C2c   When booking assistance did you ask for help planning the journey?

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No

ASK ALL

C2d   When booking assistance did you book your train ticket at the same time?

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No

ASK IF C2d = 2 (NO)

C2e   Why didn't you buy your ticket at the same time?

OPEN RESPONSE, PROBE FULLY

_____

_____

99   Don't know / can't remember

ASK ALL

C3   Did you receive confirmation of the assistance booking?

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/Can't remember

ASK IF C3 = 1 (RECEIVED CONFIRMATION OF BOOKING)

C4   Was the information in the booking confirmation accurate?

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/Can't remember

ASK IF C3 = 1 (RECEIVED CONFIRMATION OF BOOKING)

C5   How easy to understand were the instructions within the booking confirmation about where to meet the staff member?

READ OUT, SINGLE CODE

5 = Very easy to understand	4 = Fairly easy to understand	3 = Neither easy nor difficult	2 = Fairly difficult to understand	1 = Very difficult to understand	0 = I was not told this	6 = Don't know	7= N/A

a. Information about <u>when</u> to meet the staff member
b. Information about <u>where</u> to meet the staff member

ASK ALL

C6   Before we go on to discuss the actual day of your journey, please tell us which of the following best describes how you felt after making your booking…

READ OUT, SINGLE CODE

1. I felt confident that <u>all</u> requirements would be met
2. I felt confident that <u>most</u> requirements would be met
3. I felt doubtful that requirements would be met on the day
4. DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know

ASK ALL

C7   Thinking about the booking process, how satisfied were you with… READ OUT FIRST ITEM?

What score out of 5 would you give where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 very satisfied?

READ OUT SUBSEQUENT ITEMS IN TURN, SINGLE CODE PER ROW, ROTATE ORDER OF STATEMENTS

REPEAT SCALE AS NECESSARY

5 = Very satisfied	4 = Satisfied	3 = Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	2 = Dissatisfied	1 = Very Dissatisfied	6 = Don't know

a. The overall assistance booking process
b. The helpfulness of staff when booking assistance
c. The assistance arrangements that were booked for the journey

BREAKING BLUE

Section D: Journey experience

We'd now like to ask you about what happened with regards to the assistance **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <you> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <your ANSWER FROM A2> booked for **(FROM SAMPLE)** <DATE> at **(FROM SAMPLE)** <STATION WHERE ASSISTANCE REQUIRED> station.

ASK IF A1 = 1 (CUSTOMER)

D1   Were you travelling alone or with someone?

SINGLE CODE

1. Alone
2. With a companion(s)

ASK ALL

D2   What was the main purpose of the journey?

PROBE AS PER PRECODES, SINGLE CODE

1. Commuting (e.g. to work, school or university)
2. Business/ other work (e.g. to a business meeting with a customer)
3. Leisure (e.g. shopping, visiting friends/ relatives, day trip/ holiday)
4. Other (please specify)
5. Prefer not to say

ASK ALL

D3   **IF CUSTOMER AT A1:** Have you made this journey before?

   IF COMPANION AT A1: Has <your ANSWER FROM A2> made this journey before?

1. Yes
2. No

ASK ALL

D4   Was a member of staff there to meet **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <you> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <your ANSWER FROM A2> within an acceptable timeframe?

PROBE AS PER PRECODES, SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No, but I was eventually met by staff and able to continue my journey as planned
3. No, but I was eventually met by staff and able to continue my journey (but not as planned, e.g. took a later train)
4. No, I was eventually met by staff but not able to continue my journey
5. No, I was not met by staff but was able to continue my journey as planned
6. No, I was not met by staff but was able to continue my journey (but not as planned, e.g. took a later train)
7. No, I was not met by staff and was not able to continue my journey
8. DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know/Can't remember

ASK IF D4 = 1-4

D5   And did **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <you> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <your ANSWER FROM A2> actually receive the following assistance….?

SHOW FROM SAMPLE ASSISTANCE REQUESTED, READ OUT EACH ITEM IN TURN

	Yes	No	DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know/Can't remember
SHOW CODES FROM C1 SINGLE CODE FOR EACH ITEM	1	2	3

ASK IF D4 = 1-4

D6   And how satisfied **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <were you> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <was your ANSWER FROM A2> with….

SHOW CODES WHERE D5 = 1, READ OUT SUBSEQUENT ITEMS IN TURN, SINGLE CODE PER ROW

REPEAT SCALE AS NECESSARY

5 = Very satisfied	4 = Satisfied	3 = Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	2 = Dissatisfied	1 = Very Dissatisfied	6 = Don't know

ASK IF D4 = 1-4

D7   And how satisfied **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <were you> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <was your ANSWER FROM A2> overall with the assistance at **(FROM SAMPLE)** <STATION WHERE ASSISTANCE REQUIRED> station?

REPEAT SCALE AS NECESSARY

5 = Very satisfied	4 = Satisfied	3 = Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	2 = Dissatisfied	1 = Very Dissatisfied	6 = Don't know

ASK IF ANY OF D5 = 2 (DID NOT RECEIVE THE ASSISTANCE REQUESTED)

D8   Did not receiving the assistance requested affect **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <you> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <your ANSWER FROM A2> being able to get to the **final** destination?

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/Can't remember

ASK IF C1 DOES NOT = 12 AND D4 = 1-4

D10   At any point in this part of your journey did the assistance involve a taxi or alternative means of transport arranged by the train company?

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/Can't remember

ASK IF D10 = 1 OR D5_12 = 1 (ASSISTANCE INVOLVED A TAXI OR ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORT)

IF D5_12 = 1 SHOW: You said earlier that your assistance involved a taxi.

D11   Did the vehicle arrive on time?

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/Can't remember

ASK IF D10 = 1 OR D5_12 = 1 (ASSISTANCE INVOLVED A TAXI OR ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORT)

D12   Was the vehicle suitable for **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <you> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <your ANSWER FROM A2>?

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/Can't remember

ASK ALL

D13   And did **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <you> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <your ANSWER FROM A2> experience any disruption such as delays or cancellations on the stage of the journey at **(FROM SAMPLE)** <STATION WHERE ASSISTANCE REQUIRED> station?

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/Can't remember

ASK IF D13 = 1

D15   Did **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <you> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <your ANSWER FROM A2> reach the final destination for the journey?

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes as planned
2. No
3. Don't know/Can't remember

ASK IF D13 = 1

D16   Did someone contact (**IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <you> (**IF COMPANION AT A1)** <your ANSWER FROM A2> to let (**IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <you> (**IF COMPANION AT A1)** <them> know that the assistance had changed?

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No
3. This wasn't necessary because the delay had no impact upon the booking
4. Don't know/can't remember

ASK IF D4 = 1-4

D17   Thinking about the assistance at **(FROM SAMPLE)** <STATION WHERE ASSISTANCE REQUIRED> station on **(FROM SAMPLE)** <DATE>, how satisfied were **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <you> (**IF COMPANION AT A1)** <they> with… READ OUT FIRST ITEM?

What score out of 5 would you give where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 very satisfied?

READ OUT SUBSEQUENT ITEMS IN TURN, SINGLE CODE PER ROW, ROTATE ORDER OF STATEMENTS

REPEAT SCALE AS NECESSARY

5 = Very satisfied	4 = Satisfied	3 = Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	2 = Dissatisfied	1 = Very Dissatisfied	6 = Don't know

a. The helpfulness and attitude of staff who provided assistance at the station
b. How well **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <your> (**IF COMPANION AT A1)** <your ANSWER FROM A2's> particular needs were understood by the staff who assisted **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <you> (**IF COMPANION AT A1)** <them> at the station
c. Staff being knowledgeable and proficient in how to assist you

ASK ALL

D19   Thinking about your experience at **(FROM SAMPLE)** <STATION WHERE ASSISTANCE REQUIRED> station on **(FROM SAMPLE)** <DATE>, how satisfied are **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <you> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <they> in terms of the following…

READ OUT, SINGLE CODE PER ROW, ROTATE ORDER OF STATEMENTS

5 = Very satisfied	4 = Satisfied	3 = Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	2 = Dissatisfied	1 = Very dissatisfied	6 = Don't know	7= N/A

a. Station facilities suitable for **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <my> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <their> needs
b. Train facilities suitable for **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <my> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <their> needs

ASK IF D4 = 1-4

D20   We are keen to know how helpful **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <you> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <your ANSWER FROM A2> found Passenger Assist in terms of making the train journey possible or simply more convenient. Which of the following best describes **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <your> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <their> experience?

PROBE AS PER PRECODES, SINGLE CODE

1. I/They could not have completed this particular journey without Passenger Assist
2. I/They could have completed my journey but it would have been more difficult (e.g. would have taken more time, needing another person etc.)
3. I/They could have completed my journey without Passenger Assist
4. Don't know

ASK ALL

D21   Overall how satisfied are you with the whole process from booking the assistance to the assistance received at **(FROM SAMPLE)** <STATION WHERE ASSISTANCE REQUIRED> station on **(FROM SAMPLE)** <DATE>?

SINGLE CODE

5 = Very satisfied	4 = Satisfied	3 = Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	2 = Dissatisfied	1 = Very Dissatisfied	6 = Don't know

Section E: General views on the assisted travel service

We would now like your thoughts on Passenger Assist as a whole. We're keen to understand your perspective on what works well, what doesn't work so well, and how you think the service could be improved.

ASK ALL

E1 Overall, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 very satisfied, how satisfied are you with Passenger Assist? *(Thinking about all journeys you have made using Passenger Assist)*

SINGLE CODE

5 = Very satisfied	4 = Satisfied	3 = Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	2 = Dissatisfied	1 = Very Dissatisfied	6 = Don't know

ASK ALL

E2 Do you have any other general comments on the Passenger Assist service?

OPEN RESPONSE, PROBE FULLY

_____

_____

98 Nothing

99 Don't know

ASK ALL

E4 On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is very unlikely and 10 very likely, how likely would you be to recommend Passenger Assist to a friend/ family member who may require such a service?

SINGLE CODE

Very likely = 10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Very unlikely = 0	DK = 11

ASK ALL

E5   ORR is interested in any feedback you may have regarding Passenger Assist. If you could make one change to make it better, what would that be and why?

OPEN RESPONSE, PROBE FULLY

_____

_____

98   Nothing

99   Don't know

ASK ALL

E6   Have **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <you> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <your ANSWER FROM A2> ever asked for assistance at a train station without having booked in advance?

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/Can't remember

ASK IF E6=1

E7a   Did **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <you> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <your ANSWER FROM A2> receive assistance?

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/Can't remember

ASK IF E7a = 1 or 2

E7b   Tell us a little bit about **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <your> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <your ANSWER FROM A2> experience? (Arriving at the station and asking for assistance without booking in advance)

OPEN RESPONSE, PROBE FULLY

_____

_____

99   Don't know

ASK ALL

E8   Have **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <you> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <your ANSWER FROM A2> heard of or used an app for booking Passenger Assist?

MULTI CODE

1. No
2. Yes – heard of it
3. Yes – downloaded it
4. Yes – used it

ASK IF E8 = 2, 3 or 4

E9   Can you tell us what the app is called?

OPEN RESPONSE, PROBE FULLY

_____

_____

99   Don't know/Can't remember

BREAKING BLUE

Section F: Demographics

Before we finish, we would just like to ask a couple of final demographic questions. This is important as it helps us to better understand if Passenger Assist is meeting the needs of all types of customers.

ASK ALL

F1   **IF CUSTOMER AT A1:** DO NOT ASK AND CODE GENDER

    IF COMPANION AT A1: ASK IF A2 = 3 OR 10-16: Is your <ANSWER FROM A2>…

1. Male
2. Female
3. Refused

ASK ALL

F2   **IF CUSTOMER AT A1:** How old are you?

    IF COMPANION AT A1: How old is your <ANSWER FROM A2>?

SINGLE CODE

1. 16-24
2. 25-34
3. 35-49
4. 50-64
5. 65-74
6. 75+
7. DO NOT READ OUT: Refused

ASK ALL

F3   **IF CUSTOMER AT A1:** Which of the following best describes your current circumstances?

    IF COMPANION AT A1: Which of the following best describes your <ANSWER FROM A2>'s current circumstances?

READ OUT, SINGLE CODE

1. Working full or part-time
2. Not working
3. Student
4. Retired
5. Other (Please specify)
6. DO NOT READ OUT: Refused

ASK ALL

F4   **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <Do you> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <Does your ANSWER FROM A2> have any of the following long-standing physical or mental health conditions?

READ OUT, MULTI CODE

1. Vision (blindness or visual impairment)
2. Hearing (deafness or hard of hearing)
3. Physical (wheelchair user, mobility issues, amputee, dwarfism)
4. Learning or concentrating or remembering
5. Mental health problems
6. Social or behavioural issues, for example, due to neurological diverse conditions such as Autism, Attention Deficit or Asperger's Syndrome

10. A communication disorder/disability

7. Another long-term health condition that doesn't fit any of the above
8. None of these conditions   SINGLE CODE
9. I would prefer not to say   SINGLE CODE

ASK ALL

F5   Thank you for sparing the time to help ORR with this study. Occasionally, it is very helpful for us to be able to re-contact people we have spoken to, either to clarify certain issues, or to get a bit more detail on topics that ORR is particularly interested in. Would you be happy for us to call you back briefly if necessary?

Just to remind you: Your details will be kept completely confidential and all your answers will remain anonymous.

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No

ASK ALL

F6   INTERVIEWER: CAPTURE NAME AND CONTACT NUMBER

OPEN RESPONSE

NAME:
TELEPHONE NUMBER:

Those are all of the questions I have for you today. Thank you very much for taking part in this survey. Your answers will help ORR to understand more about passengers' experience of the assisted travel service and identify areas for improvement.