

ORR Assisted Travel Advisory Group

Meeting 3.

31st July 2018, One Kemble Street, London, WC2B 4AN



Attendees

Assisted Travel Advisory Group:

David Mapp	Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee
James Taylor	Disability Charities Consortium
Fiona Walshe	Department for Transport
Susan Holden	Network Rail
Craig O'Beirne	Rail Delivery Group
Stephen Brookes MBE	Rail Sector Champion
Phil Wilks	Transport Focus
Patrick Nyamurundira	Transport Scotland
Stephen Chamberlain	Welsh Assembly Government

ORR:

Stephanie Tobyn	Consumer Policy Team
David Kimball	Consumer Policy Team
Bryan Little	Consumer Policy Team
Scott Hamilton	Consumer Policy Team
Anna Saunders	Consumer Policy Team
Chris Casanovas	Information & Analysis Team
Chloe Barton	Legal Team
Margaret Hickish	External Consultant

Apologies:

James Taylor	Disability Charities Consortium
Marcus Clements	Consumer Policy Team
Anne Heal	ORR Non-Executive Director

1. Welcome & introductions

Stephanie Tobyn welcomed the advisory group and introductions were carried out for the benefit of those attending or the first time on behalf of their colleagues. Apologies were noted from James Taylor, as well as Marcus Clements and Anne Heal from ORR.

2. Update from previous meetings

The minutes from the previous advisory group meetings were shared in advance of the meeting and were published on ORR's website and publicised on social media.

David Kimball provided the advisory group with a summary of the issues previously discussed at advisory group meetings; including reliability, information provision and monitoring. The advisory

group were also advised of various workshops that have taken place with key industry stakeholders and disability groups.

Stephanie Tobyn advised the advisory group that ORR have met with Mobile and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS) to provide an update on ORR's work in improving Assisted Travel. ORR committed to keep MACS involved in all future work in this area and to engage on all matters that affect Scottish TOCs.

Stephanie also highlighted Government's Inclusive Transport Strategy¹ that was published on 25 July 2018 and confirmed that ORR will work to meet the challenges set out in the document.

3. Group Discussion on key issues

Staff Training;

Margaret Hickish, of Design4Inclusion, has been [employed] by ORR to provide expertise in assessing the range of disability awareness training that is being provided to all rail staff.

Margaret carried out an extensive review of current disability awareness training materials received from train operators and Network Rail in response to ORR's information request. Margaret will provide ORR with a literary review and proposals to ensure the rail industry and work together to achieve a consistent approach to staff training.

Current training was commonly found to take place in a classroom environment over the course of one day, as part of the staff's induction programme. Some operators provide additional training at stations or on board trains but this is supplementary. Refresher training is also offered by some operators.

Initial recommendations were that training must be up to date, relevant to current legislation and follow an agreed set of core requirements. Margaret also set out some initial findings from a gap analysis which included the need for training material to;

- Dispel myths of disabled people,
- Understand what is meant by physical and attitudinal barriers,
- Avoid use of stereotypical language and assumptions,
- Understanding all current legislation,
- Have a consistent approach to luggage assistance, and
- Understanding the challenges disabled passengers face.

Margaret will conduct a more detailed gap analysis and devise a possible flight path for each operator.

The advisory group noted the need for a baseline standard to be adopted by the industry to help delivery consistency and to help staff understand what the requirements placed on them by ORR.

RDG were identified by both ORR and the advisory group as having a key role in implementing and delivering a consistent training programme for the all rail staff, including senior management.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-transport-strategy>

Passenger Awareness;

David reiterated the need to increase passenger awareness following ORR's research² that prompted the Improving Assisted Travel consultation in November 2017 and shared proposals to be included in ORR's consultation due to be published in the autumn of this year.

The advisory group suggested that the industry should adopt one name for assisted travel services and could explore raising awareness through local TV and radio.

RDG and Transport Focus were identified by both the advisory group and ORR as having a key role in promoting assisted travel and ensuring passengers are made aware of what is available to them.

Booked assistance notice period;

Anna Saunders reminded the advisory group of the varying notice periods currently adopted across the industry, that range from 1 hour to 24 hours.

ORR acknowledge passengers would like to see a reduced notice period and have the ability to travel spontaneously but understand there are constraints to this. ORR have held workshops with industry colleagues and disability groups to understand the challenges in lowering the current notice period (24 hours) and carried out site visits at busy stations across the Network to understand the practicalities involved also.

The advisory group understood the challenges that the industry face but suggested the implementation of RDG's new technology should help to provide some mitigation. The advisory group also suggested ORR should form a cross-industry task force to look at developing a longer term solution to spontaneous travel.

'Other' issues arising from 2009 DPPP Guidance;

Following discussions with industry colleagues and disability groups, David Kimball shared proposals with the advisory group for reviewing the current DPPP Guidance document.

Proposals included renaming the document, providing greater clarity as to the eligibility of assisted travel services and providing a clear distinction around the language used in setting out requirements and what is recommended good practice.

Final proposals will be included in ORR's autumn consultation.

ORR's role in approval and review of DPPP's;

Anna set out the current process ORR undertake in the approval and review of DPPP's and shared ORR's proposals for the revised process, which will include engagement with local disability groups and external stakeholders and for a less formal approach to annual reviews unless operators propose any significant changes.

The advisory were satisfied with the proposals and suggested that ORR consider the impact of local engagement for long distance operators and those who cover a large geographical area of the network.

² <http://orr.gov.uk/rail/consumers/consumer-consultations/improving-assisted-travel-consultation>

4. Next Steps

Stephanie thanked the advisory group for their input throughout the advisory group meetings and advised that ORR will now use all the information they have gathered to produce the consultation document.

END