

ORR Consumer Expert Panel

5 December 2018, 13.00-16.30

One Kemble Street, London



Agenda

13.00-13.10	Welcome & Introductions
13:10-13.20	DPPP Guidance Review Consultation summary
13.20-14.05	Highways England 5-year Customer Service Strategic Plan
14.05-14.35	Stakeholder engagement in CP6
14.35-14.50	Break
14.50-15.30	Crowding: Safety, health and wellbeing research
15.30-16:00	Improving our intelligence about safety concerns raised by rail passengers
16.00-16.15	Feedback from Survey & Looking Ahead
16.15-16.30	Meeting Summary & Close

Welcome & Introductions

Stephanie Tobyn welcomed the panel and outlined the meeting agenda. Apologies were noted from Steve Gooding, Rob Sheldon and London TravelWatch.

DPPP Guidance Review Consultation summary

ORR's consumer team published a consultation¹ their changes to guidance for train and station operators on Disabled People's Protection Policy (DPPP) on 14th November. Stephanie thanked the panel for their input over the course of the year and summarised the key proposals of the consultation.

The team have undertaken lots of stakeholder engagement in the last 18 months and are becoming increasingly aware of the high levels of external interest in this area of work. Social media has been seen to be at the preferred platform for interested parties to raise their concerns with the industry. In response ORR are considering their online approach and have offered to engage with key individuals, commuter and disability groups.

¹ <http://orr.gov.uk/rail/consumers/consumer-consultations/improving-assisted-travel-consultation-2018>

The panel were encouraged by the amount of work done by the team to date and suggested focus should be now placed on progression and having a positive impact on the industry by improving the experiences of disabled passengers.

Highways England 5-year Customer Service Strategic Plan

Road user satisfaction has consistently been below its industry target of 90% and as a result ORR's highways team are undertaking enhanced monitoring of Highways England's customer facing activities. The focus of the team is to ensure that Highways England are focusing on improving satisfaction in parts of the country where satisfaction is low and more widely where performance has been found to be weak.

ORR have already identified a willingness from Highways England to improve and advised the panel of initiatives that have already been implemented – such as customer panels and increasing Board visibility to help bridge the disconnect between their strategy and user satisfaction.

The panel were pleased to see that customers were being involved in discussions and suggested a cultural change within Highways England would help it to improve its overall user satisfaction. The panel suggested that Highways England should consider expanding its focus and engage with other regulated businesses. However, before doing so the panel stressed the importance of having appropriate resource in place to ensure they could undertake the role effectively. The panel also felt improvements could be made by broadening their stakeholder engagement to better understand the impact and vulnerabilities on each of their stakeholder groups. Transport focus suggested this could be done through a customer satisfaction survey.

An action was taken to consider a more in-depth follow up discussion with the panel.

Stakeholder engagement in CP6

Further advice was sought from the panel on how ORR could better incorporate stakeholders' views in its assessments of the quality of Network Rail's stakeholder engagement.

ORR advised their initial assessment of Network Rail went well but going forward throughout CP6 it wants to ensure that its survey of stakeholders' views is less onerous and contains responses from a wider range of stakeholders.

The panel suggested ORR consider multiple methods of assessing Network Rail's performance in this area and recommended ORR should seek independent third party assurance to bridge the apparent levels of distrust between Network Rail and the stakeholder and ensure that views of stakeholders are fully reflective of the engagement that has been undertaken.

The panel felt that ORR should conduct benchmarking and use reputational incentives to encourage competitiveness between each Route. Giving greater autonomy to front line staff was seen as being a key indicator for ORR to evaluate how seriously stakeholder engagement was being taken.

Finally, the panel suggested ORR set out clear expectations for their future assessments and should be more directive to ensure Network Rail and their stakeholders understand the importance of the engagement process.

Further development of ORR's assessment survey will be discussed by the panel in 2019.

Crowding: Safety, health and wellbeing research

In response to some recent incidents that have provoked public concern, the Railway Safety Standards Board (RSSB) have commissioned an imminent research study into the health, safety and wellbeing impacts of crowding on rail passengers. The research will aim to work with the industry and passengers to find mitigation techniques, bring the current evidence base up to date and develop a new analytical assessment of the risk and potential causes of harm.

The panel welcomed the broadening of the research and recommended that the research focuses on real passengers and their vulnerabilities – particularly those with hidden disabilities. The research should consider passenger perceptions of discomfort, stress, safety and risk when evaluating passenger feedback. The panel also noted that the cost of the journey may influence the critical nature of the passenger's responses.

The panel set out a clear expectation that the research would reflect advancements in technological communication and that the literature review would include previous studies into public perceptions of safety and how this influences behaviour.

The panel offered to engage on further iteration of ORR's policy following conclusion of phase 1 of the research. This will be discussed in June 2019

Improving our intelligence about safety concerns raised by rail passengers

Over 50% of correspondence received by ORR relates to safety, but despite this ORR's intelligence of safety related complaints made to rail companies remains low.

In order to improve its intelligence, the panel suggested ORR consider undertaking a programme of research with passengers and engaging with other regulated companies to better understand how they manage this data. The panel also agreed that ORR should approach British Transport Police to discuss the implementation and success of their See It Say It Sort It security campaign.

Transport Focus suggested that ORR could get an understanding of safety complaints by identifying complaints that raise safety observations rather than

safety specific incidents. However, Transport focus were aware of the challenge this solution posed in terms of accuracy and resource.

Feedback from Survey & Looking Ahead

Stephanie thanked the panel for their annual feedback which was used to write a paper for ORR's executive committee. The committee agreed to renew the contracts of existing panel members until January 2021 and would start discussions at Board level to appoint a non-executive director as Chair.

The panel agreed that the meetings for 2019 should follow the same format and structure as they have done this year and thanked ORR staff for their continued involvement.

END