

# Regulator's insistence on better passenger information drives industry change

September 4, 2020



The Office of Rail and Road (ORR) and the rail industry are working together to improve passenger information. The rail industry has created a strategy and plan in response to ORR's call earlier this year to improve passenger information particularly during disruption.

The regulator is trialling a new Customer Information Measure to assess the management of passenger information in train companies and drive forward improvement.

Following its independent research, the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) called for passengers to have effective advice and reassurance during disruption, with clear and reliable information, which is consistent across the network.

With changes to timetables and travel advice happening more often than usual, Covid-19 has highlighted just how vital it is for passengers to have consistent information which helps them plan and make journeys with confidence.

ORR is pleased that the industry's response recognises the need to make improvements. Its Passenger

Information Improvement Plan comprises 13 work packages designed to provide passengers and staff alike with timely, accurate and more complete information. This builds on the commitments the industry made in January 2020 to us.

Good progress has been made on those commitments. This includes agreed funding of £7m to redevelop the National Rail Enquiries website to improve the quality of information provided, and the enhancement of a personalised information tool, to provide proactive alerts about crowding and information about social distancing.

ORR is also working with the industry to develop a new way to drive continuous improvement in delivering customer information. A Customer Information Measure (CIM) will now allow management of passenger information by individual train companies to be assessed; identify areas for improvement and provide a benchmark for comparison. Two train operators – Cross Country and LNER – working with Network Rail, will shortly begin the pilot assessments using the CIM.

John Larkinson, ORR Chief Executive, said: “Passengers must have the information they need to plan and make their journey, especially when there is disruption. While improvements have been made in recent years, more still needs to be done to meet passenger expectations.

“The industry strategy and our Customer Information Measure are crucial to driving change. I am keen that this work progresses quickly so that passengers can start realising the benefits as soon as possible.”

*Photo credit: Office of Rail and Road*

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