



A Response by the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport to the

Transport Select Committee Inquiry: 'Improving the rail passenger experience'

The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport ("the Institute") is a professional institution embracing all transport modes whose members are engaged in the provision of transport services for both passengers and freight, the management of logistics and the supply chain, transport planning, government and administration. Our principal concern is that transport policies and procedures should be effective and efficient, based on objective analysis of the issues and practical experience, and that good practice should be widely disseminated and adopted. The Institute has a number of specialist forums, a nationwide structure of locally based groups and a Public Policies Committee which considers the broad canvass of transport policy. This response has been developed by the Strategic Rail Policy Group.

Information provided to passengers before, during and after rail journeys, including information provided at stations, in trains and via National Rail Enquiries, operators' websites and online apps (excluding in relation to the process for claiming compensation for a delay/cancellation).

The Institute is aware that many customers at stations and on trains have access to open source data, via apps on mobile phones etc, that are more up-to-date and provide greater detail than is made available to rail staff. This leads to confusion and reduces the opportunity for those without mobile phones to make immediate alternative decisions when trains are running late or out of course, or cancelled, or just to be aware of what is happening. Train operators need to communicate effectively, via their staff if on board, to their customers and the industry must continue to work together to make improvements in this regard. The Institute notes that Network Rail has a project to harmonise its information flows to staff, stations and on-board train systems so that a consistent single version of 'the truth' is available to all users. It is suggested that the Committee might wish to ask Network Rail about progress in this area and what its planned timescales for completion are. Operators' websites and other appropriate technologies should be continually improved and the access to open source data by developers should continue to be open and transparent and presented accurately.

Ticketing, including overcoming obstacles to the more widespread delivery of "smart-ticketing" and part-time season tickets.

The Institute knows that both the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) and the Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB) are working in this area and that RSSB is sponsoring a competition currently into how the concept of a 'gateless gateline' could be developed to speed up access to and from stations without affecting initiatives to reduce the level of ticketless travel. The rail sector, and the rail industry generally, are rarely in a position to be a market maker in such areas but the early adoption of new products and systems, or timely adaptation of appropriate technologies used in other sectors, should be a priority.

In-train facilities, including on-journey Wi-Fi and power.

All new trains should be provided with Wi-Fi or equivalent modern technologies, to enable connections to the internet as a matter of course, and DfT should strongly encourage train operators to retrofit existing rolling stock with an expected long-term future, where this can be achieved technically and cost effectively. Fitment of trains does not automatically solve the problem, however and cooperation with external internet providers and Network Rail will need to continue. The franchise renewal process is one way of achieving improvements but other incentives can be considered. Making power available to all passengers at all seats should also be part of new train specifications but it is understood that retrofitting existing trains can be very expensive indeed and adversely affects train weight, so, while desirable, may not always be a short-term practical proposition.

Performance measures in relation to passenger experience, including passenger survey methodologies.

Recent attempts to compare the outputs from surveys such as those undertaken by Transport Focus and its predecessors over many years and those produced by the Consumers Association (for example) are unlikely to be productive. The objective nature of the Transport Focus surveys, the long term tracking processes they use, and the sample sizes adopted, cannot be expected to consistent with short term snapshot surveys commissioned by pressure groups.

Mechanisms to hold operators to account for poor performance and spread the best practice across the industry.

These are essentially matters for the Department for Transport, devolved nations and sub-national transport bodies to deal with. One of the key challenges for the Rail Delivery Group is to facilitate best practice and work closely with users and funders to ensure that the network is managed to deliver strategic as well as local outcomes.

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May 2016