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for Transport



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National Implementation Plan for the Accessibility of the UK Rail System for Persons with Disabilities and Persons with Reduced Mobility

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Reference Documents

File name:	Description: <i>e.g. Business Case, Terms of Reference, etc.</i>	Location <i>Full path</i>
150313 PID	Project Initiation Document for Implementation of PRM TSI	G:\MU\DP\049 Railways for All\034 ERA Europe TSIs\Project Management
PRM TSI	European Regulation on technical specifications for interoperability relating to persons with reduced mobility	http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014R1300&from=EN
Railways for All	Accessibility Strategy for Great Britain's Railways	http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120409061727/http://assets.dft.gov.uk/publications/railways-for-all-strategy/railways-for-all-strategy.pdf

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The revised Technical Specifications for Interoperability for Persons with Reduced Mobility (PRM TSI) entered into force on 1 January 2015. It specifies that all European Union (EU) Member States should work towards improving the accessibility of their rail system for persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility. The PRM TSI can be found on the European Commission's (EC) website at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014R1300&from=EN>.

This updated TSI repeals the Decision 2008/164/EC, however, that TSI still applies to subsystems authorised in accordance with that Decision, projects for new, renewed or upgraded subsystems that are at an advanced stage or are the subject of an ongoing contract and projects for new rolling stock of an existing design.

All Member States are required to develop and endeavour to put into practice a National Implementation Plan (NIP) setting out how they will progressively eliminate all identified barriers to accessibility across the rail network (barriers are to be identified through the inventory of assets strand, see section 1.6). This plan should be submitted to the European Commission by January 2017.

The NIP should run for a period of at least 10 years and shall be updated regularly, at least every five years. UK rail infrastructure funding currently runs in five year plans. Although the aspiration to continue to improve the accessibility of stations will continue, this NIP can only offer certainty on the funding of infrastructure work up to 2019. Rail vehicle accessibility has a target of 100% compliance by 2020, and, therefore, this plan can only outline the rail vehicle strategy up to 2020.

1.2 Scope

This implementation plan is relevant to all passenger train and station operators in the United Kingdom. It applies to the infrastructure, operation and traffic management, telematics applications and rolling stock subsystems.

1.3 Development of the UK National Implementation Plan

The UK NIP has been developed by the Department for Transport (DfT), Transport Scotland, Welsh Government and the Department for Regional Development Northern Ireland in collaboration with:

- the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC);
- the Office of Rail and Road (ORR);
- Network Rail;
- Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC);
- Train Operating Companies (TOC);
- Transport for London (TfL);
- European Rail Agency (ERA);
- Rail Delivery Group; and
- User Groups.

1.4 Interface with other National Implementation Plans

The Infrastructure TSI and Energy TSI have the most overlap with the PRM TSI. This is due to the station accessibility works (covered under the Infrastructure TSI), including platform heights, and the effect of electrification on upgrading footbridges to make them accessible.

1.5 Definitions

1.5.1. Definition of ‘station’

The definition of station used in this NIP is taken from the PRM TSI 2.1.1 *Scope related to infrastructure subsystem*.

1.5.2. Definition of ‘disability’

This implementation plan assumes the same definition of disability as the Equality Act 2010:

“A physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

1.6 Provisions of the Technical Specifications for Interoperability for Persons with Reduced Mobility

The PRM TSI establishes a strong international framework for promoting EU action on improving the accessibility of the trans-European conventional and high-speed rail system for persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility.

There are three strands to the implementation of this regulation.

1.6.1. National Implementation Plan

The NIP identifies barriers to accessibility, defines the UK’s strategy to progressively eliminate all of these barriers, and outlines the extent of the work required.

1.6.2. List of Advanced Projects

A list of projects at an advanced stage of development will be compiled and submitted to the EC before the deadline on 31 December 2015.

1.6.3. Inventory of Assets

An inventory of assets identifies all barriers to accessibility, provides information to users, and serves as a baseline, against which progress can be monitored and evaluated. It also covers public areas of stations dedicated to the transport of passengers that are controlled by the railways undertaking, infrastructure manager or station manager and rolling stock which is in scope of the Locomotive and Passenger TSI¹.

The EC has published an Invitation to Tender (ITT) in the Official Journal of the European Union for the development of the technical tools for data collection. Tender applications had to be submitted by 13 June 2015. Future work for the UK on the Inventory of Assets includes identifying the main data collectors, meeting potential suppliers to discuss the current UK situation, and ensuring that any data collection completed by the UK is not duplicated by the supplier.

1.6.4. Advisory Body

The PRM TSI recognises the need to establish an advisory body, which will assist the EC in monitoring implementation of the TSI. Its role includes, inter alia, monitoring the development of a minimum data structure for the inventory of assets, assisting the EC in monitoring the implementation of the TSI, and facilitating the exchange of best practice among Member States.

¹ Commission Regulation (EU) No 1302/2014 Locomotive and Passenger TSI:
<http://www.era.europa.eu/Document-Register/Pages/RST-TSI.aspx>

2. Context

2.1 Setting the Scene

2.1.1. Statistics

This section sets out the UK national picture in terms of persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility.

2.1.1.1. General Demographics

- There are 12.2 million people with a limiting long-term illness, impairment or disability² (19% of UK's population).
- The most commonly reported impairments are those that affect mobility³ (57%, 6.9 million) and stamina, breathing or fatigue (38%, 4.6 million).
- The prevalence of disability rises with age. In 2012/13 around 7% of children were disabled, compared to 16% of working-age adults and 43% of adults over State Pension age⁴.

2.1.1.2. Impact on daily life

- Around a third of disabled people experience difficulties related to their impairment⁵ in accessing public, commercial and leisure goods and services⁶.
- 30% of older people say that they would like to go out more often⁷.
- Over a quarter of disabled people say that they do not frequently have choice and control over their daily lives⁸.

2.1.1.3. Transport-focused statistics

- In 2011, around a fifth of disabled people reported having difficulties related to their impairment or disability⁹ in accessing transport¹⁰.
- The UK has the consistently highest satisfaction with accessibility across the EU. In particular, respondents were satisfied with the accessibility of stations (65%), carriages (63%) and ticket offices (71%)¹¹.
- As of May 2015, 7,620 heavy rail vehicles had been built or fully refurbished to modern access standards – 60% of the GB fleet¹².
- Out of the roughly 2,500 stations (18%) on the UK rail network around 460 (18%) have step-free access to all and between all platforms.

² Family Resources Survey 2012/13

³ Family Resources Survey 2012/13

⁴ Family Resources Survey 2012/13. From 6 April 2010, the qualifying State Pension age for women has been gradually increasing. This change does not affect the State Pension age for men, currently 65. This means the definition of both State Pension age and Working age is not consistent over time.

⁵ "Related to the impairment" refers to the constraints of their environment due to their impairment.

⁶ ONS Opinions Survey 2010

⁷ TNS Loneliness survey for Age UK, April 2014

⁸ ONS Opinions Survey 2011

⁹ "Related to their impairment or disability" refers to the constraints of their environment due to their impairment, and not the lack of local public transport.

¹⁰ ONS Opinions Survey 2011

¹¹ *Europeans Satisfaction with Rail Services*,

http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_382a_sum_en.pdf, accessed 5 May 2015

¹² *List of Rail Vehicles built or refurbished to modern accessibility standards*, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/list-of-rail-vehicles-built-or-refurbished-to-modern-accessibility-standards>, accessed 7 May 2015

- 40% of disabled travellers who didn't use public transport said that one of the main reasons for not using it was due to a lack of confidence in service provision in different areas¹³
- 29% of adults with impairments claim that difficulty with transport is a barrier to work¹⁴.
- Disabled people are particularly dependent on public transport with 60% of disabled people having no car in the household, compared with 27% of the general population¹⁵.
- More than 170,000 Disabled Persons Rail Cards (DPRC) are in circulation (2015) - an increase from 110,000 in 2010. DPRC is restricted to those disabled passengers who face the greatest difficulty when travelling. Currently there are approximately 5m journeys per annum made where DPRC discounts are applied.
- Through the National Passenger Survey, it is estimated that there are over 70 million journeys per annum made by disabled people on the GB rail network.
- 1.2 million journeys take place which involve pre-booked assistance.

2.1.2. Evolution of Mobility Needs

- Since 2008 the number of passenger journeys on the UK rail network has increased by 23%; this is the biggest increase in journeys of any EU country that reports to Eurostat¹⁶.
- With a strong correlation between age and disability, as well as an ageing population (Office of National Statistics projects that 21% of the UK population will be of State Pension age in 2035), the number of people with a limiting long-term illness, impairment or disability is likely to rise¹⁷.
- Stemming, in part, from anti-discrimination and rights legislation, it is likely that there will be a continued increase in the use of the UK's rail network by people with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility.
- The number of people living with dementia is expected to double to 1.4m over the next 30 years¹⁸.
- By 2030, it is estimated that the number of younger adults with learning disabilities may rise by 32.2%¹⁹.

¹³ Disabled Travellers – Awareness of Rights, ORR, March 2014

¹⁴ Life Opportunities Survey, Wave One 2009/11, p.10

¹⁵ Railways for All. The Accessibility Strategy for Great Britain's Railways, March 2006

¹⁶ ORR, *Passenger Rail Usage. 2014-15 Quarter 2 Statistical Release*. Accessed April 2015. http://orr.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/15397/passenger-rail-usage-quality-report-2014-15-q2.pdf

¹⁷ ONS National Population Projections, published 26 October 2011. 15.6 million people of State Pension age out of total population of 73.2 million.

¹⁸ *Living Well with Dementia – a national dementia strategy*, Department of Health 2009

¹⁹ *Future Trends report*, Kings Fund, <http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/time-to-think-differently/trends/disease-and-disability/child-health>, accessed 8 May 2015

3. Legislative Background

3.1 National

3.1.1. Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC)

DPTAC was established by the Transport Act 1985 to advise government on the transport needs of disabled people to ensure that disabled people have the same access to transport as everyone else.

3.1.2. Railways Act 1993

The Railways Act 1993 made specific provisions to ensure that disabled people's needs were taken into account by train operators, including having to produce a Disabled People's Protection Policy (DPPP) and any infrastructure work in accordance with a statutory Code of Practice.

It also established the Office of Rail Regulation, now the Office of Rail and Road (ORR). The ORR enforces the Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations as well as the PRM TSI for the Department for Transport (DfT).

3.1.3. Transport Act 2000

Among many other measures for transport in the UK, the Transport Act 2000 sets out the requirements for the suitability of substitute service provision for disabled passengers.

3.1.4. Railways Act 2005

The Railways Act 2005 granted Scottish Ministers the power to produce their own Code of Practice to apply to services and stations in Scotland.

3.1.5. Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It replaced previous anti-discrimination laws including the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) with a single Act, making the law easier to understand and strengthening protection in some situations. The Act imposes duties on the Public Sector – The Public Sector Equality Duties – in exercising their functions. This includes Network Rail, when carrying out their public functions.

The Act protects people from discrimination and harassment based on 'protected characteristics'. The 'protected characteristics' are: age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation. It gives individuals greater protection from unfair discrimination and makes it easier for employers and companies to understand their responsibilities.

The Act introduces the Public Sector Equality Duty which applies to all public sector organisations and other organisations exercising public functions. This includes the DfT, ORR and Network Rail.

Train operating companies, including those operating UK franchises, are not subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty. However, Section 20 of the Equality Act, setting out a Duty to make Reasonable Adjustments, does place an obligation upon all train operators to take reasonable steps - a disabled person should not face a substantial disadvantage in relation to a matter, in comparison to persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility.

An entire Chapter of the Act (Part 12 Disabled persons: transport, Chapter 3) refers to the accessibility requirements of rail vehicles; it defines the processes to be followed but not the physical requirements for an accessible rail vehicle.

3.1.6. Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations

Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations (RVAR) have applied to all new rail vehicles entering service in England, Scotland and Wales since 31 December 1998. Northern Ireland has similar regulation that is not covered by this.

The regulations outline the standard requirements for meeting the needs of disabled passengers. This includes providing access for wheelchair users, the size and location of handrails, handholds and control devices, providing audio-visual passenger information systems (PIS), priority seating and other equipment.

The Rail Vehicle Accessibility (Non-Interoperable Rail System) Regulations 2010 apply to non-mainline vehicles, and contain the specifications applicable to main line vehicles introduced before the first version of the PRM TSI was published. Vehicles introduced before RVAR 1998 have to be compliant before 1 January 2020; the PRM TSI may be applied instead to main line vehicles.

3.1.7. The Railways (Interoperability) Regulations 2011

The Railways (Interoperability) Regulations 2011 (as amended) (RIR) is the domestic legislation that enforces the application of the TSI. RIR requires new or upgraded subsystems (such as stations, rolling stock and signalling equipment) to be authorised before being brought into use. The authorisation process requires accredited organisations to certify that the project has applied the appropriate provisions of the TSIs, and once this has been evidenced and the process is complete, ORR will authorise the use of the subsystem. It is a legal requirement that the subsystem remains compliant after being brought into use.

3.2 Devolved Governments

3.2.1. The Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland Regulations 2002

The Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland Regulations 2002 established the Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS). The organisation's work complements the work undertaken by DPTAC. It advises Scottish Ministers on policy affecting the travel needs of persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility, and raises awareness amongst people in Scotland of developments which affect their mobility, choices and opportunities of travel.

3.2.2. Government of Wales Act 2006

The Government of Wales Act 2006 imposes a requirement on Welsh Ministers to exercise their functions with due regard so there is equality of opportunity for all people.

3.2.3. Transport (Wales) Act 2006

The Transport (Wales) Act 2006 requires Welsh Ministers to publish a Wales Transport Strategy (WTS). A new Welsh National Transport Plan is being developed in line with the Welsh Government's policies and objectives for transport, as set out in the WTS and the Welsh Government's wider policy objectives.

3.3 International

3.3.1. Directive 2008/57/EC: On the Interoperability of the Rail System within the Community

Directive 2008/57/EC: On the Interoperability of the Rail System within the Community, sets out the requirements to achieve interoperability within the EU rail system. The Directive established the TSI that outlines harmonised standards defining the Essential Requirements for Interoperability. This applies across Europe's railways. The intent of the interoperability regime is not only to facilitate cross-border rail operations, but to also remove barriers to trade and reduce costs by establishing common standards across the European Union.

The TSIs cover the various subsystems that make up the rail network: rolling stock (locomotive & passenger and wagons), infrastructure, energy and control, command and signalling. "Transverse" TSIs define requirements that cover multiple subsystems: noise, safety in rail tunnels and accessibility for persons of reduced mobility (PRM). There are also "functional" TSIs covering operations and traffic management, and telematics applications for both passenger and freight services.

The directive applies to the European Union rail system, which now includes all Network Rail infrastructure, HS1 and the Channel Tunnel. It does not apply to metro services such as London Underground and Tyne & Wear Metro. The requirements of the Directive have been transposed into GB domestic legislation through the Railways (Interoperability) Regulations 2011 (as amended).

3.3.2. Commission Regulation (EU) No 1300/2014: Technical Specification for Interoperability: Persons with Reduced Mobility (2014)

Commission Regulation (EU) No 1300/2014: Technical Specification for Interoperability: Persons with Reduced Mobility (2014) is the revised TSI that relates to accessibility of the EU's rail system for persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility (PRM TSI). The 2014 version of the PRM TSI extended its scope beyond the strategic Trans-European Rail Network (TEN) to the whole main line European rail system.

The PRM TSI contains requirements for passenger rail vehicles and for stations. The requirements for vehicles are very similar to those in the RVAR: when the first version of the PRM TSI came into force, RVAR was revised to exclude those trains subject to the TSI, by means of The Rail Vehicle Accessibility (Interoperable Rail System) Regulations 2008.

4. Current situation

4.1 Specific Projects to Improve Stations

Only around 460 stations, out of the 2,500 on the UK rail network, have step-free access to and between all platforms. There are three current projects in place specifically to improve the accessibility of UK rail stations, outside of complete station upgrades and renewals²⁰:

4.1.1. Access for All Main Programme

Launched in 2006 as part of The Railways for All Strategy, the Access for All Programme started as a £390m fund targeted at improving the accessibility of the UK's stations through to 2015. The initial programme was delivered early and under budget, allowing 151 step-free routes in stations to be completed by the end of 2015.

To build on this success, the fund has since been extended to 2019 with an additional £160m. 278 stations were nominated, from which 68 were chosen for funding. This investment is over and above commitments made in franchises, the ongoing renewal of stations delivered by Network Rail, and major station improvement projects.

4.1.1.1. Eligibility

Stations that meet the following five criteria are eligible for this funding:

1. Industry Priorities – the Train Operating Companies (TOCs) prioritise and nominate stations on their system for funding. Geographic location is taken into consideration to ensure an even spread of improvement projects.
2. Passenger Footfall – taken from ORR usage data.
3. Incidence of Disability in Local Area – information is taken from the most recent Census.
4. Proximity to facilities such as hospitals or schools for disabled children.
5. Availability of third party funding.
6. Geographical location.

4.1.1.2. Benefits of this Programme

- 150 step-free routes at stations will be delivered by the end of 2015.
- Initial research into benefits show that station patronage can rise by up to 20% when step-free access to platforms is provided.
- These projects have an average benefit-cost ratio (BCR) of 2.4:1, but some have very high BCRs, such as 11.3:1 at Vauxhall, London. If wider benefits are included, for example passengers with pushchairs or luggage and increased fares, BCRs can be as high as 19:1.

4.1.2. Access for All Small Schemes Programme

This is an annual £7.5m cash grant to TOCs for smaller scale or locally focused access improvements to stations. This fund was in response to concerns that Access for All funding would target bigger stations and projects rather than local, smaller projects. The funding is allocated directly to TOCs based on the footfall at their stations and is released on completion of projects.

Over 1,200 stations have benefitted from this fund since 2006. Typical work undertaken by this programme includes accessible toilets, lighting improvements, customer information screens, ticket windows, and automatic doors into station.

²⁰ These fall under the specifications of the PRM TSI and therefore would be made accessible as part of the upgrade or renewal works.

4.1.3. Access for All Mid-tier Programme

In addition to the three current projects, there is the Access for All Mid-tier Programme. This programme was launched in April 2011 as a £37.5m fund for station access projects requiring between £250,000 and £1 million of government support. 42 projects were chosen with 160 stations to benefit by the end of 2015.

This fund was popular with industry and delivered projects included lifts, tactile warning strips, toilets, and ticket windows. However, there is currently no further funding available.

4.1.4. National Stations Improvements Programme (NSIP)

NSIP has been funded since 2009. Its aim is to improve passenger satisfaction survey results at medium-sized stations around the country, where there would normally not be a commercial case for doing so; either it is too small to warrant investment or the TOCs do not believe they will see a return on their investment within the lifespan of their franchise. Improvements are measured by an increase in passenger satisfaction.

The devolved approach to running this programme means that those who know the area and stations best are able to decide where funding should be given. Third party funding targets have been included to encourage TOCs to unlock additional funding for their projects. Since 2009, 451 stations have received some form of improvement and a further 113 projects have been chosen for funding up until 2019.

4.1.5. Welsh Government Funding

The Welsh Government launched its own station improvement programme which has funded station accessibility improvements to stations in Wales. This is a £40m programme which includes £21m of European Regional Development Fund Convergence funding. The scheme is an open grant scheme and is open to applications from the railway industry, local authorities (including the regional transport consortia) and others. In addition, the Welsh Government has also funded a number of smaller schemes and has provided matching investment for Access for All projects in Wales to expand the programme.

4.2 Other Projects to Improve Stations

4.2.1. Crossrail

Crossrail is a new 118km, high-frequency, high-capacity railway for London and the South East. The East-West route across Greater London is currently under construction and is expected to be fully operational by the end of 2019. When fully open, Crossrail will dramatically improve accessibility to key locations along the route.

Accessibility improvements will include:

- All of the new Crossrail stations and refurbishment of existing station facilities will take into account accessibility needs and follow the guidance contained in the DfT Code of Practice.
- All stations will be step-free from street to platform with level access from platform to Crossrail trains at all of the new central London underground stations and at Heathrow.
- Crossrail will offer the same ‘turn up and go’ service currently provided on the London Underground and London Overground for passengers requiring assistance between platforms or onto and off trains.
- When interchanging between Crossrail and other services, there will be step-free access between Crossrail platforms and other National Rail and London Underground services where possible, given the constraints of the existing Tube and National Rail network.

- The specifications for Crossrail trains will include provision of space for the carriage of bicycles as well as items such as pushchairs, luggage and wheelchair access. Manual boarding ramps will also be available.

4.2.2. Thameslink

By the end of the Thameslink Programme in 2018, there will be step-free access from the street to the train, without the requirement for additional assistance in the Thameslink Core (St Pancras, Farringdon, City Thameslink and Blackfriars) and platforms 4 and 5 of London Bridge station.

Including Access for All improvements, by 2019, the number of step-free stations on the Thameslink network will have reached 74 out of 114 (65%) and access between platforms will have reached 50 out of 114 (44%). As a percentage of footfall, these figures are respectively 90% and 85%.

4.2.3. Major Station Projects

Major station projects, such as the redevelopments of Birmingham New Street and Reading stations, have to adhere to the DfT Code of Practice, which brings together EU and national standards with best practice guidance on station accessibility.

4.2.4. Electrification

Key routes across the UK will be electrified to provide faster, more reliable and greener journeys. Currently there are electrification programmes to the Great Western line and the North. To electrify the lines, wires are being installed above the tracks, which means that some bridges and tunnels will need to be modified to fit the new wires. Where non-step-free footbridges are currently being modified, they will be upgraded to ensure step-free access following the guidance set out in the DfT Code of Practice.

4.3 Franchising Commitments

4.3.1. Minor Works Budget

All post-2004 Franchise Agreements with train operating companies to operate UK rail services have included the Minor Works Budget. This is an annual fund which is specified in the Franchise Agreement for the purpose of facilitating small scale physical alterations or additions to improve accessibility of Stations to Disabled Persons, not involving substantial works of construction or reconstruction.

All post-2004 Franchise Agreements with TOCs to operate UK rail services have included the Minor Works Budget. This is an annual fund, which is specified in the Franchise Agreement, to facilitate small scale physical alterations or additions to improve accessibility of Stations to Disabled Persons. It does not involve substantial works of construction or reconstruction.

Current Franchise Agreement Minor Work Budget's range from £150,000 to £600,000 per annum, increasing with inflation each franchise year.

TOCs must develop a Minor Works Programme on commencing a franchise which must be agreed with the Secretary of State. TOCs must carry out this agreed programme each year, and provide regular reports on progress.

The minor works programme has been included in franchise agreements since 2004. It is an annual fund usually of between £250,000 and £300,000 contributed by the TOC (increasing with inflation each franchise year) that is generally used on improving station accessibility.

TOCs submit a list of works that they would like to complete over the year for approval. DPTAC advises as to whether certain projects should be approved.

4.3.1. Franchise Agreement

All post-2004 Franchise Agreements contain provisions around accessibility and inclusivity. They include references to license obligations such as DPPP, in particular to accessible transport arrangements, and providing the Passenger Assistance booking service, and impose further reporting obligations on TOCs.

All post-2004 Franchise Agreements contain provisions around accessibility and inclusivity. They include references to license obligations, such as DPPP, accessible transport arrangements and providing the Passenger Assistance booking service. The Franchise Agreements also impose further reporting obligations on TOCs.

4.4 Rail Accessibility Focus Groups

4.4.1. Industry Steering Group

Industry Steering Group is a quarterly meeting with representatives from Government, operators and other stakeholders to discuss rail accessibility improvements. This is an important meeting to help coordinate progress between the main stakeholders in the industry.

4.4.2. ATOC Disability Group

ATOC Disability Group is a national forum for train operators which meets periodically to evaluate how performance can be improved. The Group responds to, and takes account of, changes in rail policy

4.5 Overview of Rolling stock

4.5.1. New Vehicles

Since RVAR was introduced in 1998 (and replaced for heavy rail by the PRM TSI in 2008), 6,115 new heavy rail vehicles have been introduced in Great Britain which meet those accessibility standards. More than 4,000 will be introduced by the end of 2019.

4.5.2. 2020 Accessibility Deadline

In 2005, the Disability Discrimination Act 2005²¹ mandated that all passenger rail vehicles must be accessible by 1 January 2020.

While the latest fleets of trains are fully compliant with accessibility requirements, several thousand vehicles will still be in service by 2020 which pre-date the standards. Rather than withdraw these older trains, the Government, in consultation with its disability advisors (DPTAC), has set out for the industry what rectification work is required on the fleets to remove the major barriers to travel for disabled people.

²¹ Since incorporated into the Equality Act 2010

This generally means that those older vehicles will have, by 2020:

- Audio-visual Passenger Information Systems;
- Contrasting floors/handrails/handholds;
- Tactile/palm-operable/contrasting door controls;
- Priority seats;
- Mandated numbers of wheelchair spaces;
- An accessible toilet (if toilets are fitted); and
- Compliant boarding ramps.

If there is minor non-compliance with the accessibility requirements, for example, if a door control is 15 mm too high, and it does not materially affect the ability of persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility to travel, then the non-compliances do not need to be rectified. This policy of “targeted compliance” is supported by disability organisations, the rail industry, Ministers and Parliament as a pragmatic way to deliver an accessible fleet by 2020 without diverting resources to areas which do not deliver any improvement to disabled people.

As of May 2015, more than 1,500 older (pre-1999) heavy rail vehicles have been fully refurbished to the standard expected under “targeted compliance” – while plans are already in place for thousands more to be altered to ensure compliance. Based on this progress, the Government anticipates that 100% of the current fleet which is still in use at the end of 2019 will be accessible.

The 2020 deadline also applies to non-heavy rail vehicles, which are not subject to this National Implementation Plan. As of May 2015, almost 2,850 non-heavy rail vehicles had been built (or fully refurbished) to RVAR (representing 58% of that fleet).

4.5.3. Enforcement

Although DfT takes the lead for accessibility policy, ORR is the enforcing authority for RVAR and PRM TSI. ORR inspectors have investigation and enforcement powers defined by The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. These are applicable to RVAR 2010 through Regulation 6 of RVAR and to PRM TSI through Regulation 39 of RIR. In the event of a breach of the Regulations Inspectors are empowered to serve formal notices requiring changes to be made (Improvement Notice) or prohibiting an activity (Prohibition Notice). Failure to comply with a Notice is a criminal offence and is likely to result in prosecution. A serious breach of the Regulations may result in immediate prosecution without the prior service of a Notice.

4.6 Licensing Obligations

4.6.1. Disabled People’s Protection Policy

Train and station operators are required by their operating licences to establish and comply with a DPPP which must be approved by ORR.

When approving DPPPs, ORR will have regard to the 2009 Department for Transport guidance on *‘how to write your disabled people’s protection policy’*. ORR also takes account of the ORR July 2014 regulatory statement on disabled people’s protection policies and the 18 December 2014 open letter to train operating companies on the compliance and approval process for disabled people’s protection policies.

Each TOCs DPPP sets out the arrangements and assistance that an operator will provide to protect the interests of older and disabled people using its services and to facilitate such use. DPPPs set out commitments relating to their provision of assistance for passengers, alternative accessible transport, and passenger information, and their policies relating to disabled and older persons on tickets and fares, stations, help and facilities on the train, and in making connections between services.

4.6.1.1. Passenger Assistance

Each licensed operator must participate in a reservation system for disabled passengers whose journey begins at any of the stations at which that operator's trains are scheduled to stop. Passenger Assist is free and available to anyone who needs assistance due to a disability, temporary impairment, or older age.

TOCs must make a variety of commitments to provide pre-travel assistance to passengers in planning their journey and booking train tickets and assistance for that journey, and to provide assistance at stations and on board trains for booked journeys. No more than 24 hours' notice is required, and without notice where possible.

Certain stations in London are currently trialling a 'turn up and go' policy, where passengers do not need to notify stations before their arrival. Other train operators have committed to ask passengers for only four hours' notice when booking, and are looking to reduce this time further on certain routes.

4.6.1.2. Alternative Accessible Transport

Operators must also commit in their DPPPs to provide, without extra charge, an appropriate alternative accessible service to take disabled passengers to the nearest or most convenient accessible station from where they can continue their journey if they are unable to travel to or from a station because the station is inaccessible to them, or where the service or substitute rail transport is inaccessible.

4.6.1.3. Enforcement

In October 2013, responsibility for approving and monitoring train and station operators' disabled people's protection policies (DPPPs) transferred to ORR from DfT. Since then, ORR has been engaging with stakeholders, including operators and groups representing those with disabilities, to understand how well the current arrangements work and the role of DPPPs in supporting confident use of the railway.

ORR's focus is on improving organisational culture. This involves concentrating on the internal arrangements that an operator has in place to deliver its obligations. When approving DPPPs, ORR wants operators to demonstrate that their arrangements and approach reflect an organisational culture which drives effective delivery and continuous improvement. When monitoring DPPPs, ORR will look at how well these arrangements are delivered by focusing on the outcomes that are being achieved.

In addition to this, ORR is working with stakeholders to establish a core data set of measures for operators to report against to provide a robust evidence base for DfT monitoring. They will then use this evidence, alongside any other relevant information, to inform whether they need to carry out closer scrutiny of an operator.

4.6.2. Code of Practice – *Design Standards for Accessible Railway Stations*

As set out in the Railways Act 1993, it is the responsibility of the Secretary of State to maintain a code of practice protecting the interests of disabled rail passengers. This code provides a clear set of standards (including European standards, national standards and best practice guidance), which must be followed by TOCS and anybody else carrying out rail infrastructure improvements. As part of a TOC's licence, they must adhere to this document.

Whilst the Railways Act 2005 granted Scottish Ministers the power to produce their own Code of Practice to apply to services and stations in Scotland, Scottish Ministers and the Secretary of State chose to produce a joint Code of Practice.

4.7 Industry Initiatives

4.7.1. Stations Made Easy

Stations Made Easy is a web-based system that holds information on every UK station. This includes maps, pictures, routing information, and other information that would be useful for checking the accessibility of a station. This system is managed and updated by ATOC and National Rail Enquiries.

Currently, the audits are undertaken by a private company, which also updates the routing information. The contract for this service runs out in March 2016, and ATOC is reviewing how this system will be developed and managed in the future.

5. Definition of a Strategy

5.1 Prioritisation Rule

5.1.1. England and Wales

Annex B of the PRM TSI sets out a temporary prioritisation rule to decide whether a station's accessibility should be improved if it is being renewed or upgraded. This rule is not used for stations in England and Wales.

5.1.2. Scotland

The prioritisation rule can, however, be used in Scotland, but it is not automatically applied. The application of the prioritisation rule needs to be justified by a business case. This allows railway operators to concentrate available upgrade budget on the larger, busier stations.

As this rule is temporary, we recognise that it is likely to be removed from revisions to the PRM TSI.

5.1.3. Stations

5.1.3.1. Access for All Main Programme

The criteria for stations chosen for the Access for All main programme will remain the same:

1. Industry priorities
2. Passenger footfall
3. Incidence of Disability in Local Area
4. Proximity to facilities, such as hospitals or schools for disabled children
5. Availability of third party funding
6. Geographical location.

5.1.3.2. Access for All Small Schemes

The decision surrounding the allocation and spending of small schemes funding will remain the same: the annual pot of funding will be split between each train operating company depending on the number of stations and their footfall. It will then be the responsibility of the company to decide how to spend this funding.

5.1.4. Rolling Stock

5.1.4.1. 2020 target

The law already requires all passenger rail vehicles to be accessible by 1 January 2020 (see section 4.5.2). As of May 2015, 7,620 heavy rail vehicles were in use which had been built or fully refurbished to modern accessibility standards – 60% of the national fleet.

With the replacement of some older trains by over 4,000 new vehicles by the end of 2019, and the application of “targeted compliance” to those that remain, the Government expects that all trains in use in the UK will be accessible by 2020.

6. Financing

6.1 Access for All Main Programme

The Access for All Main Programme is currently funded until at least 2019 by £160m. This will deliver step-free routes at 68 stations, as chosen by the DfT from TOC-nominated stations.

6.2 Access for All Small Schemes Programme

Access for All Small Schemes programme is currently funded by a £7.5m cash grant that is split between TOCs depending on the number of stations and their footfall.

6.3 Minor Works Fund

The Minor Works Fund is written into the franchise agreement of TOC and there is no desire to remove it from the cost of running franchises. They are still being included in new franchise agreements in 2015.

6.4 Rolling Stock Accessibility

Incorporating accessibility requirements into vehicles as they are being built only marginally increases their price.

The capital cost of modifying the thousands of older (pre-1999) vehicles which are being refurbished to the standards expected under “targeted compliance” is expected to be in the region of £200m. This will be rentalised by the owners over the remaining life of those fleets and reflected in the levels of franchise subsidy/premia.

7. Follow-up and Feedback

7.1 Update of the inventory of assets

The UK will fully support the work in compiling an EU inventory of assets. As part of this work, we will continue to keep our station accessibility website, Stations Made Easy, updated and work on how this system can be integrated effectively into the EU system.

7.2 Update of the plan

This plan covers infrastructure work with certainty up to the end of the current funding period, Control Period 5 (CP5), which ends in 2019, and vehicle accessibility up to 2020. As a minimum, this plan will be updated before the end of CP5 to outline the future strategy for eliminating obstacles to accessibility on the rail network.

This plan will also be updated if there are any significant changes to the UK's strategy between now and the update at the end of CP5, such as an increase in funding, changes to primary legislation or unanticipated project issues.

8. Appendix A – Glossary

ATOC	<p>Association of Train Operating Companies</p> <p>Representative body of the 28 train operating companies that provide passenger services on the UK rail network. Responsible for the management of the Passenger Assist booking system and for the development and delivery of the Disabled Persons Railcard.</p>
CP5	<p>Control Period 5</p> <p>Control Periods are the 5-year timespans that are used for financial and planning purposes on the UK rail network. CP5 runs from 2014 to 2019.</p>
DDA	<p>Disability Discrimination Act</p> <p>Primary legislation that made it unlawful to discriminate against disabled people in relation to employment, the provision of goods and services, education and transport. It came into force in 1995, was amended in 2005 and repealed by Equality Act 2010.</p>
DPPP	<p>Disabled People's Protection Policy</p> <p>A DPPP sets out, amongst other things, the arrangements and assistance that an operator will provide to protect the interests of disabled people using its services.</p>
DPTAC	<p>Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee</p> <p>Advises the government on transport legislation, regulations and guidance and on the transport needs of disabled people, ensuring disabled people have the same access to transport as everyone else.</p>
EC	European Commission
NIP	National Implementation Plan
ORR	<p>Office of Rail and Road</p> <p>The independent safety and economic regulator for Britain's railways. It is responsible for ensuring that railway operators comply with health and safety law. It regulates Network Rail's activities and funding requirements, regulates access to the railway network, licenses the operators of railway assets and publishes rail statistics. ORR enforces RVAR and PRM TSI for the DfT.</p>
PRM TSI	Technical Specification for Interoperability for Persons with Reduced Mobility or Persons with Disabilities
RAB	<p>Regulatory Assets Base</p> <p>Represents the value of the assets used for the regulated activities. It provides a means for revenue requirements and prices/access charges.</p>
RVAR	<p>Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations</p> <p>A statutory instrument that sets standards to improve accessibility for disabled passengers on rail vehicles.</p> <p>There have been three sets of RVAR so far: the original RVAR1998 – The Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations 1998 – which has been repealed and now RVAR2008 and RVAR2010 – The Rail Vehicle Accessibility (Interoperable Rail System) Regulations 2008 and The Rail Vehicle Accessibility (Non-Interoperable Rail System) Regulations 2010 respectively.</p>
TOC	<p>Train Operating Company</p> <p>A business that operates passenger trains on the UK rail network.</p>

9. Appendix B - Stations with Step-Free Access

Information on whether stations are accessible can be found on the Stations Made Easy website at: http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations_destinations/default.aspx.