

# DfT-DPTAC Rail Sub-Group Meeting

12/02/19 13.30 – 15.30

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## Attendees:

### DPTAC

David Mapp

David Partington

Keith Richards

Matthew Smith

Niki Glazier

Tanvi Vyas

Mike Brace

### DfT

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### Additional Attendees

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Dr Alice Maynard (Rail Review)

## Key Points and Actions:

### 1. Welcome and Introductions – David Mapp

- 1.1 David welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies noted were: David Chrimes.
- 1.2 David asked for disclosure of any conflicts of interest. None made.

### 2. Rail Review – Alice Maynard and ██████████ ██████████

- 2.1 Alice introduced herself as a panellist on the Expert Challenge Panel for the Williams Rail Review. The Panel supports Keith Williams in testing the Review's analysis and recommendations, and provides fresh perspective and advice. Alice's specific role on the Panel is to review passengers and their experiences of the rail network. The Challenge Panel has met as a full panel twice, once in October and once in January.
- 2.2 Alice noted that the Williams Rail Review is an opportunity to prioritise customers and tax payers. This Review is about making something that delivers value for money, and a positive experience for those who use the railway.

- 2.3 █████ █████ explained that the DfT's Rail Review Team is split into four strands: Commercial, Industry Structures, Passengers, and Implementation and Analysis. The Review has 4 phases, which is currently at phase 2. Phases 1 and 2 were dedicated to listening and evidence gathering. Phase 3 will be testing and modelling, and phase 4 will be the publication of the Review's White Paper. Papers from phase 1 are due for publication within the coming weeks. **Action: Secretariat to share papers with the group when available, and to arrange a separate DPTAC and Rail Review meeting during phase 3.**
- 2.4 Alice wants accessibility embedded into all aspects of the Review, rather than having a separate 'disability' category. DPTAC noted that key evidence to support the Review doesn't always have to be technical. For example, if the Review were to use evidence that showed disabled people use rail proportionately less than non-disabled people. Alice argued that such evidence isn't always necessary, and it risks generalising disabled people into one category. Alice wants the evidence to consider a vast array of disabilities, and acknowledge that disabled people have different needs and lifestyles.
- 2.5 Alice noted that rail designs should focus on accessibility within the initial design processes, this will benefit all users, not just disabled people. This approach would incorporate accessibility into operators' business models. █████ █████ agreed, and referenced two reports from Steer<sup>1</sup> which have shown that accessibility enhancements do have a positive impact on business. The group agreed that there still needs to be more evidence to highlight the monetary benefits of accessibility enhancements on the rail network. Alice noted that if the rail system is made more accessible then this will create new customers, and act as a monetary incentive for operators.
- 2.6 DPTAC highlighted the lack of a co-ordinated plan for accessibility improvements across the rail network, for example not all stations have heated waiting rooms. This has resulted in inconsistencies from station to station, and train to train. Keith Richards also noted that operators and regulators have set different objectives, this has led to further inconsistencies and confusion. Alice explained that the Review is exploring the concept of a 'guiding mind' which would collate the different aspects of the operators' objectives.
- 2.7 David Mapp identified two prime issues with the current structure of the rail industry's actions on accessibility: (1) a culture that doesn't invest in accessibility, (2) a franchise structure which reduces operators' ability to

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<sup>1</sup> *Access for All Benefits Research Final Report, August 2010 and Access for All Benefit Research Department for Transport Impacts of Station Accessibility Improvements Final Report July 2015*

invest. Alice agreed and noted that the government should focus more on accessibility in the franchise agreements.

- 2.8 DPTAC want accessibility embedded in the core of the Review's recommendations. Alice explained that the structure of the Review will have a section which addresses passenger needs, this should specify that all passengers have been considered.
- 2.9 David Mapp noted that a 'one size fits all' approach to rail doesn't work, as trains are used for both long-distance and commuter purposes. Commuter and long-distance operations are two different types of service and business model. It was recommended that this is considered in the Review.

### 3. Post-Rail Review Discussion – David Mapp

- 3.1 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] noted a key issue is ensuring accessibility enhancements are actually taken up by operators. This issue is less focussed on how to make a train or station accessible, and more on the issue of having operators carry out the enhancements.
- 3.2 DPTAC noted that they would like to see the evidence that the Review Team are using. Whilst the group welcomed Alice's approach, they still feel that evidence is vital.

### 4. Update on Steer's Report – [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

- 4.1 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] provided an update on Steer's report. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] has taken over as Accessibility Lead at the RDG. [REDACTED] has reviewed Steer's report, which has also been sent to TOCs to ensure the recommendations are feasible. The report will then be sent to Ministers and DPTAC.

### 5. Update on DPPP and DPRC – David Mapp

- 5.1 David Mapp provided an overview of ORR's consultation into DPPPs. DPTAC have responded the consultation on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2019. It's expected that ORR will publish the revised guidance in the second quarter of 2019. The next steps will be to understand how the ORR will monitor how operators will adopt the changes. **Action: Secretariat to invite ORR to next Rail WG meeting.**
- 5.2 David updated the group on the DPRC. Work on reviewing the card is ongoing, and is focused on discount levels (particularly those for companions/cares), eligibility criteria, and promotion of the card. The next phase of the review will be a fairly extensive programme of research being commissioned by the RDG.

### 6. RVAR Exemptions – Dave Partington

- 6.1 Dave Partington provided an update on RVAR exemptions and PRM-TSI dispensations. It was agreed that consideration of dispensation requests can be time consuming and, often, quite technical.
- 6.2 █████ explained that when an application doesn't meet the requirements, the DfT conduct further work with the operator, including site visits. DPTAC's views are a part of the consideration, but it is ultimately down to the SoS to agree or reject a dispensation.
- 6.3 It was noted that the 2020 deadline is quickly approaching, and DPTAC's time will need to be appropriately managed to accommodate a large number of requests.
- 6.4 DPTAC expressed concern over customers being made unaware of dispensations that have been agreed, and there was discussion around whether the operator(s) concerned should provide clear communication to the customers who will be using exempt rolling stock.

## 7. Workplan – David Mapp

- 7.1 David Mapp went through the Rail WG's workplan, and asked the group whether to add or remove any items. **Action: Secretariat to archive: 3.4 - Rail Ombudsman.**
- 7.2 It was questioned whether further work had commenced on journey disruption. **Action: █████ to ask RDG about ongoing work in this area.**
- 7.3 David Mapp suggested that the group should provide input into the smart ticketing, pay-as-you-go (PAYG) consultation. **Action: Matthew Smith to be the Rail WG's lead on this consultation.**
- 7.4 David Mapp noted that the review of DPPPs and RVAR exemptions will both result in heavy workloads for the group during 2019. In order to manage the work, and to ensure that it was shared as equitably as possible, he suggested splitting the group into two teams, with one team focussing on DPPPs and the other on RVAR/TSI exemptions/dispensations. This approach was agreed. **Action: David Mapp to send proposed work allocation plan to the group in order to manage workload.**
- 7.5 David Mapp initiated a discussion about the group's working methods. He suggested holding short teleconferences in-between the WG meetings, to be used primarily to brief WG members on ongoing work. It was highlighted that some members are unable to input into DPTAC work during standard working-hours. It was suggested that the teleconferences could be organised outside of working-time hours or during lunchtimes. The group agreed to the proposed approach. **Action: █████ █████ to arrange teleconferences in-between WG face to face meetings.**

## 8. Next Meeting – David Mapp

- 8.1 Next meeting will be May. A Doodle Poll will be sent out shortly.