



To the station

Insights from HS2 online panel



Task:

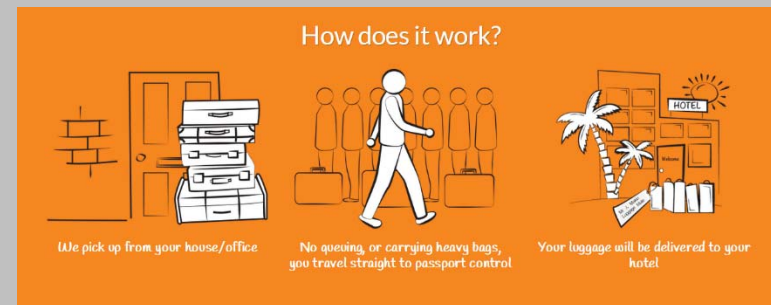
- The following two services give passengers the opportunity to send their luggage ahead to their end destination so it is available for them to collect when they arrive. If this service was available on HS2, how likely would you be to use it?
- Details of the services:

EUROSTAR



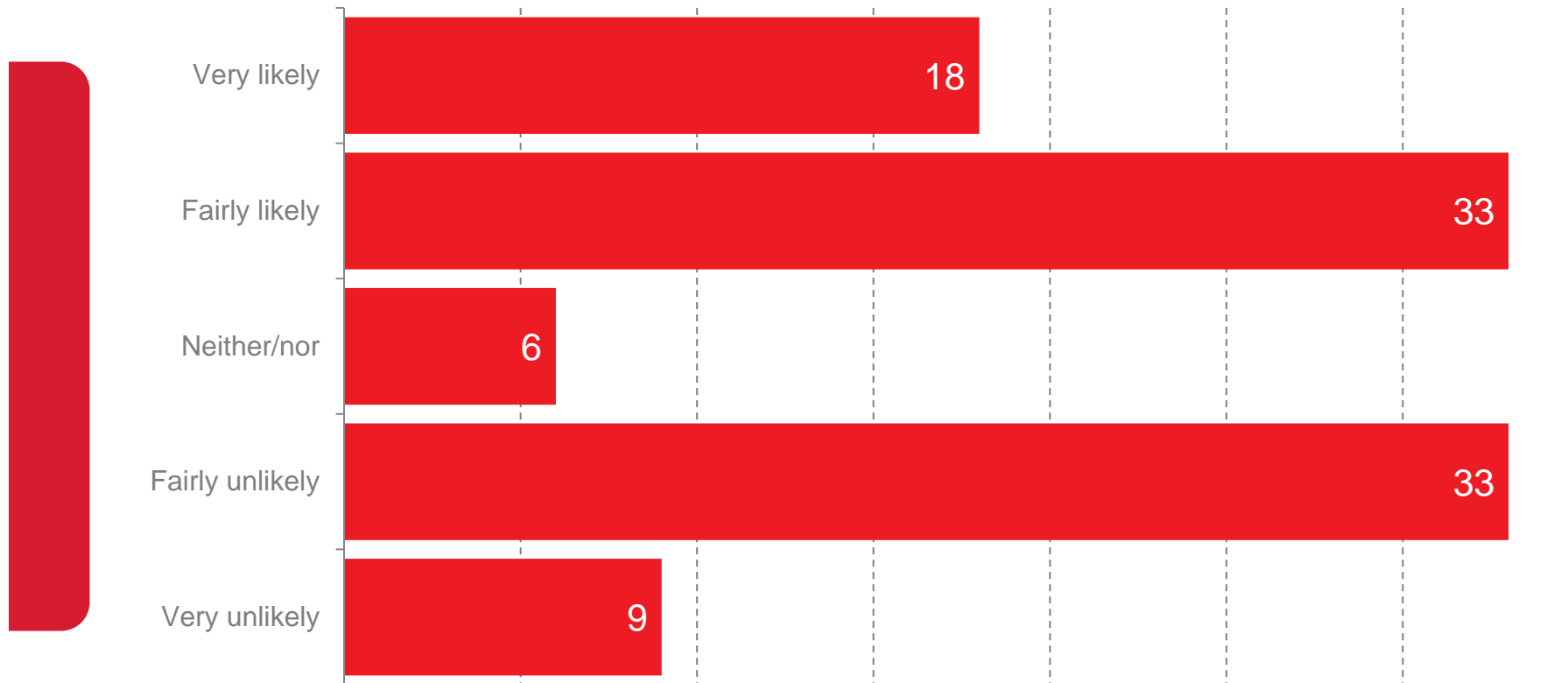
If you're travelling with extra, oversized or restricted luggage, you'll need to use our registered luggage service. We'll put your bags in a designated part of the train, so you'll know they're well taken care of and won't take up space in your coach.

LUGGAGE MULE



Task 14, posted 01/08/2014

Likelihood to use luggage delivery



- Following the results of the poll, those that answered very/fairly unlikely and those that answered very/fairly likely were placed in separate discussion forums and asked to explain their response.



Reasons against the service

Security

- Don't like to let luggage out of sight.
- Little trust that luggage would arrive.
- Informed by previous bad experiences when checking luggage in for flights.

*"I do not like to have my luggage out of sight. After two traumatic incidents when my luggage did not turn up on the airport carousel I like to keep my cases close. I would never trust any firm to transport my luggage in advance."
(Business, Birmingham, 51-60)*

Travel light

- Many passengers travel light and do not foresee a time when they would require a large suitcase when taking the train.

Advance packing

- Takes away the option for doing some last minute packing ahead of departure times.

*"I am usually packing up till the last minute so having my bag taken in advance may mean that something vital couldn't be stuffed in. Also having it taken from my home would just make me think it has more chance of getting lost."
(Leisure, Nottingham, 31-40)*

- **Cost** was not a major factor.
- Most would expect to pay.
- A free service would make no difference.

*"Using a separate luggage courier would ramp up the cost of the journey with no definite benefit. Even if the service were free, I would not be inclined to use it, regardless of luggage size."
(Leisure, Glasgow, 51-60)*

Reasons for the service

- Passengers with large bags or awkward sized items like sports equipment, bikes and pushchairs would be more likely to use a luggage delivery service. This is most true when travelling with family, long stays and for work trips.
- Passengers want the option to take a holdall sized bag on board the train.

Perceived benefits

- Easier boarding of HS2.
- More space as less room designated for luggage.
- More comfortable as luggage not next to or under feet.
- On last day of holiday, do not have to carry luggage all day.

"I would prefer to take a small carry-on bag with me (airline cabin sized) and use the luggage service for suitcases or large, awkward bags only - for instance, if I am travelling away for longer than a weekend." (Leisure, Nottingham, 41-50)



Two distinct services emerge

- Most saw two distinct luggage services that HS2 could offer passengers.

End to end luggage courier service

- High appeal amongst those initially interested.
- Zero appeal amongst those not interested.

“I would certainly use the Eurostar service for a suitcase as it is very much like an airline service (the cost may be included in the ticket) but the luggage mule service may be easier if I had many more cases or it was a longer trip.” (Leisure, Nottingham, 41-50)

Baggage drop at HS2 station

- Appeals to a larger audience.
- Universal appeal amongst those initially interested.
- Some appeal amongst those who initially dismissive.

“If I was dropping my luggage off at the station then I would hope it would be free or cheap, I would expect to pick my luggage up from the station at the other end too, once I got off the train. If it was getting picked up at home then I would expect to pay but I would also expect it to be delivered to my final destination” (Leisure, Nottingham, 41-50)

Expectations of service

End to end luggage courier service

- Prepared to pay a small fee for service dependent on size or weight of luggage and distance travelled.
- Collected from home or workplace at a time of choice.
- Maximum one hour slots.
- Can be collected up until day of travel.
- Arrives at end destination before you do.

Baggage drop at HS2 station

- A free service.
- Mandatory for all large suitcases to be checked in
- Available for 'pick-up' quickly after arrival into the station.
- Minimum waiting time.

Expectations and requirements

- Full real-time tracking online and via mobile apps.
- Automatic notifications of progress (collection, delivery, estimated times).
- Free 24 hour helpline.
- 100% guarantee that luggage will not be lost or late.
- Very generous compensation in the event of loss or lateness.

Task:

- Thinking about the entire journey that you go through when travelling on the train, what is the most stressful part of the process?
- Please think about all elements of the journey, including journey planning, at the station, on board the train, and arriving at your destination.

Task 18, posted 04/09/2014

Factors which impact travel experience

- There is a fine line between stress and annoyance. At the root of stress seems to be a fear of the unknown and of negative outcomes such as missing trains, physical discomfort, passenger disputes and wasting money.

Relaxing experience

- Plenty of time.
- Ticket is flexible.
- Know where to go or can find where to go easily.
- Comfortable environment for relaxation.
- No delays.
- Simple processes.
- Easy to find information.

Stressful experience

- Time pressure.
- Un-refundable ticket for specific train.
- Unfamiliar environment/ don't know where to go.
- Environment prevents relaxation.
- Delays.
- Complicated processes.
- Difficult to find information.

Stress points throughout the journey

Experiencing delays

- Not receiving information.
- Finding (crowded) alternatives.
- Delayed arrivals.

Onward travel

- Embarking.
- Finding station exit.
- Finding taxis and buses.

Buying tickets

- Planning route.
- Choosing tickets.
- Collecting tickets.

Making connections

- Finding and getting to onward platform.
- Moving luggage.

Getting to seat

- Navigating unfamiliar station.
- Last minute platform calls or changes.
- Boarding the (correct) train.
- Finding a seat.
- Finding luggage space.

Physical or mental discomfort can lead to stress throughout the journey.

Buying tickets

- Buying tickets is confusing and time-consuming. Stress caused is exacerbated by time constraints.



Planning route

- Finding a route, without multiple changes.
- Dealing with engineering works.
- Finding out if route is feasible (step-free access).



Choosing ticket

- Too many options, fear of choosing wrong one.
- Searching multiple websites to find cheapest ticket.
- Annoyance, even anger, at paying high prices.



Collecting tickets

- Forgetting correct payment card.
- Not having ticket reference (no mobile battery).
- Difficulty of entering reference codes.

*“It starts when you are searching for the train journey online and the ticket prices seem ludicrous or you are recommended a 12 hour journey with 4 changes on the National Rail journey planning website.”
(Business, Manchester, 18-30)*

*“Too many options of fares to select at the start of planning the journey. This must be made easier for the customer, fewer options but of comparable value for money.”
(Business, Nottingham, 61-70)*

“Another stressful bit is collecting my tickets as on a few occasions I’ve had my mobile phone battery go flat and had to use my other phone to retrieve my booking information, all the while the clock is ticking nearer and nearer to my train’s departure.”(Business, Leeds, 31-40)

Delays and cancellations

- Delays are one of the most stressful aspects of train travel due to increased journey time, missed connections, being late for commitments and having to use more crowded alternatives. Stress is aggravated by inaccurate information on the cause of the delay and resolution time. Passengers need reliable information to choose how to proceed.

"If [as passengers] we know the true situation we can work with it. Being kept in the dark does not help matters, worse is when information turns out to be incorrect. On more than one occasion the platform displays that a train is on schedule and then inexplicably it is cancelled with less than 5 minutes notice, can it really have suddenly changed status?" (Business, Birmingham, 51-60)



Departures		Plat	Expected
10:48	Crayford		Cancelled
10:54	Hayes (Kent) via		Cancelled
11:00	Slade Green		Cancelled
11:04	Plumstead		Cancelled
11:10	Dartford via Greenwich		Cancelled
11:14	Ashford Internl via		Cancelled
11:18	Crayford		Cancelled

*"I have experienced this on several occasions - just before Xmas when there was a terrible storm, nothing was going up to Scotland, no trains in and out of Leeds, we had to get a train to York that was chokka block."
(Business, London, 51-60)*

*"Mostly there is only generic announcements, i.e. "sorry that the 8:08 service is delayed"; but this does not inform us of further information to make informed decisions on how this can be rectified."
(Commuting, Nottingham, 18-30)*

*"Rarely do you get clear, concise information about the situation. Anything that is announced tends to be garbled. Not a great customer experience."
(Commuting, Birmingham, 31-40)*

Getting to the seat can be stressful



Navigating stations

- Finding platforms, lifts, toilets.



Platform announcements

- Last-minute platform calls and changes.



Congestion

- Crowded platform, at doors, in aisles.



Dealing with luggage

- Impedes quick movement.
- Finding storage space.
- Security worries if not in view.



Finding a seat

- Finding reserved or unreserved seats.
- Disputes over seats.



Boarding wrong train!

- Train destination not clearly marked.

Connections: most cited stress point

- Connections are a source of huge worry. It starts before the journey begins as passengers anticipate problems. Worries are about not having enough time, finding the platform, being slowed down by luggage and missing connections.
- Solutions: Mobile apps showing departure platform, uniform station design and electronic station maps on-board and in stations.

"There's the worry I might miss my train because of such a tight connection schedule or because of a delay. I'm not quite sure exactly how I'd stand, but I worry about having to pay more money for another ticket, to add to what is already a very expensive journey." (Leisure, Nottingham, 41-50)

"It would be good if all new HS2 stations were uniform in design or there was an electronic display showing a map of which platform you're coming into so you could navigate your way around easily." (Leisure, Nottingham, 31-40)



"Making the connections is the worst. The anticipatory stress can actually start as soon as you realise you have to make connections. (Business, Leeds, 61-70)

"Perhaps there should be an app to access departure platforms for your destination, the stress levels when your train is late and the connection time is down to a few minutes is awful." (Commuting, London, 61-70)

"My train is running late, the connection time is shortened, you just have no idea if you are going to make a connection, and if this is coupled with not knowing which platform you need to be on, it is worse." (Commuting, Birmingham, 31-40)

Discomfort prevents full relaxation



Physical discomfort

- Struggling with luggage.
- Lots of stairs.
- Lack of leg room.
- Air-con failure.
- Lack of (cheap) refreshments.



Invasion of personal space

- Overcrowding.
- Noisy groups.
- (children, sport fans, stag or hen parties).
- Over-friendly passengers.



Fear of conflict

- Aggressive or antisocial passengers.
- Fear of dealing with them.
- Fear of getting involved in violence.
- Seat disputes.

*“If I end up in a cramped position with no real space for luggage, I feel stressed. Getting from A to B is provided but the experience is not an enjoyable one and turns me back to driving.”
(Business, Birmingham, 51-60)*

“Even in public and crowded environments there is an acceptable area of personal space. Aggressive conversations, negative emotions and loud noise invade this space as does an ill placed bag, somebody standing too close, a smelly foot on the seat.” (Leisure, Leeds, 31-40)

“Some may be annoying as are just excited but some people are a constant problem by being very loud. That causes fellow passengers stress as you know if you say something to them, they will react adversely.” (Leisure, Leeds, 31-40)