

Assisted Passenger Reservation Service

Best practice guidelines – a check list



Passenger Focus has created the Assisted Passenger Reservation Service best practice guidelines using the advice and experience of passengers who have travelled on the National Rail network using the Assisted Passenger Reservation Service (APRS).

Passenger Focus will be working with train operators across Great Britain to make certain they make every effort to deliver APRS based on the best practice identified by passengers with disabilities.

1 Booking the journey

Passengers need:

- a freephone number to book assistance
- alternative online methods of booking their journeys
- National Rail Enquiries to give correct APRS contact details every time to book assistance
- staff who are fully trained and familiar with the National Rail network to take their APRS booking
- a person at the other end of the phone – passengers do not want to waste time waiting on an automated system
- to be asked what level of information they require. Experienced rail users don't want to hear the same explanation every time whereas new passengers will require comprehensive detail
- staff to take details of their

requirements and call them back if there are delays in making booking arrangements – passengers don't want to be held up on the phone while staff sort out system issues

- a central database to hold their details for future reference, including their name and contact details; type of disability and assistance required; details of any regular journeys made
- to be informed on the facilities, including staff assistance, available at the stations and on the trains they are using
- to be told if the station they want to use isn't accessible (temporarily or permanently) and whether this will mean they will be travelling by road
- a booking reference to simplify cancellations, changes of plan or complain, as well as for staff to check booking details quickly and simply

- written confirmation sent via their chosen delivery method (email, fax or post) subject to booking timings. This should include journey details, the APRS booking reference, specific details of the assistance and on-train accommodation booked, and an explanation of what to do on the day
- to be aware of what to do if the assistance is not delivered as expected.

2 Arriving at the station and boarding the train

Passengers need:

- to know if there will be staff on hand for assistance
- to be informed of where they will meet the staff who will assist them. There should be a clearly marked reporting point at each staffed station
- to know before they arrive





- ➔ at the station that staff are ready for their arrival and know their booking details
- to be told if there is a problem, its extent and be kept informed
 - their booked assistance to be delivered smoothly and problem free – they don't want staff (however kind and helpful) having to respond at the last minute and sort out problems because the booking has not been communicated
 - station and train staff to check with each individual what level of assistance they require
 - safety to be paramount. Ramps should be fit-for-purpose and installed correctly
 - help with luggage.

3 On the train

Passengers need:

- to be escorted to their seat or where this is not possible, advised on how to find their seat

- to be seated with their travelling companions
- on-train staff to identify themselves and ask if they can offer any immediate help
- to be told what facilities are available on the train
- refreshments brought to them if they are unable to reach onboard facilities
- help with luggage.

4 The end of the journey

Passengers need:

- assistance getting off the train as booked
- staff to escort them to a suitable exit at the station or to their connecting train
- advice on their onward journey

- such as details on taxi facilities, local bus stops or station meeting points
- contact from the company which booked the APRS to enable passengers to provide feedback
- to be reimbursed their fare if the APRS is not delivered in a satisfactory manner
- all aspects of the APRS to be regularly monitored and audited by the industry.

For further information on APRS and Passenger Focus's research findings visit www.passengerfocus.org.uk