



# HS2 Passenger panel

## September Task

18<sup>th</sup> October, 2016

# Discussion: Ticket Gates

HS2 are trying to get a balance between ensuring people pay for their journey, but at the same time, not creating unnecessary barriers within the station.

There are many approaches to fare checking, at some Oyster/contactless ticket stations in London there are no ticket gates at all. Passengers have to tap in and out during a journey and fines are given for failing to tap in or out through ticket inspections.

Technological advances in the future may also provide better solutions for checking and purchasing tickets.

Last week Chiltern Railway announced that it was testing a mobile payment system <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-37221573> which would calculate your train fare based on the journey that a passenger has just completed.

This month we'd like you to think about...

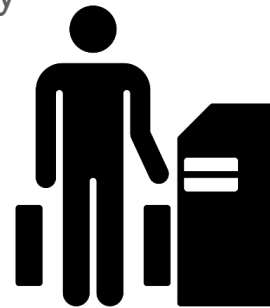
- What emotions do you feel when you approach a ticket gate?
- Do ticket gates make you feel anxious?
- How do ticket gates make you feel in regards to revenue protection elicits?
- Could HS2 remove ticket gates altogether and trust passengers to pay the correct fare?

Task 86, posted 09/09/2016

# Ticket gates are a pain point in any journey and result in passengers feeling stressed before the journey has begun

A number of problems occur at the ticket gates that lead passengers to fear this part of the journey. This usually revolves around;

- Being caught up in crowds
- Problems with tickets
- Manoeuvring through the barriers



*"The only emotion I feel when approaching a ticket gate is please don't eat my card as in the course of my life it has happened more times than I can remember"*  
(Leisure, London, 31-40)

Whilst there is an understanding that ticket gates are there to protect revenue, passengers would like other barrier options to be considered for HS2 in order to help alleviate these problems

*"I've missed trains plenty a time because I've spent 30 seconds looking at 6 identically-designed train tickets to find my outbound one"*  
(Business, London, 18-30)

At a minimum, passengers would prefer HS2 to operate a scan/tap system similar to Oyster rather than inserting a ticket (which is often where problems occur)

What emotions are being experienced at this part of the journey?

Annoyance  
Stress  
Anxiety  
Dread  
Embarrassment  
Nerve-racking  
Confusion  
Impatience  
Cross

*“Get anxious approaching ticket barriers in London mainly due to the fear of being crushed by bottle necks”  
(Commuter, London, 18-30)*



# Where does it all go wrong?

The panel identified multiple areas which causes these negative emotions

- Large crowds are felt to be dangerous
- Tickets being rejected
- Tickets being swallowed
- Difficulty passing through barriers (especially with luggage/children/mobility aids)
- Large queues can lead to passengers missing trains (There is both a fear of being delayed and of delaying others)
- Confusion over which piece of card is the ticket (not the reservation)
- People trying to squeeze through on someone else's ticket
- Wider wheelchair barriers are still extremely narrow
- Limited number of barriers compared to number of passengers

*"The only emotions I feel with railway ticket barriers (mainly in London when using the underground) are confusion and impatience, it's embarrassing when you have to seek help to work a simple machine, that's assuming the machine hasn't decided to have your ticket for lunch"*  
(Leisure, Manchester, 70+)

*"I have encountered people sneaking up close behind me when going through barriers in order to get through on my ticket/oyster and this really makes me cross!"*  
(Business, London, 51-60)

*"I feel a mixture of emotions when approaching a ticket gate. Annoyance because I am going to be slowed down especially if there is a bottleneck!"*  
(Leisure, London, 61-70)

Small area to pass through



# Passengers have to be organised and well prepared in order ease the stress of operating the gates

Many passengers talk about the level of preparation and organisation they do to ease the feeling of stress upon arrival at ticket gates

*“Emotionally I feel, oh no, another barrier, have I forgotten my ticket or Oyster card, do I have the right change (money), will the ticket machine work etc? These are very immediate emotions but I always think ahead and am planned”*  
(Business, Nottingham, 61-70)

*“As I always buy a ticket in advance I don't really feel any emotion when I approach”*  
(Leisure, London, 61-70)

*“I'm a great 'checker-in-advance' type of person, so I normally feel fine about arriving at the gate – I already know I've got my ticket, and am usually clutching it as I approach!”*  
(Leisure, Birmingham, 70+)



The current systems are not felt to be particularly customer friendly, and there is much room for improvement. Passengers do not want to search through tickets to find the correct one (among the multiple cards they are given) or have to monitor their balance so as not to get stopped at the last minute before boarding.

# Whilst there is much hostility towards ticket gates, not everyone is completely against them

Passengers worry about protecting revenue, particularly with the chance of increasing fares for them.

Passengers report to like their tickets being thoroughly checked given that they are paying increasingly more to take these journeys

*"I always have a sense of disappointment when there is a half hearted attempt to look at tickets".*  
(Business, Liverpool, 41-50)

*"I feel pretty good about ticket gates, it's a system that doesn't slow me down too much and it makes sense to have them"*  
(Commuter, Leeds, 18-30)

*"I think they are a necessary evil".*  
(Business, Birmingham, 51-60)

Some passengers however also worry that even the barriers do not protect revenue enough

- People squeezing through on someone else's ticket
- Barrier jumping
- Alternative exits

*"however they have many many flaws which still allow people to get on without paying a fare and better designed and more advanced system could not only prevent this, but at the same time speed up the whole process"*  
(Commuter, London, 18-30)

*"I think ticket barriers are ineffective with regards to revenue protection as there are often several unguarded exits to a platform".*  
(Commuter, Manchester, 18-30)

# Could ticket barriers be removed? Can passengers be trusted?

One option would be to remove ticket barriers all together and inspect tickets on board the train instead



**Not having the stress of barriers at the station**

VS.

**Disturbing passengers during the journey**

Many passengers were concerned that removing barriers would open the doors to people abusing a trust-based system, which would inevitably increase costs for honest passengers. However there are both pros and cons to removing ticket barriers;

**Pro**

- People can help elderly passengers onto the train
- Inspections on trains allow passengers to interact with staff and ask questions

*"This is a problem with elderly relatives who may need help carrying bags. Train-spotters and railway photography enthusiasts are also unable to get onto the platforms unless they have valid tickets"*  
(Business, Birmingham, 31-40)

*"He checked tickets, answered questions, was polite and cheerful, and effortlessly dealt with a couple of minor issues (loud talking on a mobile) as he went along the carriage. I wanted to take his name and recommend him to the train company as a staff trainer!"*  
(Business, Leeds, 41-50)

**Con**

- Non-passengers can use passenger facilities on the platform
- May encourage more people to skip paying fares

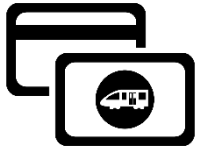
*"Essentially no pay no entry. Avoids having to check tickets enroute and concentrate on board staff for other matters"*  
(Commuter, Birmingham, 31-40)

*"Trusting passengers is a big mistake on so many levels, better to make things straight forward and fool proof."*  
(Leisure, London, 41-50)



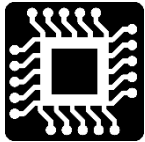
# Multiple solutions were discussed among the panel

- Random ticket inspections – fear of being caught



*“In our discussions about "smart-ticketing" we have touched upon being identified by our ticket and "known" to the smart station/train - I believe that this concept could eliminate the need for barriers and also limit fare evasion by identifying people who are not in possession of the correct "ticket". So it is not a case of people being trusted not to do something more, the fact that people will know that they cannot do something without the certainty of detection and sanction”*  
(Business, Birmingham, 51-60)

- Electronic tags



*“ A barrier that doesn't feel like a barrier would be the ideal for me. Maybe something like the electronic tag recognition units in retail outfits - the doorway is still normal size but a horrid noise sounds if you take goods out with the tag on”*  
(Business, London, 51-60)

- Sensors on the seats



*“ Given that all actual seats on HS2 trains must be booked, perhaps there could be a means of flashing the barcode at some kind of receiver above the seat itself. Here's to finding lots of innovative ways to avoid ticket gates!”*  
(Leisure, Birmingham, 70+)

# Multiple solutions were discussed among the panel

- Oyster style barriers



*“ Another system I use is the one at the Etihad stadium, when entering the ground (see pics), just present your ticket ( it can be a plastic season card, paper ticket, or printed at home ticket ), there is a different coloured light activated to show what kind of ticket it is, e.g. my son could not use my concession season card, as it activates a red light and his activates a blue”  
(Leisure, Manchester, 70+)*



- Travel pass



*“ Passenger Transport reports that the way the new system works is that the passenger carries around a small device (the "MultiPass"). When you pass through a station the pass will detect wireless beacons transmitting a signal, essentially identifying which station you're at. Then once a day, the pass will connect to your phone via bluetooth, upload all of the data and charge you the lowest possible fare for the journeys that you have made that day.”  
(Commuter, London, 41-50)*

<http://www.passengertransport.co.uk/2015/09/best-thing-since-magstripe-tickets/>

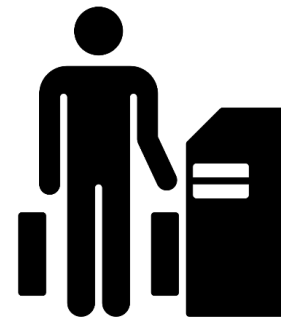
Regardless of how this is managed by HS2, they must be clear on how passengers use ticket gates given that there are so many different methods currently being adopted

# Ticket barriers are a pain point, but there are ways to reduce the negative impact of these

Passengers understand that having barriers work towards keeping ticket prices down for the honest passenger, but things must be done to reduce the stress they currently cause.

Whilst the potential solutions were not seen to be flawless, the most popular ones were;

- Increasing the number of gates
- Having contactless entry
- Ticket checks at the platform/seat
- Ticket inspections on board



*“ I would definitely think HS2 could get rid of barriers, I believe there is the technology available to register customers on and off the train and allow them to pay the fair, on board ticket inspections are much less intrusive in my opinion and I would be in favour of these over barriers”  
(Commuter, Manchester, 18-30)*

What ever is decided for HS2, it must be clear, intuitive and customer friendly