Declan Collier  
Chair  
Office of Rail and Road  
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WC2B 4AN

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Dear Declan

Assistance for wheelchair users by train staff

Firstly, I would like to congratulate you on the confirmation of your appointment as the new Chair of the ORR. I wish you well in your new role.

I am writing about changes by train operators to staffing on trains and the implications this has for disabled passengers, and particularly wheelchair users, and their right to assistance at railway stations.

We have heard concerns that some train operators have made the second member of staff on trains non-essential, meaning that trains can run without them being aboard. This means that passengers who rely on train staff to board or disembark trains will lose the ability to turn up and board trains at stations where they have previously been able to do so. In light of these concerns, I would be grateful if you could:

1. Clarify current legal requirements for TOCs to provide a ‘turn up and go’ service, and how this should be supported by on-train and station staffing.

2. Whether the TOCs have conducted equality impact assessments of changes to on train staffing and, if so, whether the ORR has reviewed these.

3. What assessment the ORR has made of changes by train operators to staffing on trains and how this has affected the service provided to disabled passengers, and whether any reduction in services has resulted in train operators ceasing to be in compliance with their disabled people’s protection policies (DPPPs).

If you have not looked at this to date, I would ask that you consider looking at this issue and report back to us on your findings.

Lilian Greenwood MP  
Chair of the Transport Committee