
STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2023 No. 715

PUBLIC PASSENGER TRANSPORT

The Public Service Vehicles (Accessible Information) Regulations 2023

Made - - - - 27th June 2023

Coming into force - - 1st October 2023

The Secretary of State, in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 181A and 181B of the Equality Act 2010(1), makes the following Regulations.

A draft of these Regulations has been approved by a resolution of each House of Parliament in accordance with section 208(4) and (5)(fa) of the Equality Act 2010.

The Secretary of State has consulted the Welsh Ministers and the Scottish Ministers, in accordance with sections 181A(6) and 181B(8) of the Equality Act 2010, before making these Regulations.

Citation, commencement and extent

1.—(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Public Service Vehicles (Accessible Information) Regulations 2023 and come into force on 1st October 2023.

2. These Regulations extend to England and Wales, and Scotland.

Interpretation

3. In these Regulations—

- (a) “alert” means a sound intended to draw the attention of passengers to the information following it;
- (b) “community bus service” has the meaning given in section 22(1) of the Transport Act 1985(2);
- (c) “franchising scheme” has the meaning given in section 123A of the Transport Act 2000(3);
- (d) “local service” has the meaning given in section 2 of the Transport Act 1985;

(1) 2010 c. 15. Sections 181A and 181B were inserted by section 17 of the Bus Services Act 2017 (c. 21).

(2) 1985 c. 67. Section 22(1) was amended by the Local Transport Act 2008 (c. 26), section 59(1), S.I. 2013/1644 and S.I. 2019/572.

(3) 2000 c. 38. Section 123A was inserted by section 4 of the Bus Services Act 2017 (c. 21).

- (e) “London local service” has the meaning given in section 179(1) of the Greater London Authority Act 1999⁽⁴⁾;
- (f) “London local service agreement” has the meaning given in section 182(1) of the Greater London Authority Act 1999;
- (g) “London service permit” means the permit referred to in section 185(1) of the Greater London Authority Act 1999;
- (h) “operator” has the meaning given by section 81 of the Public Passenger Vehicles Act 1981⁽⁵⁾;
- (i) “passengers” means persons travelling on the relevant local service;
- (j) “priority seat” has the meaning given by paragraph 1 of Schedule 2 to the Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations 2000⁽⁶⁾;
- (k) “prospective passengers” means persons wishing to travel on the relevant local service;
- (l) “relevant information” means information required to be provided to passengers pursuant to regulations 7 to 11 of these Regulations;
- (m) “relevant local service” means a local service to which these Regulations apply in accordance with regulation 4.
- (n) “scheduled route” means—
 - (i) in respect of local services other than London local services, a route registered with a traffic commissioner or specified in a franchising scheme;
 - (ii) in respect of London local services, a route specified in a London service permit or in a London local service agreement;
- (o) “scheduled stopping place” means a place designated in advance by the operator of the service as a prospective stopping place;
- (p) “stopping place” means a place at which prospective passengers are taken up or passengers are set down;
- (q) “traffic commissioner” has the meaning given in section 4 of the Public Passenger Vehicles Act 1981⁽⁷⁾; and
- (r) “wheelchair space” means a space in a vehicle designed to accommodate one or more wheelchairs.

Application

4.—(1) Subject to the remainder of this regulation, these Regulations apply in respect of local services.

(2) These Regulations do not apply in respect of—

- (a) a small bus used to provide local services;
- (b) a vehicle which was first used to provide local services before 1 January 1973;
- (c) an excursion or tour;
- (d) a closed door home to school service;
- (e) a long distance service;

⁽⁴⁾ 1999 c. 29.

⁽⁵⁾ 1981 c. 14. Section 81(2) was repealed by the Transport Act 1985, section 139(3) and Schedule 8.

⁽⁶⁾ S.I. 2000/1970. There are amendments to Schedule 2, but none is relevant.

⁽⁷⁾ Section 4 was amended by the Local Transport Act 2008 (c. 26), section 2, and the Public Service Pensions and Judicial Offices Act 2022 (c. 7), Schedule 1, paragraph 17.

- (f) any part of a local service where the service is operating as a demand responsive transport service;
 - (g) a community bus service other than where such service is provided using a vehicle which is first used to provide such a service on or after 1st October 2023.
- (3) These regulations apply from the dates specified in regulation 5.
- (4) In this regulation—
- (a) “closed door home to school service” means a service which is for the carriage of eligible passengers to and from an educational establishment and which can only be used by eligible passengers;
 - (b) “demand responsive transport service” means a service, or part of service, where the route is not fixed but instead is determined on a case by case basis with reference to requests from passengers or prospective passengers;
 - (c) “educational establishment” means an institution for providing primary education, secondary education or further education, where “primary education”, “secondary education” and “further education” have the meanings given to them in section 2 of the Education Act 1996⁽⁸⁾;
 - (d) “eligible passengers” means a person who is travelling to or from an educational establishment for the purposes of—
 - (i) receiving education or training at the educational establishment;
 - (ii) supervising or escorting a person who is receiving education or training at the educational establishment;
 - (iii) providing education or training at the educational establishment;
 - (e) “excursion or tour” has the meaning given in section 137(1) of the Transport Act 1985⁽⁹⁾;
 - (f) “long distance service” means a service—
 - (i) consisting of one or more local parts and one or more non-local parts; and
 - (ii) with respect to which the distance covered by the non-local parts is more than half of the total distance; and
 - (g) “small bus” means a vehicle which is adapted to carry less than seventeen passengers.
- (5) For the purposes of paragraph 4(f) of this regulation—
- (a) “local part” means a part of a service which is not a non-local part;
 - (b) “non-local part” means a part of a service with respect to which, except in an emergency, one or both of the conditions in section 2(2) of the Transport Act 1985 are met with respect to every passenger using the service;
 - (c) the distance covered by the non-local parts is calculated by adding together the distance covered by all of the non-local parts forming part of the service, such distance for each non-local part to be measured in a straight line from the start of the route for that non-local part to the end of the route for that non-local part;
 - (d) the total distance is the total of the distances covered by the local parts and the non-local parts; and
 - (e) the distance covered by the local parts is calculated by adding together the distance covered by all of the local parts forming part of the service, such distance for each local part to be measured using the scheduled route of that local part.

(8) 1996 c. 56. Section 2(1) was substituted by the Education Act 2002 (c. 32), section 156, and section 2 was amended by the Learning and Skills Act 2000 (c. 21), section 110(1) and by the Education Act 2002, section 177(1) to (3), Schedule 7, paragraph 6(2), Schedule 21, paragraph 33 and Schedule 22, part 3.

(9) There are amendments to section 137(1), but none is relevant.

Time of application

- 5.—(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3)—
- (a) in relation to a vehicle first used to provide local services on or after 1st October 2019, these Regulations apply from 1st October 2024;
 - (b) in relation to a vehicle first used to provide local services on or after 1st October 2014 and on or before 30th September 2019, these Regulations apply from 1st October 2025;
 - (c) in relation to a vehicle first used to provide local services on or after 1st January 1973 and on or before 30th September 2014, these Regulations apply from 1st October 2026.
- (2) In relation to an applicable community bus service, these Regulations apply from 1st October 2024.
- (3) In relation to a partially compliant vehicle—
- (a) these Regulations, other than regulations 8(2), 10, 11, 13 and 14, apply from 1st October 2023 and regulation 6 shall be construed accordingly;
 - (b) these Regulations apply in their entirety from 1st October 2031.
- (4) In this regulation—
- (a) “applicable community bus service” means a community bus service to which these Regulations apply by virtue of regulation 4(2)(g);
 - (b) “partially compliant vehicle” means, subject to paragraph (5), a vehicle on which, immediately before 1st October 2023, persons travelling on the vehicle are being provided with information in accordance with regulations 7, 8(1) and 9, in both audio and visual form, provided that—
 - (i) the information which is provided in audio form is, when measured from at least 51% of the passenger seats on the vehicle, or, where the vehicle has more than one passenger deck, from at least 51% of the passenger seats on each passenger deck of the vehicle—
 - (aa) at least 3 decibels louder than the pre-measured ambient volume or, where the vehicle has adaptive volume control, at least 3 decibels louder than the live-measured ambient volume;
 - (bb) notwithstanding paragraph (4)(b)(i)(aa), no louder than 84 decibels;
 - (ii) in circumstances where there are no standing passengers on the vehicle, there is an uninterrupted line of sight between at least one display of the visual information and at least 51% of the passenger seats on the vehicle or, where the vehicle has more than one passenger deck, between at least one display of the visual information and at least 51% of the passenger seats on each passenger deck of the vehicle; and
 - (c) “adaptive volume control”, “live-measured ambient volume” and “pre-measured ambient volume” have the meanings given in regulation 13.
- (5) If a vehicle which is a partially compliant vehicle ceases to meet one or more of the requirements in paragraph (4)(b) on or after 1st October 2023 then, with effect from the first date of such cessation, these Regulations shall apply to the vehicle on the basis that it is not a partially compliant vehicle.

Requirement to provide information

- 6.—(1) An operator of a relevant local service must ensure that passengers are provided with information in accordance with regulations 7 to 11.
- (2) An operator of a relevant local service must ensure that relevant information is provided in a manner which complies with regulations 12 to 14.

Route information

- 7.—(1) Passengers must be given the following information—
- (a) the name, number or other label used to designate the route of the relevant local service on which they are travelling; and
 - (b) at least one of—
 - (i) the name of the final scheduled stopping place for that relevant local service; or
 - (ii) the direction of travel.
- (2) The information referred to in paragraph (1) must be provided—
- (a) at each stopping place on the route;
 - (b) beginning at a time when the doors are open at that stopping place.
- (3) The provision of the information referred to in paragraph (1) need not be completed prior to the relevant local service departing the stopping place.

Route termination information

- 8.—(1) Passengers must be informed when a relevant local service reaches the final stopping place on its route.
- (2) The information referred to in paragraph (1) must be immediately preceded by an alert.

Stopping place information

- 9.—(1) Passengers must be informed of the next scheduled stopping place on the route for the relevant local service on which they are travelling.
- (2) The information referred to in paragraph (1) must be provided—
- (a) after the scheduled stopping place that precedes the scheduled stopping place referred to in paragraph (1);
 - (b) in sufficient time before reaching the scheduled stopping place referred to in paragraph (1) to enable passengers to leave the vehicle at that scheduled stopping place.

Diversion information

- 10.—(1) Passengers must be informed where a relevant local service is being diverted or will be diverted from its scheduled route with the result that the service will be unable to stop at one or more scheduled stopping places on the scheduled route.
- (2) The information referred to in paragraph (1) must—
- (a) be provided—
 - (i) where the driver of the vehicle knows about the diversion before reaching the last scheduled stopping place prior to the start of the diversion, in sufficient time before reaching that scheduled stopping place to enable passengers to leave the vehicle at that scheduled stopping place;
 - (ii) where the driver of the vehicle does not know about the diversion before reaching the last scheduled stopping place prior to the start of the diversion, at or as soon as possible after the commencement of the diversion; and
 - (b) be immediately preceded by an alert.

Information about hail and ride services

11.—(1) Where a hail and ride service is preceded by one or more scheduled stopping places, passengers must be informed that a hail and ride service will be commencing.

(2) The information referred to in paragraph (1)—

(a) must be provided at the last scheduled stopping place prior to the commencement of the hail and ride service; and

(b) must be immediately preceded by an alert.

(3) Where a hail and ride service is not preceded by one or more scheduled stopping places, passengers must be informed at the start of the route that the service is operating as a hail and ride service.

(4) Where a hail and ride service is followed by one or more scheduled stopping places, passengers must be informed that the hail and ride service will be ending.

(5) The information referred to in paragraph (4)—

(a) must be provided—

(i) before the end of the hail and ride service, and

(ii) in sufficient time before reaching the first scheduled stopping place following the end of the hail and ride service to enable passengers to leave the vehicle at that scheduled stopping place; and

(b) must be immediately preceded by an alert.

(6) In this regulation, “hail and ride service” means a relevant local service, or part of a relevant local service, where the route is determined in advance by the operator of the relevant local service but where the stopping places are not fixed by the operator but are instead determined on a case by case basis with reference to requests from passengers to leave the vehicle or to requests from prospective passengers to travel on the vehicle.

General requirements regarding information provision

12.—(1) Where an operator is providing relevant information, it must—

(a) provide the information in audio and visual form; and

(b) ensure that the two forms of information referred to in sub-paragraph (a) are consistent with one another.

(2) An operator of a relevant local service must not require passengers to use a personal electronic device in order to receive relevant information.

Requirements regarding audio information

13.—(1) This regulation applies to relevant information which is provided in audio form.

(2) Where a vehicle does not have adaptive volume control—

(a) the operator to whom these Regulations apply in relation to the vehicle must ensure that the pre-measured ambient volume on that vehicle is measured; and

(b) relevant information must, when measured at any passenger seat or wheelchair space in the vehicle, be—

(i) at least 3 decibels louder than the pre-measured ambient volume;

(ii) notwithstanding paragraph (2)(b)(i), no louder than 84 decibels.

(3) Where a vehicle has adaptive volume control—

- (a) the operator to whom these Regulations apply in relation to the vehicle must ensure that the live-measured ambient volume on that vehicle is measured; and
- (b) relevant information must, when measured at any passenger seat on, or wheelchair space in, the vehicle, be—
 - (i) at least 3 decibels louder than the live-measured ambient volume;
 - (ii) notwithstanding paragraph (3)(b)(i), no louder than 84 decibels.
- (4) Relevant information must be provided within the frequency range of 300Hz – 3000Hz.
- (5) Relevant information must be capable of being heard by a hearing impaired person if that person is sitting in a priority seat or a wheelchair space and using their hearing aid.
- (6) In this regulation—
 - (a) “adaptive volume control” means a facility to automatically vary the volume of audio information based on live ambient volume levels;
 - (b) “audio induction loop” means an audio frequency induction loop hearing system which can be accessed using a working telecoil hearing aid;
 - (c) “hearing impaired person” means a person who is unable to hear relevant information in audio form unless they are using a working hearing aid in conjunction with an audio induction loop;
 - (d) “live-measured ambient volume” means the average volume of ambient sound determined in accordance with paragraph (7) below.
 - (e) “pre-measured ambient volume” means the average volume of ambient sound determined in accordance with paragraph (8) below.
- (7) For the purposes of the definition of live-measured ambient volume, the average volume of ambient sound in a vehicle—
 - (a) must be measured each time relevant information is being provided in audio form; and
 - (b) is the average of measurements taken at that time at the front and rear of the passenger saloon of the vehicle or, where the vehicle has more than one passenger deck, taken at the front and rear of the passenger saloon on each passenger deck of the vehicle.
- (8) For the purposes of the definition of pre-measured ambient volume, the average volume of ambient sound in a vehicle—
 - (a) must be measured—
 - (i) prior to the vehicle being first used to provide relevant local services after the date when these Regulations apply in relation to that vehicle; and
 - (ii) when the vehicle is empty of passengers and travelling on a route operated by the operator to which these Regulations apply in respect of the vehicle; and
 - (b) is the average of measurements taken, in circumstances where the requirements of sub-paragraph (a) are met—
 - (i) at the front and rear of the passenger saloon of the vehicle or, where the vehicle has more than one passenger deck, taken at the front and rear of the passenger saloon on each passenger deck of the vehicle; and
 - (ii) when the vehicle is travelling at 5 mph and when it is travelling at 20 mph.

Requirements regarding visual information

- 14.—(1) This regulation applies to relevant information which is provided in visual form.
- (2) Disregarding any standing passengers on the vehicle, there must be an uninterrupted line of sight between at least one display of the relevant information and—

- (a) at least 51% of the passenger seats on the vehicle or, where the vehicle has more than one passenger deck, at least 51% of the passenger seats on each passenger deck of the vehicle; and
 - (b) each priority seat.
- (3) Disregarding any standing passengers on the vehicle, there must be an uninterrupted line of sight between at least one display of the relevant information and—
- (a) in respect of a vehicle which is first used to provide local services before 1st October 2024, each forward-facing wheelchair space on the vehicle; or
 - (b) in respect of a vehicle which is first used to provide local services on or after 1st October 2024, each wheelchair space on the vehicle.
- (4) The character height of text comprising relevant information must be at least 22 millimetres.
- (5) Relevant information—
- (a) must not display any word in capital letters only; and
 - (b) must provide a contrast between the text and the background.

Review

- 15.**—(1) The Secretary of State must from time to time—
- (a) carry out a review of the regulatory provision contained in these Regulations, and
 - (b) publish a report setting out the conclusions of the review.
- (2) The report must be published before the end of the period of five years beginning with the date on which these Regulations come into force.
- (3) Subsequent reports must be published at intervals not exceeding 5 years.
- (4) In this regulation, “regulatory provision” has the meaning given in sections 28 to 32 of the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015⁽¹⁰⁾ (see section 32 of that Act).

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State for Transport

Richard Holden
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Department for Transport

27th June 2023

⁽¹⁰⁾ 2015 c. 26. Section 28 was amended by the Advanced Research and Invention Agency Act 2022 (c. 4), Schedule 3, paragraph 11. Section 30 was amended by the Enterprise Act 2016 (c. 12), section 19, and by the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 (c. 16), Schedule 8, paragraph 36.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations require operators of most local bus and coach services to provide information to passengers about their journeys while they are on the vehicle. Although the Regulations come into force on 1st October 2023, they are subject to a phased introduction so that older vehicles are given longer to comply with the Regulations than newer ones.

The information which must be provided to passengers is set out in regulations 7 to 11. In broad terms the information which must be provided is as follows:

- information to identify the route and direction of travel (regulation 7);
- information that the vehicle has reached its final stopping place (regulation 8);
- information about stopping places on the route (regulation 9);
- where a vehicle is on diversion, information about this (regulation 10); and
- where a vehicle is being used on a hail and ride route, information to this effect (regulation 11).

Regulations 12 to 14 specify how information should be provided.

Regulation 12 requires information to be provided in audio and visual form. Regulation 13 sets out the requirements that apply to audio information (for example, how loud it should be). Regulation 14 sets out the requirements that apply to visual information (for example, the height of the text that should be used).

Regulation 15 requires the Secretary of State to review these Regulations at least once every five years.

A full impact assessment has not been produced for this instrument as no, or no significant, impact on the private, voluntary or public sector is foreseen. A de minimis impact assessment is available from the Department for Transport, 33 Horseferry Road, London, SW1P 4DR and is published with the Explanatory Memorandum alongside this instrument at www.legislation.gov.uk.