RDG and Network Rail Guidance Note: Meeting the Needs of Passengers Stranded on Trains

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Issue 6 – December 2024
Effective from 31 March 2025

Picture courtesy of Richard Davies

About this document

Explanatory note

The Rail Delivery Group is not a regulatory body and compliance with Guidance Notes or Approved Codes of Practice is not mandatory; they reflect good practice and are advisory only. Users are recommended to evaluate the guidance against their own arrangements in a structured and systematic way, noting that parts of the guidance may not be appropriate to their operations. It is recommended that this process of evaluation and any subsequent decision to adopt (or not adopt) elements of the guidance should be documented. Compliance with any or all of the contents herein, is entirely at an organisation's own discretion.

Other Guidance Notes or Approved Codes of Practice are available on the Rail Delivery Group website.

This Guidance Note has been developed jointly by Rail Delivery Group and Network Rail.

Effective date

This document was issued in December 2024 and is dated as such. However, to give recipients time to familiarise themselves with its content and update their processes and procedures accordingly, the date on which it becomes effective is 31 March 2025.

Executive summary

This document provides guidance on the planning and implementing of arrangements to meet the needs of passengers who become stranded on trains (for whatever reason), noting that these need to be agreed jointly between infrastructure managers and transport undertakings.

Issue record

Issues 1 and 2 were published as: ATOC/NR GPG SP01 and issues 3 and 4 as RDG-NR-GN-SP01.

Issue	Date	Comments
1	December 2011	First issue to TOCs.
2	February 2012	Re-issued with amendments following Network Rail review.
3	June 2014	Re-issued (as a Guidance Note rather than Good Practice Guide) following general view. Appendix D added.
4	June 2019	Periodic review. Document re-titled from 'Meeting the Needs of Passengers when Trains are Stranded' to 'Meeting the Needs of Passengers Stranded on Trains'.
5	November 2020	Updated following the 'Stranded Passengers/trains' review to simplify the content and make the document more accessible.
6	December 2024	Following periodic review and incorporating learning/recommendations from ORR/Transport Focus research

This document is reviewed on a regular 3-year cycle or earlier if required.

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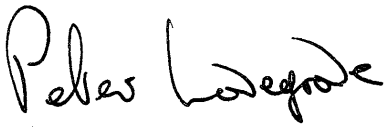

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Overview of document

This Guidance Note is structured as shown below. Sections 1 to 4 provide the context, background and definitions, Sections 5 to 7 focus on what can be done in advance of a passengers stranded on train event to lessen its likelihood, severity and impact and Sections 8 to 13 cover the period from when such an event has first been identified through until all affected passengers have ceased to be 'stranded'. Section 14 draws attention to the Passengers Stranded on Trains Response Assessment Tool while Section 15 lists other sources of information and advice.

- Section 1 – Context: Sets out the background to and details of the independent research jointly commissioned by the ORR and Transport Focus in 2023 under the title '*Meeting the needs of passengers when trains become stranded: How well is the rail industry doing?*'. The findings and recommendations from this research have been key inputs to the updating of this Guidance Note.
- Section 2 – Introduction, purpose and scope: Explains the 3-tiered approach to the management of passengers stranded on trains. Explicitly acknowledges that a one-size-fits-all approach is not appropriate given the differing characteristics of the various routes, train operators and passengers. Also provides the first reference to the recommendation that Passengers Stranded on Trains protocols be developed.
- Section 3 – Summary of key principles and priorities: Effectively an Executive Summary, this section highlights the key principles and priorities that apply to the management of passengers stranded on trains incidents. Cross-references are provided to the sections where further details on each can be found.
- Section 4 – Definitions.
- Section 5 – Prevention, planning and mitigation: Sets out what can be done in advance of an incident in terms of preparation - how such events be reduced in number, what events should be planned for and how their impact on passengers who become stranded can be mitigated when they do occur. Includes putting in place Passengers Stranded on Trains protocols, use of scenarios to develop/test plans, emergency supplies and documenting characteristics/compatibility of rolling stock and access points.
- Section 6 – Key roles and responsibilities: Includes the Stranded Trains Champion and Stranded Passengers Champion roles which are commended as a means of ensuring that a balance is maintained between operational and passenger considerations and that 'Think Passenger' remains to the fore.
- Section 7 – Staff training, competence, exercising and rehearsing: Exercising as a means of testing, validating and providing assurance that plans are fit for purpose, rehearsals as a means of ensuring staff are familiar with what is expected of them and are confident that they can provide it.
- Section 8 – Initial response to a passengers stranded on trains event: Identifying that an event has occurred/is occurring, use of METHANE mnemonic to provide a consistent overview, activating the protocol and engagement of the emergency services.
- Section 9 – Command and Control.
- Section 10 – Situational awareness, risk assessment and decision making: These are closely interlinked and hence considered together. Sets out what response options are available, who owns the risk assessment, who contributes to it and what factors need to be considered, including avoiding uncontrolled (i.e. self) evacuation by passengers. The key decision of whether or not to progress evacuation as an option. The need to develop multiple response options in parallel to provide resilience and the need to record significant decisions. The timeline for responding (15-30-60-90).
- Section 11 – Supporting passengers stranded on trains: Meeting basic welfare needs, provision of information and identifying and responding to passengers with additional support needs.
- Section 12 – Evacuation – developing and implementing the tactical plan: The various forms of evacuation that may be available, the pre-conditions for a controlled evacuation and management of passenger luggage.
- Section 13 – Stranded passengers once evacuated/rescued: Maintaining support for passengers until they cease to qualify as 'stranded' (in most cases this will be when onward journeys have been completed). Compensation/refunds and being proactive in providing this information to passengers. Formal investigations and post incident review and learning.
- Section 14 – The Passengers Stranded on Trains Response Assessment Tool (PSoTRAT) developed by RDG and intended to provide assurance to the organisation completing it and to the wider industry that this Guidance Note is being followed in principle and in practice.
- Section 15 – Other sources of information and advice.
- Appendix A – Timeline framework from when it is identified that a train is stranded.

1 Context

1.1 Context

Being stranded on a train is at best a frustrating experience for passengers. For a number, it will be particularly stressful as a result of their personal circumstances. Hot weather/bright sunshine can quickly result in the on-board environment on trains with failed air conditioning becoming unsafe while self-evacuation subjects those undertaking it to additional and uncontrolled risks. The rail industry therefore needs to work together when such events occur to prioritise supporting passengers until they have completed their journeys and ensure that the focus remains on them rather than the train itself.

Historically, there have been a number of high prolife incidents in which the needs of passengers stranded on trains have not been adequately met by the industry, causing them frustration, stress and distress and potentially exposing them to health, safety and security related risks. These events also tend to attract media attention with consequent damage to the industry's reputation. Learning from them has been reflected in the content of previous versions of this Guidance Note.

Instances of passengers being stranded on trains for extended periods and in challenging conditions continue to occur and concern that passenger safety and welfare were being compromised prompted the ORR and Transport Focus in 2023 to jointly commission independent research which sought '*to understand how well the industry is doing to embed and put into practice the intent* [of Version 5] *of this Guidance and to what extent it is meeting the needs of passengers when trains become stranded'.* The research drew on four case studies of passengers stranded on trains incidents in December 2023[1] and the resulting report '*Meeting the needs of passengers when trains become stranded: How well is the rail industry doing?*' was published in August 2024. This, and the accompanying summary report and recommendations '*Improving the passenger experience when trains become 'stranded''* are commended as recommended reading for anyone involved in the planning or implementation of Passengers Stranded on Trains protocols. Both are available from https://www.transportfocus.org.uk/publication/improving-the-passenger-experience-when-trains-become-stranded/. Unless otherwise indicated, references to 'the research' in this Guidance Note refer specifically to this ORR/Transport Focus commissioned research.

The research found this Guidance Note [Version 5] to be broadly fit for purpose but did identify four areas in particular where the content needed to be strengthened or expanded. These are summarised below and have been taken into account in the drafting of this Version:

i) Procedures tend to be written in the context of a single train that has become stranded and may not be adequate to meet the needs of passengers involved in incidents involving several trains.

ii) Too little priority is given to ensuring smooth onward journeys once passengers are off the stranded train – both in terms of documented procedures and delivery on the ground. A particular area of weakness concerns lack of information to passengers about onward travel arrangements.

iii) A key finding was that having a plan in place within 60 minutes (as recommended in previous issues of this Guidance Note) is not sufficient to meet passengers' needs… it is neither fast enough nor tailored enough. The research confirmed that the experience of passengers is significantly impacted by delayed decision-making and suggests that in the most likely and the most severe scenarios, 'plan in 60 minutes' is not fit for passenger circumstances, on-board and external conditions, the nature of the event or passengers' communications requirements.

   The research report recommends that a plan is created within 60 minutes and that passengers should be evacuated (or on the move again) within 90 minutes of a train becoming stranded unless there are clear safety, welfare and customer experience advantages in their remaining on the train.

[1] at Ladbroke Grove (Great Western Main Line), Beattock (West Coast Main Line), Corby Glen (East Coast Main Line) and Bourne End Junction (West Coast Main Line).

It further notes that in some circumstances, particularly where there is no power to a train, this is not fast enough - if it takes an hour to formulate a plan, by the time it is executed trains may have flat batteries (and therefore no lighting, air conditioning, heating or working toilets), so the on-board experience may be poor and passengers could start climbing out to make their own way to their destination.

iv) Evidence is mixed about whether the industry is good at identifying passengers with additional needs (disabilities, health conditions, travelling with young children etc.) in passengers stranded on trains situations, including the challenge of identifying less visible conditions.

Other findings from the research included:

v) During the study period (30/10/23 to 8/1/24), there were 75 passengers stranded on trains incidents which together involved 178 trains becoming stranded. Such incidents occurred on 43 of the 70 days. However, only 20 trains (11%) were evacuated. So, while instances of passengers being stranded on trains are comparatively common, those leading to an actual evacuation are considerably less so. This makes it difficult for relevant staff to build up much experience of managing them.

vi) Directly weather related incidents were the second largest in number, accounting for around 20% of the total. Infrastructure failures were the largest (c. 42%), but the report notes that it is possible that weather played a role in a number of these.

vii) The research confirmed that the experience of passengers is significantly impacted by delayed decision making, with passengers reporting that they felt their safety and wellbeing was compromised by lack of organisation and contingency plans. The report identifies communication and co-ordinated decision making across industry interfaces as the biggest barrier to meeting passengers' needs. Hence, there is a need to drive faster, passenger-focused decision making, tailored to the circumstances.

The ORR/Transport Focus summary report included a number of other recommendations broadly relating to the management of passengers stranded on trains, but these fall outside the scope of this Guidance Note.

2. Introduction, purpose and scope

2.1 Introduction

Incidents in which passengers become stranded on trains present risks to their health, safety, security and general welfare and give rise to inconvenience, frustration and discomfort. In such cases, it is incumbent on the rail industry to take the initiative in managing the situation in such a way as to meet their reasonable needs but also demonstrate competence, care and control.

The effective management of passengers stranded on trains is provided by a 3-tiered approach:

Tier 1: High level, cross-industry objectives, principles and considerations [this Guidance Note].

Tier 2: Documented plans and arrangements described at individual organisation level (i.e. infrastructure manager and transport undertaking) which draw on and are informed by the Tier 1 material. In the case of Network Rail, these plans and arrangements should be at Route level in recognition that different Routes have different characteristics [generally expected to be documented in a single Passengers Stranded on Trains (PSoT) protocol].

Tier 3: The capability to apply the PSoT protocol (or individual organisation equivalent) to support stranded passengers in practice, including ensuring those responsible for enacting the protocol are competent, prepared and equipped to do so.

2.2 Purpose

This document provides principles and supporting advice to transport undertakings and infrastructure managers on managing and responding to the needs of passengers stranded on trains. Transport undertakings vary considerably in the nature of their operations – the geographical areas served, the types of service provided, the number of on-board staff, type of roiling stock used and the numbers and types of passengers carried. Thus, while the overall objectives and principles used should be common and consistent, the approach taken at a local level will vary dependent on the circumstances and the factors assessed in Section 10 (covering Situational Awareness and Risk Assessment).

As part of this, it is recommended that infrastructure managers and transport undertakings develop a Passengers Stranded on Trains protocol which sets out how the principles and advice in this Guidance Note are applied to individual businesses, including roles and responsibilities (see Section 6).

2.3 Scope

This Guidance Note has been prepared for both passenger transport undertaking members of RDG and Network Rail. However, its content may also be of use or interest to others.

It is intended that its scope will eventually be extended to cover all infrastructure managers responsible for managing parts of the GB main line rail network or the networks which interface with it. In anticipation of this, the generic term 'infrastructure manager' has been used within this document other than where wording is specific to Network Rail.

3. Summary of key principles and priorities

This section lists the key principles applicable to meeting the needs of passengers stranded on trains, from initial planning and mitigation through development of plans and protocols to their eventual activation and subsequent standing down when all passengers have ceased to be stranded.

Each of these principles and priorities is described in detail in the remainder of this Guidance Note, with cross-references to the relevant sections provided.

3.1 'Think Passenger'

The risks and negative experiences faced by passengers stranded on trains – many of which continue until they have successfully reached their final destination - are well-documented in the remainder of this Guidance Note.

The rail industry needs to work together to ensure that when passengers become stranded on a train, the focus is on them and their needs rather than the train itself. In broad terms, these needs will range from support and reassurance (that the industry is in control and has a plan) through physical (an acceptable on-board environment, access to food and drink and functioning toilets) to information (getting messages passed on, onward travel arrangements, re-imbursement/compensation). This means recognising and acknowledging the circumstances from the passengers' perspective.

'Think Passenger' is the guiding principle that runs through this Guidance Note. It should similarly be reflected in individual and joint event, emergency and contingency plans, exercises etc., all the way down to the management of the incident on the day, with all relevant staff briefed and trained accordingly.

See all sections but particularly Section 11.

3.2 Top priorities

Maintaining the safety of the rail network, passengers and staff remains the absolute priority. It follows that in cases where there is an immediate threat to life, additional measures above and beyond those recommended in this Guidance Note may need to be taken.

It should be recognised that an uncontrolled evacuation is one of the most serious safety incidents on the railway and hence preventing it should take precedence over other passenger related priorities.

Subject to this overarching need to maintain safety being met:

- The top operational priority is to prevent further trains becoming stranded, e.g. by holding them at stations outside the affected area or diverting them via an alternative route.
- The top 'Think Passenger' priority is to start identifying and responding to passenger well-being and welfare needs.

Early appointment of suitable individuals to the key roles of Stranded Passengers Champion (by the affected transport undertaking(s)) and Stranded Trains Champion (by the infrastructure manager) is critical to achieving this.

Early full activation of the tactical plan with subsequent standing down of resources found not to be needed is better than ramping up the response too late with a degraded situation becoming a crisis.

See Sections 6.2, 6.3 and 11.

3.3 Preparation

While it is not possible to prevent incidents in which passengers are stranded on trains, there is much that can be done in advance to reduce their impact and speed up the response. This includes developing plans, preparation of paperwork, identification of key roles, training of staff, understanding the characteristics and compatibility of different types of rolling stock and identifying and documenting access points.

See Section 5, 6 and 7.

3.4 Rehearsing, testing and exercising

Exercises based on a variety of scenarios should be used to test and validate the intended documented response and also staff. Such scenarios should include those in which multiple trains become simultaneously stranded to ensure that stranded train/passenger plans and procedures take these fully into account. The aim is to validate that the Passengers Stranded on Trains protocol is a written version of what is intended to generate the best outcome and make sure that staff are trained, competent and equipped to deliver against the plan. Lessons from both exercises and actual incidents should be proactively applied and follow up actions monitored.

Rehearsals should be used to help staff become familiar with the processes and procedures to be followed.

See Sections 5.4, 7.3 and 10.9.

3.5 Early identification of stranded passenger incidents

Fast decision making requires early identification of actual and potential passengers stranded on trains incidents and processes and procedures should be in place to achieve this.

See Section 8.1.

3.6 Prompt appointment of a Stranded Passengers Champion

A Stranded Passengers Champion should be appointed by the transport undertaking concerned whenever it becomes apparent that passengers are stranded on a train. The purpose of the Stranded Passengers Champion is to 'Think Passenger' and they should not be distracted from this role, e.g. by being given any operational responsibilities.

The Stranded Passengers Champion has joint responsibility with the infrastructure manager appointed Stranded Trains Champion to undertake local risk assessments at the incident site and should work with the infrastructure manager lead for the incident to agree priorities and make key decisions accordingly.

See Section 6.2.

3.7 Prompt appointment of Stranded Trains Champion

An operational lead should be appointed whenever it becomes apparent that a train or trains has or have become stranded. It is recommended that this role be referred to as the Stranded Trains Champion. The purpose of the Stranded Trains Champion is to focus on options available for the movement of, rescue of or evacuation from trains. It is an infrastructure manager role.

The Stranded Trains Champion has joint responsibility with the transport undertaking appointed Stranded Passenger Champion(s) to undertake local risk assessments at the site and should work with the infrastructure manager lead for the incident to agree priorities and make key decisions.

See Section 6.3.

3.8 Effective and timely decision making

The research confirmed that passenger experience is significantly adversely impacted by delayed decision making. This should therefore be fast, passenger-focused and tailored to the circumstances.

See Sections 10.2, 10.3 and 12.1.

3.9 Timely undertaking – and constant updating - of risk assessments

Decision making needs to be informed by risk assessment with risk assessment, in turn, informed by situational awareness. Lots of factors need to be considered relating to external factors, the status of the train, its on-board conditions and the number and demographic of the passengers who are stranded and their collective and individual needs. The situation will rapidly and continually evolve, and it is extremely unlikely that all relevant facts will be known, so judgement will also be needed.

The Stranded Passengers Champion(s) and Stranded Trains Champion need to jointly own the local risk assessment at the incident site and the decisions informed by it.

See Sections 10.5, 10.6 and 10.7.

3.10 Timelines:15-30-60-90 principle for evacuation

In respect of controlled evacuation, the following default timeline should be worked to unless there are clear safety, welfare and customer experience reasons why this should not be the case:

- 15 minutes: Strategic decision to plan for evacuation of stranded train(s) taken.
- 30 minutes: Competent member of staff appointed for each evacuation and should ideally have reached their train(s) to assure passengers that the evacuation/ rescue is underway and to help with identification of passengers in need of additional support.
- 60 minutes: Evacuation to have commenced.
- 90 minutes: Evacuation to have been completed.

The above is not intended to preclude progressing other response options (e.g. provision of an assisting locomotive/train) but to ensure that timely provision is made for evacuation of passengers from the train should these other options not deliver the overall aim of passengers being evacuated or on the move again within 90 minutes of the train becoming stranded.

See Sections 10.4 and 12.1.

3.11 Build in contingency

The response to a passengers stranded on a train incident should not rely on a single plan – alternatives should be progressed in parallel in case the preferred option is found to be unworkable on the situation changes.

In particular, while the initial risk assessment may indicate that it will be safer for passengers to remain on board a stranded train than be evacuated from it, the balance of risk can change rapidly as on-board conditions deteriorate and the delay extends, both of which will increase the risk that passengers attempt an uncontrolled evacuation. As a controlled evacuation takes some time to organise and resource, planning for this should be started immediately, even if other options are initially preferred.

See Section 10.10.

3.12 Identifying passengers in need of additional support

The risk assessment needs to take into account those passengers who are at additional risk and/or require additional support. These include not only those generally identified as 'vulnerable' but also a variety of passengers for whom the particular circumstances of being stranded on a train will be particularly challenging or stressful, for example those travelling with young children, those who are pregnant, those with a poor understanding of English, those who are neurodivergent, etc. This Guidance Note uses the term 'passengers with additional support needs' to refer to this wider group.

See Section 11.4.

3.13 Avoiding uncontrolled evacuation

In almost all circumstances, self-evacuation by passengers in an uncontrolled manner is the least desirable outcome. Not only does it expose them to a variety of risks, many of which they may not appreciate, but it will also be the most disruptive to the network as a whole. Dissuading passengers from attempting to self-evacuate therefore remains a high priority until a controlled evacuation of all affected passengers has been completed.

See Section 10.8.

3.14 Communicate

Providing information along with demonstrating care, empathy, competence and confidence are all key to gaining and maintaining passenger trust, and hence control of the situation. Clear and credible updates on progress are vital, especially to reduce the risk of uncontrolled evacuation. A detailed and structured communication plan should be in place for both passengers and staff.

Frontline staff, particularly traincrew, similarly require reliable, up to date information – not only do they need to pass it on to stranded passengers, but staff credibility is compromised if those passengers have more or better information than they do.

See Sections 11.1, 11.2, 11.3 and 12.4.

3.15 Whole journey focus

The need for support for passengers who have been stranded on a train does not stop when they have been evacuated/rescued or are otherwise able to continue their journey and support should continue to be provided until they have reached their final destination. It is only when all passengers have ceased to be stranded that the Stranded Passenger Champion can be stood down. Information to passengers about onward travel arrangements is particularly important.

See Sections 13.1, 13.2 and 13.3.

4 Definitions

Term	Definition in the context of this document
assisting train/locomotive	Train or locomotive used or intended to be used to move/recover a stranded train.
Control	Central office with real time oversight of the state and operation of the network and responsibility for managing incidents in such a way as to ensure safety while minimising disruption to train services, passengers and freight customers. This is normally a Route Control with joint Network Rail and transport undertaking staffing but there can also be separate Network Rail and transport undertaking Controls.
controlled evacuation	Evacuation of passengers from the train under the supervision of railway industry staff and with all relevant safety controls in place, including that all train movements on adjacent tracks have been stopped and that the traction current on 3rd rail equipped routes has been switched off.

Customer Information Pledges	A set of pledges which outline what good customer information looks like, and what passengers can expect before, during and after their journey by train, as agreed by train operators in partnership with Network Rail and the Rail Delivery Group. Compliance with them is a regulatory requirement.
DCO	Driver Controlled Operation: The driver controls the operation of the train including the train doors but with an additional staff member normally rostered on the train to undertake customer service duties.
DOO	Driver Only Operation: The driver controls the operation of the train including the train doors and is normally the only member of staff provided on the train.
EPW	Emergency Permissive Working: The procedure set out in Section 3.4 of Module TS2 of the Rule Book which allows a signaller, in an emergency, to allow a train conveying passengers to enter an occupied signal section to reach a station platform, as long as they have been authorised to do so by the signal box supervisor or Control.
ESW	Emergency Special Working: A method of operation set out in Section 5 of Module S5 of the Rule Book which allows trains to be moved following a major signalling failure.
Evacuated (in the context of passengers)	Removed from the train in which they had been stranded, whether to a station platform, another train or to trackside. See also definition of ‘rescued’ below.
EWAT	Extreme Weather Action Teleconference: Activated by Network Rail in response to exceptional weather being experienced or predicted, the two priorities being to keep passengers safe and moving.
GPS	Global Positioning System: A navigation system using satellites, a receiver and algorithms to synchronise location, velocity and time data for air, sea and land travel.
GSM-R	Global System for Mobile Communications – Railway: The international wireless communications standard for railway communication and applications as used across Europe.
MOM	Mobile Operations Manager: The Network Rail role responsible for ensuring that, during times of service disruption or incidents with the potential to cause service disruption, incidents are managed effectively with the aim of minimising delay and coordinating prompt service recovery. Other infrastructure managers should provide the same capability, though may use different terminology.
NRCC	National Rail Communication Centre: Responsible for disseminating contextual information surrounding disruptions, ensuring that this information is accurate, consistent and complete and is available to passengers through numerous channels. The NRCC is primarily provided with information from transport undertakings and plays a supporting role in passing this on to passengers.
NRE	National Rail Enquiries: Provider of customer information for all passenger rail services on the National Rail network in England, Wales and Scotland.
OHLE	Overhead Line Equipment: Wires and associated equipment suspended over or adjacent to the railway line for supplying electricity to electric trains.
on-board staff	Staff, including contractors (such as catering or cleaning staff), on board a train other than members of the traincrew.
PA	Public Address system: An electronic system comprising microphones, amplifiers, loudspeakers and related equipment and through which announcements can be shared audibly with those within range (also known as a tannoy).
Passenger Assist	A facility through which passengers can request various types of assistance in advance of their intended journey.

Passengers with additional support needs	Any passengers who may be unable to hear/see/understand announcements/messages and/or who may have difficulty in following instructions. Specifically, this includes those who: • Have booked assistance in advance through use of Passenger Assist. • Have a disability or long-term health problem and hence may need particular help or assistance (e.g. insulin dependence). • Are neurodivergent. • Are unaccompanied children/young persons. • Are unable to hear or follow instructions, including as a result of a lack of English. • Who may need additional help due to e.g. pregnancy, infirmity or illness. • Are travelling with infants/young children. • Are affected by drug or alcohol consumption.
RCM	Route Control Manager: Network Rail's shift manager in Control. Other infrastructure managers will have an equivalent position, though may use different terminology.
RDG	Rail Delivery Group.
rescue train	A train used or intended to be used to effect evacuation of passengers from a stranded train or a train/loco to move a stranded train.
rescued (in the context of passengers)	Moved from the train on which they had become stranded to a place of safety, security and with access to basic facilities such as lighting and heating (where needed) and toilets – for example a replacement train or road transport or a station. Evacuation is a key component of rescue but unless directly onto another train does not in itself constitute rescue. In this Guidance Note, any reference to 'rescue' should be taken to include evacuation.
RIC	Rail Incident Commander: May be appointed by Network Rail when either a major incident is declared, or it is considered that the scale of the incident warrants a strategic level of command. If appointed, the RIC has overall responsibility for management of the incident. Other infrastructure managers may provide the same capability, though may use different terminology.
RIO	Rail Incident Officer: The nominated and certificated person charged with the roles of i) on-site command and control of all rail related organisations and their support; ii) co-ordination of all on-site rail activities; and iii) overall responsibility for the safety of people in respect of GB mainline railway hazards, at the whole incident site. Appointed by Network Rail. Other infrastructure managers should provide the same capability, though may use different terminology.
risk assessment	The process of identifying potential hazards and evaluating the likelihood and consequences of those hazards. In an incident in which passengers are standard on a train, the situation will evolve rapidly and all references in this document to 'risk assessment' should be taken to mean dynamic risk assessment, i.e. the real-time process of identifying, analysing, and responding to risks as they change or develop. A record of all risk assessments and associated significant decisions should always be kept.
Rule Book Module TW1	Module TW1 of the Rule Book on Preparation and movement of trains. Section 42 concerns 'Train stopped out of course or unable to make normal progress' and requires the driver to contact the signaller.
stranded passengers / passengers stranded on trains	Passengers who are on, or who have been evacuated from a stranded train through controlled or uncontrolled evacuation. Such passengers continue to fall within the scope of this Guidance Note until they cease to be stranded (as described in Section 13.3). Passengers stranded at a station are outside the scope of this Guidance Note unless covered by the above definition (i.e. they have been taken there following evacuation from a stranded train).

stranded train	Defined in this Guidance Note as: a. A passenger train stationary (or moving very slowly) other than as scheduled; and b. it is established that i. *either* there is no reasonable certainty that it will resume its journey within the next X minutes. ii. *or* there is reasonable certainty that it will resume its journey but only after a delay of at least Y minutes (since coming to stand). Transport undertakings should liaise and agree with infrastructure managers the values of X and Y to be applied – it is suggested that a default value of 10 be used for X and of 30 for Y. While it is common practice for Control staff (and others) to sub-categorise trains based on the reason for and consequences of them having become stranded ('incident train', 'trapped train', 'failed train' etc.) and the associated risks and response options may be different (as identified through the information gathering and risk assessment process), for the purpose of this Guidance Note, all qualify as *stranded trains* and those on them as *stranded passengers*.
TOC	A Train Operating Company, also known formally as a transport undertaking: Any private or public undertaking whose business is to provide rail services for the transport of passengers (in this case) on trains.
TOLO	Train Operator Liaison Officer: Person appointed by a transport undertaking as the lead representative of all those transport undertakings affected by the incident. The TOLO will report to and liaise with the RIO on-site.
traincrew	Drivers and, where provided, guards/senior conductors/on-board train managers.
transport undertaking	Any person or organisation that operates a vehicle in relation to any infrastructure. For the purpose of this Guidance Note, use of the term applies exclusively to rail transport undertakings operating passenger services.
Tyrell	The information messaging service as provided by Nexus Alpha and used by transport undertakings for dissemination of real time information relating to train services.
uncontrolled evacuation	Evacuation of passengers from the train without the supervision of railway industry staff. This may also be referred to as self-evacuation.
unexpected stop	Any stop made by a train at a location which is both unexpected and unusual. This includes at stations at which the train is not booked to call (and for which no Special Stop Order has been issued), on running lines other than at signals and at signals unusually displaying a stop aspect or displaying a stop aspect for an unusually long time. It is the responsibility of the guard/senior conductor (driver in the case of DOO/DCO services) to determine whether a stop is unexpected.
what3words	A proprietary geocode system designed to identify any location on the surface of Earth with a resolution of about 3 metres using three permanently fixed dictionary words. It is widely used by the emergency services.

5 Prevention, planning and mitigation

5.1 Introduction

There is a great deal of focus across the industry on reducing the number and severity of incidents, of which those involving passengers being stranded on trains form a subset, and it is not the intention to consider this further here. There are lots of root causes of trains becoming stranded, many of which are external to the industry and outside its ability to control. It is inevitable that such incidents will continue to occur.

Recognising that prevention is therefore not always going to be possible, infrastructure managers and transport undertakings need to work together to prepare and plan for such events in order to mitigate their impacts. Key to this is having a consistent approach within and between organisations for dealing with them, with this documented in a PSoT protocol.

In addition to putting in place Passengers Stranded on Train protocols (see below), infrastructure managers and transport undertakings should ensure that references to the management of passengers stranded on trains are explicitly referred to within emergency and event plans.

5.2 Passengers Stranded on Train (PSoT) protocol

It is recommended that infrastructure managers and transport undertakings work together to develop protocols for passengers stranded on trains incidents. There are clear benefits of such protocols being joint between infrastructure managers and transport undertakings. If they are separate, they should be closely aligned.

The PSoT protocol should document the approach taken and cover preparation activities such as assessing risk, training and exercising, provision/access to supplies (e.g. drinking water) as well as response on the day. It should take into account:

i) The safety of passengers stranded on trains.
ii) The safety of rail staff and other responders.
iii) The welfare of passengers stranded on trains.
iv) The provision of customer service tailored to the circumstances - information, reassurance, practical assistance.
v) Onward travel (or accommodation) arrangements to ensure that stranded passengers are able to complete their journeys.
vi) Minimising the impact on the performance of the network.
vii) Reputational damage to the infrastructure manager(s) and transport undertaking(s) concerned and the wider industry.

The PSoT protocol should explicitly reference the overall target for passengers to have been evacuated or be on the move again within 90 minutes of the train becoming stranded, the associated 15-30-60-90 minute timeline (see Section 10.4) and how these are to be met.

A detailed and structured communication plan should also be in place for passengers and staff.

Periodic assessments of the protocol should be undertaken to ensure that it remains fit for purpose. These should include both consideration of what resources are needed to support it and ensuring that these are in place. Organisations should assure themselves that the content of the protocol is able to be implemented as intended with the required management oversight.

Protocols and associated plans should be validated through testing and exercising (see Section 7.3) and reviewed both on a periodic basis to take into account evolving rail industry good practice and following real or simulated events.

5.3 Planning for passengers stranded on trains incidents

Most incidents involving passengers being stranded on a train are relatively simple and hence straightforward to resolve. However, processes need to be scalable to accommodate more demanding scenarios, such as where multiple trains are stranded, or a faster response is needed, for example in very hot weather.

There is evidence, including from the research, that procedures tend to be written in the context of a single train that has become stranded and may not be adequate to meet the needs of passengers involved in incidents involving several trains.

To address this, it is recommended that infrastructure managers and transport undertakings jointly identify a variety of plausible scenarios that would result in passengers being stranded on multiple trains and use these to inform and validate the content of their PSoT protocols – some suggested prompts for these scenarios are provided below. In each case, consideration should be given to the number of both trains and passengers that might be involved, any particular challenges that the circumstances would present to managing passenger needs and whether/when a 'major incident' would/should be declared. In each case, the enablers needed to meet the 90 minutes target and associated 15-30-60-90 minute timeline should be identified and understood and any blockers to this identified and resolved.

Such scenarios should include consideration of:

1. The requirements for cooperation and sharing of information between infrastructure managers and transport undertakings and the arrangements that need to be in place for these.
2. The need, based on risk, for emergency equipment and supplies to be provided on trains, at stations, in company vehicles and at other locations for management and support of passengers stranded on trains and including potential evacuations.

Note that using a 'Reasonable Worst Case Scenario' approach is no longer recommended. This would arguably equate to 'Failure of the National Electricity Transmission System (NETS)' as per the UK National Risk Register. This has the potential to result not only in hundreds of trains becoming stranded across the network but would also have huge impacts on the whole of the UK.

5.4 Prompts for scenarios to be considered

The following comprise some suggested themes which could form the basis for the development of scenarios for planning purposes. Such scenarios could apply individually or in combination. The list is not intended to be exhaustive.

Extreme weather

It is recommended that there is a particular focus on weather related scenarios, highlighted in the research as a significant cause of stranding.

Extreme weather is relevant to passengers stranded on trains incidents in four ways:

i) It increases the likelihood of such incidents occurring – key components of both the infrastructure and rolling stock are more likely to fail during exceptionally hot or cold weather while the infrastructure is additionally vulnerable to flooding, strong winds and lightning strikes.
ii) On-board conditions will deteriorate more rapidly in hot weather and, particularly in the absence of functioning air conditioning, temperatures can quickly reach levels that are unsafe. Similarly, on-board temperatures may drop to dangerously low levels in exceptionally cold conditions, though this will generally take longer and rather more mitigation measures are likely to be available.
iii) Extreme weather conditions will also increase the risks associated with a controlled evacuation, especially if this is to trackside – not only will using emergency ladders to alight from the train be more challenging but ground conditions may be treacherous and there may be nowhere sheltered for passengers to congregate once evacuated. Arranging replacement road transport for onward travel may be challenging or even impossible if the road network has also been affected.
iv) The ability to provide additional staff resources to assist the traincrew and support a controlled evacuation will be similarly affected in the event of road closures.

Given the above, it is recommended that Passengers Stranded on Trains protocols be reviewed, tested and assured as part of seasonal preparedness plans and that this increased likelihood of stranded trains incidents and potentially greater challenges in managing/responding to them be recognised within the EWAT process.

Loss of traction current

Failure of supply and OHLE/3rd rail damage but also as a result of an emergency isolation. The research notes that 'Damage to electrification equipment is the most likely single cause of a stranded train; and most likely to lead to more significant, complex and longer incidents. Therefore, this should be the key scenario for the review, testing, refinement, and continuous improvement of stranded trains procedures'.

Loss/non-availability of infrastructure

Such as failure of bridges, earth slips, flooding, fires, broken rails, animals on the line.

Loss of signalling

Such as power outage affecting a signalling centre, evacuation of a signalling centre, cable theft.

Fatality or other police directed suspension of train services

Cyber-attack

Particular train fleet immobilised in addition to potentially causing power or signalling outages as described above.

Space weather

Potential impact on power supplies and reliability of signalling systems.

Train(s) stranded in particularly inaccessible locations

Such as on a viaduct, in a tunnel or steep cutting or on a steep embankment.

5.5 Staff stranded on trains incidents

While the focus of this Guidance Note is on meeting the needs of passengers stranded on trains, members of the traincrew, other on-board staff and other staff sent to assist will be similarly stranded and will therefore need to have their basic needs met and, once the situation has been resolved from a passenger perspective, will also need to be supported to complete their journeys. This requirement is not developed further within this document but does need to be factored into infrastructure manager and transport undertaking plans and protocols for passengers stranded on trains incidents.

5.6 Larger scale (or multiple) incidents

In addition to the above specific scenarios, consideration should be given to incidents, whatever the cause, that due to their scale, nature or number occurring at the same time, are beyond what can be adequately managed through the company PSoT protocol. In such cases, full activation of the company emergency plan and potentially declaring a major incident may be required. What declaration of a major incident means and how it is communicated should be documented.

The criteria for triggering such an escalation of the response and who has the responsibility/authority for doing so should be set out in company plans (both the PSoT protocol and Major Incident Plan). These should include a review with a senior manager off site to help staff dealing with an incident to identify when additional assistance is needed, i.e. it is, or is becoming, a larger scale event.

Transport undertakings will normally ensure that passengers are able to complete their journeys or are put up in accommodation. However, this will not always be possible, for example where a larger scale event means the number of passengers is such as to overwhelm industry resources or where the cause of the train stranding event has had a wider impact (e.g. bad weather or a power outage affecting a large geographical area) such that it is impossible for transport undertakings to secure accommodation or replacement road transport. In such cases, requesting the assistance of the local authority, emergency services and voluntary sector – for accommodation and also general welfare provision – may be appropriate.

5.7 Mitigation

Some mitigation of the impacts on passengers stranded on trains can be provided through infrastructure managers and transport undertakings working together to pre-identify options and constraints in advance. These should include:

i) *Pre-prepared paperwork:* Having pre-prepared checklists, risk assessment templates, meeting agendas, timelines, log sheets, etc. can all help streamline processes and decision making on the day. This should also include have a Passengers Stranded on Trains protocol in place (see Section 5.2).
ii) *Staff:* Identifying all staff who have a role in responding to passengers stranded on trains incidents and making sure that they know what is expected of them and are appropriately trained, rehearsed and equipped to provide it.
iii) *Stranded Passengers Champion and Stranded Trains Champion:* Pre-identifying persons able to fulfil these key roles (transport undertakings for the Stranded Passengers Champion and infrastructure managers for Stranded Trains Champion).
iv) *Stations:* Pre-identifying suitable stations for evacuation of passengers stranded on trains (e.g. by classifying them as always available, available for use in an emergency and wholly unsuitable).
v) *Emergency supplies:* Identifying where supplies of drinking water, foil blankets, door barriers, light sticks, etc. are held (whether on trains, on stations or elsewhere) and how to access them.
vi) *Know and understand your rolling stock 1 - battery life expectancy:* For electrically powered trains, identifying by fleet how load shedding is achieved and the reasonable life expectancy of batteries. It should not be assumed that this is 90 minutes unless this has been confirmed by the transport undertaking and it should be noted that it will vary not only between classes but also within classes according to the age and condition of the battery(ies) and how fully charged it was (they were) when the power was lost.
vii) *Know and understand your rolling stock 2 – assistance/coupling compatibility:* Creating (and maintaining) a matrix of compatibility between different types of rolling stock both for train assistance purposes and train to train evacuation. In addition to full compatibility, there may be electrical or mechanical compatibility only, use of an adaptor/emergency coupling may be required, coupling may not be possible but train can be drawn up to end of stranded train to allow passengers to walk through onto it (if end corridors are provided and compatible), etc.
viii) *Access points:* Making sure that these are identified, their location is clearly defined (e.g. by GPS or What3Words) and documented.
ix) *Diversionary routes:* Understanding traincrew route knowledge and rolling stock route clearance.
x) *Training, competence and exercising of staff:* See next section.

The above list is not exhaustive.

6 Key roles and responsibilities

6.1 Responsibilities

This section sets out specific responsibilities applicable to specific job titles/roles. However, arrangements may vary between organisations and infrastructure managers and transport undertakings should review the following list of roles and responsibilities and relate them to their own operations to assure themselves that they are covering all responsibilities or are aware of another organisation which is.

Role	Action
Incident Controller (or equivalent for other infrastructure managers) ***Infrastructure manager***	Co-ordinator and decision maker for the overall response. For larger incidents, these responsibilities may be escalated to the RCM. Record how operational issues have been resolved. Make Control Log entries concerning the incident. Record details of how passengers on board are being/have been dealt with, including timelines. Also see Section 6.3 concerning the Stranded Trains Champion.
Information Controller ***Transport undertaking***	Provide information to and receive information from those at the site (including traincrew) and those in Control. Issue messages as required by the Customer Information Pledges. Ensure that the NRCC is made aware of the situation and updated on a frequent and regular basis.
MOM/RIO (or equivalent for other infrastructure managers) ***Infrastructure manager***	Make their way to the site and commence duties as RIO. Form a detailed overview of the situation, from both an operational and passenger perspective, and provide this information to the Incident Controller. Maintain close liaison with the signaller, the traincrew of all affected trains and the TOLO(s) as well as any other MOMs in the case of multiple stranded trains. Work with the TOLO, signaller and traincrew to prepare for and initiate evacuation of passengers from the train if needed.
On Call Customer Service Manager ***Transport undertaking***	Attend locations when required by passengers stranded on train events. Review with Control on progress during an incident. Give additional support to review decisions which are made by Control. Provide welfare and practical support for staff who attend incidents where passengers are stranded on trains. Check if required and, if necessary, obtain additional resources on train such as water and food. Also see Section 6.2 concerning the Stranded Passengers Champion.
RCM / Senior Network Delivery Managers (SNDM) (these are Network Rail terms – other infrastructure managers will have equivalents) ***Infrastructure manager***	Overall command of the Control staff managing the incident and compliance with required protocols for incidents including passengers stranded on trains. May assume the Strategic (Gold) Command role when/if a formal command structure is put in place for the incident, particularly if it is a larger scale incident. Also see Section 6.3 concerning the Stranded Trains Champion.
RIC (if appointed) ***Infrastructure manager***	Take overall strategic responsibility for management of the incident. The decision to evacuate a train should be made by the infrastructure manager person in charge of managing the incident, which may be the Rail Incident Commander (RIC) if appointed. The decision should be made in consultation with the Stranded Train Champion (if appointed) and the Stranded Passenger Champion(s) and should be based upon the onboard conditions of the train(s) involved.
RIO	See under MOM/RIO entry above.
Signaller *Infrastructure manager*	Alert and work with Control. Take appropriate immediate action to prevent other trains from becoming stranded. Act as the primary contact for the train driver transferring information about the on train situation and the response. Can use PA for announcements to passengers on DOO trains.

TOLO *Transport undertaking*	Make their way to the site, report to the RIO. Ensure that conditions on board the train are regularly monitored and reported back to the RIO. In conjunction with the traincrew, determine whether the situation on board the train is such that an evacuation is required and recommend this to the RIO.
TOC Duty Control Manager *Transport undertaking*	Lead the transport undertaking element of the operational response, working with the Network Rail RCM (or equivalent for other infrastructure managers). Provide the link from traincrew on site to Control. Appoint a Stranded Passengers Champion (see Section 6.2) and work with them to assess the situation on train, undertake risk assessment and formulate plans. Mobilise transport undertaking resources and make sure they are in place, including staff and supplies of food and drink at the relevant locations. Work with the local authority or other third party as appropriate if their assistance is likely to be requested. Ensure that suitable messages are being communicated. Ensure record keeping of the incident.
Traincrew (this will be the driver on a DOO train and shared between the driver and conductor on non-DOO trains) *Transport undertaking*	Undertake core duties to protect train, fault find and communicate with signaller and Control. Provide principal communication link regarding the situation on train, including numbers and needs of passengers. Be the primary point of contact on the train for passengers and staff members (could be delegated to another member of staff) - will usually be the guard/conductor/train manager when provided. Seek assistance from people on the train, including rail staff (who should volunteer), police, members of the fire & rescue services, doctors and other suitable medically trained persons and other people assessed as suitable by the staff on site. Continue to monitor conditions on the train. Deal with passenger issues that arise. Conductor/guard/train manager (driver if a DOO train) retain overall responsibility for passengers on the train with any staff providing on-train assistance working under their direction and authority.

6.2 Stranded Passengers Champion

A Stranded Passengers Champion should be appointed whenever it becomes apparent that passengers are stranded on a train. The ultimate purpose of the Stranded Passengers Champion is to ‘Think Passenger’ and they should not be distracted from this role, e.g. by being given any operational responsibilities.

The Stranded Passengers Champion has two key responsibilities. One is to lead on providing those elements of the local risk assessment at the incident site that relate to the passengers and conditions on board the train and the other is to ensure that the emerging needs of stranded passengers take primacy in agreeing the best course of action to minimise the impact on them. Their authority in these roles should be recognised by all concerned.

It is a transport undertaking role - should the incident involve the stranding of trains of two or more transport undertakings, then each should appoint its own Stranded Passengers Champion.

The Stranded Passengers Champion(s) has/have joint responsibility with the infrastructure manager appointed Stranded Trains Champion to undertake local risk assessment at the incident site and should work with the infrastructure manager appointed person in charge of the incident (likely to be the RCM or RIC if appointed) to agree priorities and make key decisions accordingly. Co-locating them with the Stranded Trains Champion is likely to be beneficial. Where two or more Stranded Passengers Champions have been appointed, they should liaise with and defer to the Stranded Trains Champion in determining overall priorities.

The Stranded Passengers Champion should not be stood down until all passengers of the transport undertaking concerned have ceased to qualify as stranded (see Section 13.3).

It should be noted that this is a role required during incidents in which passengers are stranded on trains – it is not a permanent post.

6.3 Stranded Trains Champion

A Stranded Trains Champion should be appointed whenever it becomes apparent that two or more trains have become stranded and is recommended in situations when only a single train is involved.

It is important to differentiate the role from that of the Stranded Passengers Champion, though the two roles are complementary and will need to work in unison in undertaking the local risk assessments at the incident site and the making of key decisions, including whether to plan for/initiate evacuation of passengers from the train.

The purpose of the Stranded Trains Champion is to focus on options available for the movement of, rescue of and evacuation from trains. It is an infrastructure manager role. The Stranded Trains Champion has joint responsibility with the transport undertaking appointed Stranded Passengers Champion(s) to undertake local risk assessments at the incident site and should work with the infrastructure manager appointed person in charge of the incident (likely to be the RCM or RIC if appointed) to agree priorities and make key decisions accordingly.

The Stranded Trains Champion may be stood down once all passengers have been evacuated from the stranded trains(s) and arrangements are in place for the trains themselves to be recovered.

It should be noted that this is a role required during incidents in which passengers are stranded on trains – it is not a permanent post.

7 Staff training, competence, exercising and rehearsing

7.1 Overview

Training (initial and refresher), testing, exercising and rehearsing of operational scenarios involving passengers stranded on trains should be integral to developing and maintaining the competence of the key staff involved in:

i) The processes (including communication) relating to the management of passengers stranded on trains.
ii) The assessment and decision making processes for responding to passengers stranded on trains.
iii) Rescue of passengers, including the actual train evacuation process, and the continued support of passengers until they cease to be stranded (see Section 13.3).

The Rule Book covers responsibilities of drivers, guards and signallers when dealing with emergencies and train evacuation, but company competence processes should include all elements of managing passengers stranded on trains situations, both from a direct (at site) perspective and from the perspective of those managing events within Control, who have links to such as emergency responders and external agencies.

7.2 Training and competency

Initial and ongoing refresher training appropriate to the roles and responsibilities of all staff involved (see Section 6.1) should be provided. In particular, this should include the following:

- Comms specialists.
- Control staff.
- Emergency planners.
- Senior managers / on call staff.

- Signallers.
- Station staff.
- TOLOs.
- Traincrew.

Training should be monitored via company competence management systems, which should include responding to passengers stranded on trains and train evacuation as specific elements directly associated with the implementation of company response and/or emergency plans.

Assessment or evidence of competence and demonstration of knowledge associated with managing passengers stranded on trains situations and evacuation should be attained through a variety of methods, which may include one or more of the following techniques:

i) Unannounced monitoring.
ii) Observation.
iii) Review of records, logs, voice tapes, etc.
iv) Direct questioning.
v) Practice via participation in exercises (tabletop and live) and rehearsals.

7.3 Exercising and rehearsing

Plans and preparations for meeting the needs of passengers stranded on trains cannot be considered reliable until they have been exercised and shown to be workable. Exercises play an essential role in strengthening resilience, enabling the structures, plans, procedures and skills required to deliver an effective response to be tested and validated.

Exercising and rehearsing serve two different purposes.

Exercising is focused on testing and hence providing assurance that plans, processes and procedures are fit for purpose and that staff understand, are equipped to and are able to take on the responsibilities and perform the tasks assigned to them. Exercises should have a clear, stated purpose and there should be a system in place to learn from them and incorporate this learning in updated plans, processes and training accordingly.

Rehearsals are focused on achieving familiarity and hence building confidence, whether this is in terms of using equipment, sources of information, seeking support and direction, communication requirements or generally knowing what to do.

RDG Guidance Note RDG-GN-OPS-016: Competence of Train Operator Liaison Officers (TOLOs) includes a number of references to responding to passengers stranded on trains within its recommended competence standards.

8 Initial response to a passengers stranded on trains event

8.1 Identifying the start of an event

Identifying that a train has become stranded with passengers on board will routinely happen as a result of reports from railway staff, e.g. signaller or driver applying the instructions for trains stopped out of course or unable to make normal progress as per Rule Book Module TW1. Control may also be alerted that a train has become or is likely to become stranded from other sources, such as real time train movement monitoring systems and GPS alerts from trains. If a train is able to make only very slow progress, i.e. less than walking speed for an extended period, it should be regarded as stationary. This lesson was learnt from the incident at Lewisham in 2018. The precise location of the train needs to be clear. Control systems, GPS, GSM-R cells, what3words, train Wi-Fi systems and photos from traincrew smart phones can be used for this purpose.

Identifying and recording the start time of an incident is key to setting and maintaining a tight timeline. It is important to avoid the incident becoming protracted by failure to take positive and timely action.

Signallers and drivers should be alert to the need to recognise situations in which passengers become or are likely to become stranded on trains, including when a train is moving abnormally slowly for an extended period, and report this accordingly. Signallers will also need to take action to prevent further trains becoming stranded.

8.2 Use of METHANE[2]

Any incident involving passengers being stranded on a train will require joint working between the infrastructure manager(s) and transport undertaking(s) concerned while those involving multiple trains and/or large numbers of stranded passengers are likely to involve working with the emergency services (see Section 8.6), local authorities and potentially other responding agencies. The earlier other responding agencies are notified of the incident, the sooner joint working arrangements can be agreed and put into place.

In order to help all agencies gather initial information about an incident in a consistent manner, a common approach is recommended. The 'METHANE' mnemonic is widely used by the emergency services and other responding agencies and brings structure and clarity to the initial stages of managing any multi-agency or major incident:

Letter	Stands for	Additional information specific to passengers stranded on trains incidents
M	Major incident declared?	Both infrastructure managers and transport undertakings can declare a 'major incident'. See Sections 5.3 and 5.6.
E	Exact location	The exact location or geographical area
T	Type of incident	Is the problem related to the infrastructure or an individual train?
H	Hazards	What hazards or potential hazards can be identified, e.g. presence of 3rd rail, damaged OHLE, flooding, etc.?
A	Access	What are the best routes for access and egress?
N	Number affected (N.B. as used by the emergency services, this is 'Number of casualties')	How many trains are affected and what is the initial estimate of numbers of passengers stranded on them (tens, hundreds or thousands)?
E	Emergency services	Which, and how many, emergency responder assets and personnel are required or are already on-scene?

8.3 Activating the Passengers Stranded on Trains protocol

As soon as an incident involving passengers being stranded on a train is identified, the PSoT protocol(s) should be activated and should then guide the response. Immediate priorities – which should be set out in the protocol include:

i) Both infrastructure managers and transport undertakings immediately activating the appropriate incident command structure.
ii) The appointment of a Stranded Passengers Champion (by each transport undertaking whose passengers are involved – see Section 6.2) and a Stranded Trains Champions by the infrastructure manager (see Section 6.3).
iii) The deployment to site of a RIO, who may be supported by one or more MOMs, and a TOLO. Where more than one train is stranded, additional resources should be deployed.
iv) The timer (whatever form this takes) to monitor achievement of the 15-30-60-90 timeline targets (see Section 10.4) should be started.

Early consideration should be given to the availability of external resources which can potentially be called upon to assist. This should include the emergency services (see Section 8.6) which should be alerted if it is apparent that the incident is serious or has the potential to rapidly escalate into one which is serious.

[2] The wording in this section is derived from the JESIP Joint Doctrine - https://www.jesip.org.uk/joint-doctrine/early-stages-of-an-incident-m-ethane/

8.4 Potential activation of Critical Incident management procedures

Passengers stranded on trains incidents have the potential to impact negatively on the reputation of the transport undertaking concerned and wider industry, particularly if the incident is not dealt with well or there is adverse publicity over the amount of time that passengers spent on the train. As such, they may qualify as critical incidents, which are described thus in RDG Guidance Note RDG-OPS-GN-063: Critical Incident Management: '*Certain incidents of a relatively minor nature from an operational perspective have the potential to generate a disproportionate amount of public/media/political interest and a risk of significant reputational damage, both to the transport undertaking concerned and the wider industry*'. It is therefore recommended that consideration be given to activation of the company's Critical Incident procedures.

8.5 Activating resources

Additional staff will be required to support a stranded train in most circumstances. DOO trains will generally need resources deployed faster than trains with on-board staff. Resources deployed should be industry wide, including use of Network Rail MOMs. However, overloading of those in key roles such as that of RIO should be avoided.

8.6 Emergency services and other responding agencies

Early consideration should be given to asking the emergency services to assist with evacuation/rescue, resources, equipment and control of the situation. As a minimum, the emergency services should be alerted to any significant incidents of passengers being stranded on trains. Any such communication with the emergency services should be led by the infrastructure manager.

Other agencies external to the rail industry are potentially able to offer assistance, either in evacuation of stranded passengers and/or providing them with food, drink, clothing or general rest and reception facilities. In particular, local authorities have a statutory duty, as Category 1 Responders under the Civil Contingencies Act, to plan for emergencies, including looking after people affected.

Infrastructure managers and transport undertakings should maintain up to date lists of emergency contacts for each of the relevant emergency services and organisations that can provide support in an emergency and maintain a regular dialogue with them.

8.7 Overview of the generic approach to incident management

Infrastructure managers, including Network Rail Routes, and transport undertakings responding to passengers stranded on trains should implement a command and control structure to ensure that the incident is managed effectively. The approach for the management of incidents should be broadly consistent and how this should apply to incidents involving passengers stranded on trains is depicted in the diagram below.

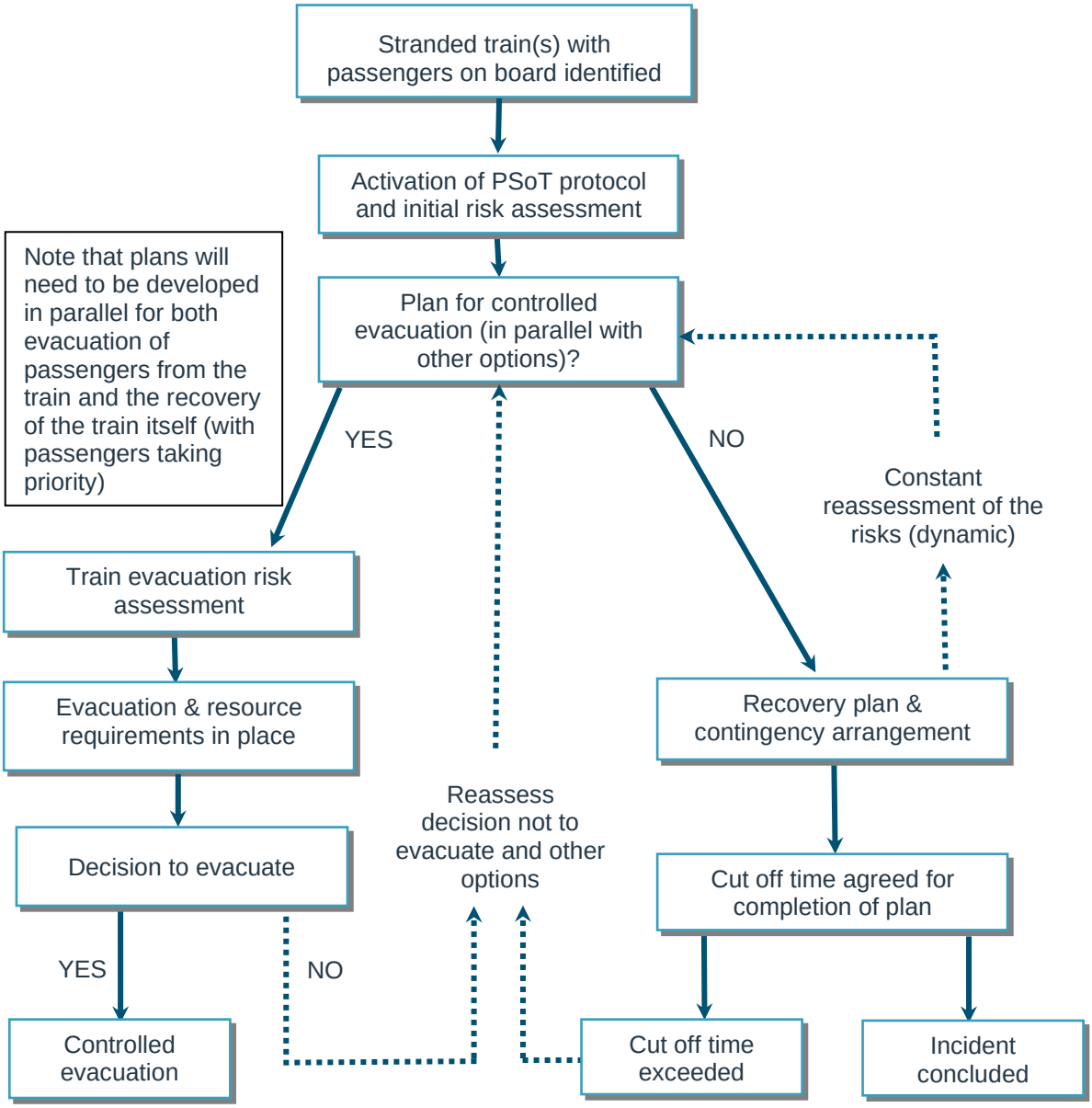


Figure 1 – Procedure following an incident which results in passengers becoming stranded on a single or multiple trains

9 Command and control

9.1 Application of command and control arrangements

The management of any incident involving passengers becoming stranded on trains, including any controlled evacuation, should be a co-operative venture between the infrastructure manager(s) and the transport undertaking(s) affected. The application of the command and control procedure will depend upon how the infrastructure manager(s) and transport undertaking(s) are organised, and local procedures will be required. The framework is summarised in Appendix A with suggested timelines for making and implementing decisions.

The required resources - people, attendance at site, equipment and the level of control/command processes - will depend on the incident. The normal command and control will be via the Control with additional resources being mobilised as required. It should be recognised that resources may not be available at the levels required and this needs to be factored into the plans. In addition, in the event of a controlled evacuation, the different methods of implementing this will require differing levels of command and control and attendance.

Arrangements should include an on-call structure and when the company emergency plan would need to be enacted - see Section 5.6.

When the incident requires additional resources, command and control decisions should take into account the views and advice of the emergency services if they are on-site.

The information available to assist with decision making - such as whether to evacuate passengers from a train or leave them on it - may vary between organisations and any failure to agree the course of action should be raised to the appropriate senior transport undertaking and infrastructure manager on call managers.

To supplement pre-planned arrangements, command and control staff should be encouraged to be imaginative in exploring options for solutions and mitigations. For example, it might be possible to use a permanent way trolley to transfer supplies to a stranded train and/or to transport less able-bodied passengers in the event of a controlled evacuation.

10 Situational awareness, risk assessment and decision making

10.1 Overview of the decision making process

Decision making should be fast, passenger-focused and tailored to the circumstances. Particular attention should be paid to decision making across industry interfaces to avoid this becoming a barrier to meeting passengers' needs.

Decision making requires the bringing together of three components:

i) Situational awareness – consideration of each of the factors listed in Section 10.7.
ii) Risk assessment – taking into account the situational awareness.
iii) Professional judgement - situational awareness will never be complete and hence the understanding of risk will never be perfect. Professional judgement is needed to identify and attempt to fill the gaps, weigh the options and prioritise based on the information that is available.

The diagram below shows the JESIP Joint Decision Model (JDM)[3] annotated to show how it might be applied to passengers stranded on trains incidents:

[3] As widely used by the Emergency Services and other UK responding agencies - see https://www.jesip.org.uk/joint-doctrine/the-joint-decision-model-jdm/

Figure 2 – JESIP Joint Decision Model as applied to passengers stranded on trains incidents

In addition, a number of decision-making tools are available – for example G-FORCE[4] as developed by RSSB.

10.2 Hierarchy of options

In terms of the overall response to the incident, the hierarchy of preferred options to be considered is:

i) Stranded train is able to resume its journey, either because the original reason for it having been stranded has been resolved or it has been rescued.
ii) Evacuation: Train to a platform.
iii) Evacuation: Train to train.
iv) Evacuation: Train to track to alternative train (brought up alongside).
v) Evacuation: Train to track (walking along ballast to a suitable access point).

[4] https://www.rssb.co.uk/safety-and-health/improving-safety-health-and-wellbeing/understanding-human-factors/operational-decision-making/gforce-a-model-to-improve-decision-making-capability

Section 12 provides guidance on how to carry out an evacuation once the decision to do so has been made.

10.3 Key decisions

To evacuate or not to evacuate?

The single biggest decision to be made is likely to be between keeping passengers on board the train in the hope that it will be able to continue its journey within a reasonable time or evacuating them.

When and how to evacuate

Initially, the decision is whether to plan for an evacuation in parallel with progressing other options. But if an evacuation is the preferred option – or becomes the preferred option as the balance of risk changes and noting that one of the key objectives is to reduce the risk of an uncontrolled evacuation – then a further decision needs to be made on when and how this will be achieved (as per the hierarchy of options in Section 10.2).

Alerting the emergency services

Early consideration should be given to whether the assistance of the emergency services is likely to be required in the evacuation and contact made with them accordingly – see Section 8.6.

How are the on-going safety and welfare needs of passengers stranded on trains going to be met?

Until such time as rescue/evacuation of passengers has been achieved and passengers have been able to complete their journeys, decisions will need to be made and implemented in respect of meeting their physical needs such as lighting, heating, food and drink (water is particularly important) and access to toilets and providing them with information and reassurance. The specific needs of those who require additional support will also have to be taken into account – see Section 11.4.

Logging of decisions

Stranded passenger incidents are liable to trigger extensive investigations, potentially including legal inquiries, and may also be required if the event results in litigation. All those in decision making roles should therefore ensure that a record is kept of all significant decisions made, as well as the basis for the decision (including the information known at the time and any risk assessments undertaken) and the grounds on which alternative options were rejected. Where meetings are convened (whether in person or via Teams or similar), it is recommended that a suitable trained decision loggist be made available to make such records or an alternative technical solution used (e.g. recording the meeting and/or keeping a transcript).

10.4 Timelines

The target is for passengers to have been evacuated or be on the move again within 90 minutes of the train becoming stranded.

In order to achieve this when evacuation is, or becomes, the preferred option, the following timeline needs to be adhered to unless there are clear safety, practicality, welfare or customer experience reasons why this should not be the case. The timeline should start from the moment that a train is identified as stranded (as per the definition of ‘stranded train’ within Section 4). However, it should be recognised that the train may already have been at a stand for some time before this if there is a delay in identifying the start of the event as described in Section 8.1

- 15 minutes: Strategic decision of whether or not to plan for evacuation of stranded train(s) taken. The decision to plan for an evacuation is not intended to preclude progressing other response options (e.g. provision of an assisting locomotive/train) but to ensure that timely provision is made for evacuation of passengers from the train should these other options not achieve the overall 90 minute target time set out above.

  Also, key roles of Stranded Trains Champion, Stranded Passengers Champion, RIO, RIC (if appointed) and TOLO to be assigned.

- 30 minutes: Competent member of staff appointed for each evacuation and should ideally have reached the train(s) to which they have been assigned to assure passengers that the rescue is underway and to help with identification of passengers in need of additional support.

- 60 minutes: Evacuation to have commenced.

- 90 minutes: Evacuation to have been completed.

In the case of electrically powered trains without traction current, it is recommended that every effort be made to complete evacuation within 60 minutes, particularly in hot weather.

Given how key management of time is for meeting the needs of passengers stranded on trains, having a visible timer is recommended as an aid to keeping plans time bound.

10.5 Initial risk assessment

Determining the preferred and alternative options for responding to passengers stranded on trains incidents should be informed by an assessment of risk based on the information available. Particularly in the early stages, not all risks will be immediately quantifiable or even known, hence judgement will also be needed. The initial passenger needs and risks assessment requires refining and adjusting repeatedly as further information becomes available and the situation develops.

Responsibility for conducting the risk assessment is shared between the infrastructure manager(s) and transport undertaking(s) and it is recommended that the local risk assessment at the incident site be assigned jointly to the Stranded Trains Champion, as appointed by the infrastructure manager (see Section 6.3), and the Stranded Passengers Champion(s), as appointed by the transport undertaking(s) (see Section 6.2). Input from traincrew and other staff on site, remote train monitoring systems, monitoring of social media and, where possible, on-train CCTV, will be critical in providing the situational awareness of local conditions needed to inform the risk assessment.

Holding the infrastructure manager and transport undertaking jointly to account for risk assessment and the consequent decision making should enable a whole system risk approach to be used. For example, isolating the power supply over a significant area as a precautionary measure against a low likelihood risk following an incident may result in a large number of trains becoming stranded with all the risks and challenges that this presents. Conversely, any decision to re-energise power systems or authorise the movement of trains on adjacent lines needs to consider whether passengers have self-evacuated or are likely to do so.

10.6 Planning for evacuation

The most fundamental decision is likely to be whether to seek to hold passengers on board the train until it can be moved or set in motion arrangements for them to be evacuated.

Evacuating passengers from a train is not a decision to be taken lightly because it requires preparation and organisation and introduces an element of additional risk which should be balanced against the risks arising from keeping them on board. However, there are four circumstances in which evacuation is or becomes the preferred option, or indeed the only option.

i) When the nature of the incident is such that no other means of rescuing passengers is available, e.g. major damage to the infrastructure meaning that no train movements are possible for an extended period.

ii) In circumstances where evacuation is able to resolve a situation faster than waiting for a technical resolution if passenger numbers are low and/or the logistics simple. It is recommended that infrastructure managers and transport undertakings work together to explore whether simplified local evacuations can be undertaken in low-risk situations where the train is close to a station or an access point, all movements have been stopped and 3rd rail traction current has been isolated,

iii) As a response to an increasing likelihood of uncontrolled evacuation. In almost all cases, an uncontrolled evacuation by passengers is the least safe option for them and the most disruptive to the wider rail network and every effort should be made to dissuade them from this course of action (see Section 10.8). If this is unsuccessful, a controlled evacuation of the train(s) should be started as soon as possible, with passengers made aware of this intention.

iv) When external factors mean that passengers remaining on the stranded train is not the safest option. One such situation concerns wildfires. These can themselves result in the stranding of trains by burning through traction current or signalling cables or can pose a threat to a train stranded for other reasons. While the number of wildfires in the UK varies considerably on a year by year basis, there is a clear upward trend in line with global warming. If a stranded train is itself threatened by a wildfire, the assistance of the Fire & Rescue Services should immediately be sought for advice on the best course of action. Rapidly rising floodwater could also, in extreme cases, mean that remaining on the train is unsafe.

An evacuation may require specialist equipment and will always need sufficient staff to guide passengers through the unfamiliar procedure. Given the time required to assemble and deploy the required resources and equipment, the decision to evacuate, or at least potentially to evacuate, needs to be taken within the first 15 minutes if the overall target of 90 minutes for passengers to be evacuated or on the move again is to be met. Unless there is a high level of confidence that evacuation is not going to be needed, it is therefore recommended that it always be considered as a potential option and planned for accordingly.

When preparing for an evacuation, consideration should be given to the start and end points, any hazards that may be encountered and how these can be mitigated. In addition, the plan should include arrangements to be put in place for passengers once they have been removed from the immediate situation – these need to include staff to receive, re-assure and direct them, access to heating/lighting (if required), functioning toilets, refreshments, etc. and provision for onward travel. Care should be taken to avoid walking passengers off a train on which conditions are good only to require them to wait at the roadside for a bus, unprotected from the elements.

10.7 Situational awareness: factors to consider

To the extent that reliable information is available, risk assessments should take into account the following factors. These provide an overview of the issues, but it is unlikely that all these can be assessed fully in an unfolding event. Risk assessments should be updated as the situation changes and a record should be kept of all risk assessments undertaken.

Infrastructure managers and transport undertakings should ensure their PSoT protocol(s) specifies expectations about where information on these different factors will come from (e.g. a specific role or another organisation).

The factors below are grouped but are not listed in any implied order of priority.

No	Factor	Items to consider
***External factors**:*		
1.	Geography	The exact location at which the train is stranded relative to cuttings, embankments, tunnels, viaducts, etc. will affect the ease with which evacuation to or via the track can be achieved. The on-track environment - whether the train is on single or double/multiple track, the presence of OHLE or 3rd rail, the suitability of the ballast for alighting onto/walking on and cant deficiency - also needs to be considered. Track geometry will also affect the options for train-to-train evacuation. If the stranded train is not at a platform, the distance to the nearest station or access point to the railway (such as a level crossing) and the overall remoteness will affect the ease of providing onward travel and rescue to passengers once evacuated.

		Railway geography is also relevant - this will determine the ease with which an assisting train/locomotive can be both sourced and deployed.
2.	External conditions: weather	External air temperatures and the degree of sunlight shining directly on the train can have a direct and potentially serious impact on conditions inside the train, particularly if on train heating/air conditioning/ventilation systems are inoperative. If evacuation to or via the track is being considered, then wind speed, precipitation, fog and ground conditions (e.g. wet or presence/depth of snow/ice/frost) should be taken into account.
3.	External conditions: level of light	Being stranded on a train during hours of darkness may increase the stress levels of passengers, traincrew and on-board staff, particularly if on-board lighting has failed. Similar issues apply if a train is trapped in a tunnel, where passengers prone to claustrophobia will be particularly vulnerable. In both these cases, evacuation to or via trackside is likely to be considerably more difficult than it would otherwise be. Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB) research into train evacuation in emergencies showed that complete absence of light is very disconcerting to many people and conversely that even very limited amounts of light, such as created by mobile phones, are very reassuring. On trains without power, traincrew should seek to turn off most of the train lighting, leaving only minimal lighting in each carriage, to conserve battery power as long as possible.
4.	Time of day/day of week	This will affect a number of other considerations, including the number and demographics of passengers, the availability of staff able to be sent to the train to assist the traincrew, the availability of alternative road transport, the facilities available at stations to which stranded passengers are rescued, etc.
5.	Mobile phone reception	While GSM-R should be generally available (subject to there being power for the handset available on the train), access to public phone networks may be limited or non-existent and this will affect the ability to communicate with both passengers and staff.
***Factors relating to the incident**:*		
6.	Reason for the train stranding	For example, a simple mechanical failure is easier to deal with than a train trapped by extensive flooding.
7.	Duration	If the duration of the incident causing the train(s) to be stranded can be foreseen with a reasonable degree of certainty this will clearly influence the response.
8.	Scale of incident	Stranded train incidents can range from a small number of passengers being stranded on a single train with fully functioning heating/air conditioning and several members of traincrew/on-board staff to multiple crowded trains losing power during the middle of a heat wave. Infrastructure manager/transport undertaking response plans need to be flexible enough to address a full range of incidents. While each incident is likely to have unique elements, a simple three-way classification (large/medium/ small, major/ intermediate/minor, red/orange/yellow, etc.) may prove helpful as a means of enabling all concerned to gain an immediate appreciation of the overall scale of the problem and also in acting as a trigger for incremental parts of the response plan to be activated.
9.	Multiple trains with passengers on board affected	Where passengers are stranded on multiple trains then prioritisation of the resources based on the risk factors will be required. This needs to include the disproportionate effect that stopping a number of trains to allow a controlled evacuation of passengers from an individual train may have.

10.	Availability of suitable assisting locomotives/train	A realistic assessment of the time within which a stranded train can be assisted by another train or locomotive needs to be made. This should take into account the location of any such locomotives/train(s) relative to the stranded train (and with which they must be compatible), sourcing of associated traincrew, special equipment (such as emergency couplings) and the availability of the necessary infrastructure to permit the assisting train/locomotive to reach the one that which is stranded. In some cases, for example where a train is stranded as a result of flooding or there are OHLE problems, such assistance may not be possible as the assisting train/locomotive is unable to get to the scene. Assistance of the train should only be seen as the primary response when there is confidence that the needs of passengers on board the train can be adequately met until the assistance can be provided.
11.	Provision of rescue train	An alternative to evacuating stranded passengers to the trackside is to transfer them to a rescue train. This may be achieved either by i) drawing a second train alongside and transferring passengers to it using 'bridges' or via the track or ii) bringing a train to the front or rear of the stranded train and then either walking passengers through (where corridor connections allow) or else transferring them via the track. As for assisting trains/ locomotives above, an assessment is needed of the practicality (including realistic timescales) of this option, taking into account all relevant factors.
12.	Exceptional risks to the stranded train	There are some circumstances in which there may be a direct risk to the stranded train and any passengers stranded on it. Examples of this are a train stranded in rising flood water or as a result of a wildfire (see Section 10.6). In such cases, the assistance of the emergency services should be immediately sought and arrangements for a controlled evacuation from the train(s) in question urgently developed and implemented.
13.	Distance from/ease of reaching access point	Taking into consideration external factors such as weather, lighting levels, underfoot conditions and specific hazards (e.g. limited clearance).
14.	Availability/suitability of alternative onward transport/ accommodation	This should include consideration of the expected time to mobilise such transport, including the logistics and practicality of it being able to reach the nearest or other available access point. Overnight accommodation should be provided for those unable or unwilling to complete their journey until the following day.
15.	Proximity to station	If a station is close by, it may be possible to apply a simplified local evacuation (see Section 10.6). Also, whether there is a station within a reasonable distance that can be used for the rescue of stranded passengers, i.e. one with suitable facilities.
Factors relating to the train:		
16.	Type/characteristics of train involved	Whether or not the train has its own power, both for maintaining on-board systems and/or for movement (i.e. diesel or electric), how and how quickly battery load shedding takes place (for electrically powered trains without traction current), provision of end corridors, number and types of external door, provision of windows that can be opened, etc.
17.	Emergency equipment	What equipment is provided and how it can be accessed and deployed. Also, stocks of emergency supplies such as drinking water and foil blankets.
Factors relating to the passengers and on-board conditions		
18.	Number of passengers	In addition to the overall number of passengers on each of the affected trains, the number standing and not able to be provided with a seat.

19.	Types of passengers principally involved (e.g. frequent or infrequent travellers, type and length of journey being made, etc.)	This will influence factors such as how much reassurance will be needed, the amount of luggage, whether passengers are likely to have their own supplies of food and drink, etc. Most importantly, this also influences the likelihood for an uncontrolled evacuation, e.g. commuters making shorter journeys and who know there is a station 400 metres down the track from which they can be picked up or make alternative arrangements to get home or to work are more likely to take matters into their own hands than occasional passengers making longer journeys. Passengers heading for airports/Eurostar/seaports for international journeys and who believe they may be able to get a cab or other form of alternative transport may also be more likely to self-evacuate. Evidence indicates that passengers in the London area tend to be quicker to embark on uncontrolled evacuations than those elsewhere in the country.
20.	Attributes of individual passengers involved – the number of passengers with additional support needs and the nature of such needs	See Section 11.4.
21.	VIPs/media on board	
22.	Alcohol and group behaviour	Consumption of alcohol or being part of a large group may adversely influence passenger behaviour.
23.	Internal conditions/ facilities	On-board conditions should generally be the single most important factor influencing the decision on how best to respond. The type of train will affect this, with trains powered only by electricity losing on-board systems such as lighting, heating, toilets and PA quickly as batteries run down while diesel and bi-mode trains, or where auxiliary power can be provided, can sustain power to such services for an extended period. There are two particularly critical elements. The first is the temperature/quality/humidity of air on the train. The speed at which, in the event of inoperative air conditioning, the on-board environment can deteriorate during hot or even warm weather – especially on a heavily-loaded train – from one which is simply unpleasant to one which poses significant risks to health (and hence escalates the incident into a full-scale emergency) should not be under-estimated. Conversely, the ventilation effect of opening external doors and normally sealed windows should not be over-estimated. It is therefore recommended that in all such cases, preparations for evacuation should begin immediately the situation becomes apparent. The second concerns the availability of toilet facilities. For many people, including young children and those with certain medical conditions, even 2 hours without access to a working toilet may be very problematic, hence it is recommended that the aspiration should be to ensure that no passenger is stranded on a train without functioning toilet facilities for more than 60 minutes.
24.	Availability of drinks/ refreshments	Drink and to a lesser extent food will need to be provided if passengers are stranded on a train with no or limited catering for a prolonged period.
25.	On-train PA	Whether this is functioning and also whether it can be accessed remotely by a Control office.
26.	External media/peer group influences	These can come from a number of sources – personal messages, social media and more general media reporting.

		Passengers may form groups where there is common interest – those travelling to a sporting event or an airport for example – and therefore become harder to manage. If passengers become aware of other uncontrolled evacuations, they may be tempted to follow suit, particularly if confidence in the rail industry's ability to manage the situation is low.
Staff relating factors:		
27.	Number/type of on-board staff on the train	This will determine how much and what form of additional support needs to be provided. DOO trains will generally require a larger and quicker response.
28.	Availability of staff	The availability of staff both to assist during any evacuation and provide on-going support for passengers while they are waiting onward transport should be considered when formulating a controlled evacuation plan as this may influence the choice of the precise evacuation point and the timing.
29.	Ease with which staff can walk through train	This will depend on the length of the train, whether corridor connections are available between as well as within units, how crowded the train is and the amount and quality of information that is being provided to passengers.
Other factors		
30.	The ability to provide information to passengers stranded on the train	This relates both to the technical ability to get information to the train and the ability to disseminate information through the train, whether through announcements made by traincrew or remotely (i.e. from signaller or Control office) or by a member of traincrew (or someone acting on their behalf/instruction) passing through the train directly addressing passengers. See Section 11 for more detail.
31.	The ability to provide information to traincrew and other staff assisting them on the train	It is essential that staff are provided with at least the same information as passengers and within at least the same timescales. If it becomes apparent that passengers are being better informed than staff, trust that the rail industry is in control of the situation will quickly dissipate and the likelihood of uncontrolled evacuation will increase.
32.	Use of EPW and ESW	Whether it is possible to introduce Emergency Permissive Working or Emergency Special Working to e.g. allow a stranded train to draw forward or set back to a more suitable location for an evacuation and, if so, how quickly.

10.8 Preventing uncontrolled evacuation: specific factors to consider

One of the key objectives is to reduce the risk of an uncontrolled evacuation.

There is a limit to how long passengers will be prepared to remain on a stranded train, even though this may be the safest environment for them. While the exact threshold will depend on a variety of factors, the evidence from train drivers involved in the incident at Ladbroke Grove incident of 7 December 2023 is that passenger behaviour started to deteriorate after 60 minutes and that all passenger support was lost after 90 minutes, when uncontrolled evacuation attempts began.

Traincrew in particular need to remain alert to the risk of this and take actions to reduce it. When it is judged that an uncontrolled evacuation is likely (based on feedback and advice from traincrew and other staff on site), every effort should be made to dissuade passengers from this course of action. This should include options for re-deploying any railway staff who are at or near the site to assist traincrew in reducing the risk of uncontrolled evacuation and may mean diverting engineering staff to this end rather than repairing assets. As soon as it is judged likely that passengers are beginning to consider starting an uncontrolled evacuation, they should be advised to remain on board and assured that a safe resolution of the situation is being developed.

Rail staff will need help to identify indicators (set out in the following table) that an uncontrolled evacuation may take place. Below is a simplified behaviour model which has been developed to describe the factors most likely to result in an uncontrolled evacuation.

Individual	Organisational
• Misperception of hazards • Perceived low likelihood of detection • Perceived immunity from consequences and decisions • Able bodied • Male passengers are more likely to start an uncontrolled evacuation than females	• Low staff to passenger ratio • No established authority • Poor information provision • Lack of trust in organisations being 'in control' of the situation
Environmental	**Task/Scenario**
• Unacceptable temperature • Not able to meet basic needs of passengers, e.g. toilets • Positive external conditions • Destination in sight • Alternative travel options known to be in the area and accessible • Evacuation route visible	• Long delay • Crowded • Group pressure to evacuate • Shortage of time – perceived or actual • Complex procedures

This simplified model is suitable for aiding traincrew in passenger management and decision making during disruptions. However, more detailed information is provided in the RSSB project report T626 "Research into the management of passengers on trains stranded in high ambient temperatures", which may be useful in developing plans.

10.9 Multiple trains

It is acknowledged that there may be multiple stranded trains and that there may not be sufficient resources immediately available to attend to all of them. Each train should therefore be assessed individually. Trains should be treated as a priority according to the profile of the passengers on board, taking into account the perceived likelihood of self-evacuation and passengers with additional needs. The priority order should be determined by the Stranded Trains Champion taking into account input from the Stranded Passengers Champion(s).

10.10 Resilience of contingency arrangements

Infrastructure managers and transport undertakings responding to incidents involving passengers stranded on trains should not rely on a single response plan (for each stranded train) but instead aim to have alternative options (Plans A, B, C) in place or in the process of being implemented so as to provide resilience. These should be planned in parallel with the preferred option and should also account for implementing multiple plans at the same time (or in a specific order) if multiple trains are involved.

11 Supporting passengers stranded on trains

11.1 Information to passengers

It is vital that passengers have confidence in the ability of the transport undertaking and infrastructure manager to resolve the incident. Providing regular information is a very powerful means of reassuring passengers that 'the railway' remains in control and is actively attempting to resolve the problem. People are not irrational – if they perceive 'the railway' is not adequately managing the situation and associated risks, they may take logical steps, within the context of their own understanding of those risks, to reduce them by self-evacuating in an uncontrolled manner.

Accurate information should be given, irrespective of whether it is good or bad news. It should be provided as defined in the appropriate Customer Information Pledges. In addition to the factual content (which may be fairly minimal, at least in the early stages), reassurance is also needed.

11.2 What passengers want/expect

A Transport Focus report[5] published in 2010 highlighted that passengers can be expected to focus on the following key themes in respect of how the incident is being managed and there is no evidence to suggest that this has changed materially since:

1. Treat me with respect.
2. Recognise my plight.
3. You got me into this, help get me out.
4. Act joined up.

Feedback from those involved in the Ladbroke Grove incident of 7 December 2023 identified the following as the three biggest areas of passenger concern:

1. Lack of communication about the rescue.
2. Anger about the time the rescue took.
3. Concern about compensation claims.

11.3 Generic considerations for information provision

Reference should be made to the Customer Information Pledges produced by the RDG Customer Information Group. References to individual Pledges are shown in square brackets in the remainder of this section.

Where information is incomplete or imprecise, it should still be passed on but with suitable explanation of its limitations. This is to provide reassurance to passengers that efforts are continuing to rectify the situation and that "the railway" cares. Information provided, whether by on-board staff, at stations, via social media/websites, Tyrell messages or the NRCC, should always be clear, consistent, correct and concise [J3].

It is recommended that the following information be provided:

Event/Issue	Recommended approach to communications
Disruption	Tell passengers as soon as it is known that their train may be disrupted [G1]. This could include use of GSM-R messages direct to the train.
Unexpected Stop	An initial announcement (the 'disruption icebreaker') should be made within two minutes, even if the reason for the delay is not known at that point [G4]. a. A further announcement to be made as soon as further information is available about the cause and likely consequences of the delay. b. Announcements are about reassurance and confidence-building – even if nothing more is known. The content and style of the announcement are likely to be the biggest factors in managing passenger behaviour and maintaining their trust in 'the railway'.
Continuing delay	Further announcements should be made by a member of the traincrew or other on-board staff whenever new facts suitable for informing and/or reassuring passengers become available [H5]. It is good practice for staff to demonstrate empathy and provide reassurance and confidence, with announcements continuing to be made at regular intervals of no more than 10 minutes even when no new information is available.
Dissuading passengers from an uncontrolled evacuation	Where traincrew or on-board staff believe there is a risk of uncontrolled evacuation, all reasonable efforts to prevent this should be made. These should include making announcements highlighting the risks involved, such as dangers from moving trains, power cables, weather and ground conditions, presence of the 3rd rail, etc. and emphasising to passengers that their safest option is to remain on the train. Suitable and sufficient dialogue with passengers reduces this risk. See also Section 10.8.
Use of recorded announcements	Recorded announcements should generally not be used to communicate to stranded passengers. People want to hear from someone who cares and is in charge. Whilst it is recognised that safety critical actions will need to take precedence over making announcements, every effort should be made to continue to keep passengers informed by whatever means possible.

[5] https://www.transportfocus.org.uk/publication/delays-and-disruption-rail-passengers-have-their-say/

PA announcements via GSM-R	Transport undertaking information Control staff should be encouraged to use the GSM-R TOC terminal, where provided, to ensure that passengers stranded on DOO trains have regular updates – this not only accelerates communications but also reduces calls between train drivers and Control offices, thereby releasing them to focus on operational considerations. Most trains can have this facility and updates can be provided to trains with on-board staff as well [G1]. Good practice is that arrangements for Control are set out on how this is best managed.
Use of social networking channels	Many passengers are using digital technology to communicate directly with people (including transport undertakings) outside the train and increasingly to access and exchange information and make comments on social networking sites. They are no longer reliant solely on information provided by on-board staff and can often access more information than on-board staff, though its accuracy may be variable. It is therefore vitally important that as much information as possible is made available via these forms of media, not least because if there is no “official” source of information passengers can form an incorrect or misleading perception of what is actually occurring. The social media channel most likely to be used by passengers is X (formerly known as Twitter) and it is recommended that all transport undertakings should have arrangements in place to monitor and respond to X messages in real time during periods of disruption. Transport undertaking X accounts should be regularly updated with the latest information about the incident. It should be acknowledged that trains are stranded, confirmation given of the specific trains involved and an estimate provided of when both individual trains and services more generally will be on the move. If it is likely that trains will be stranded for a significant length of time, this needs to be made clear to passengers from the outset, together with information about what is being done to get trains moving or passengers evacuated from them and to provide assistance to passengers on board the train(s) meanwhile. NRE’s national account (@nationalrailenq) is managed 24/7 by the NRCC. It is crucial that effective communication is maintained with the NRCC (e.g. via Tyrell and other messaging systems) to ensure that the X accounts are kept up to date with changing developments and that individual replies can be sent to passengers. Inbound questions from passengers should be answered and assurance should be given about onward travel arrangements such as connections. The NRCC also monitors the NRE Facebook channel in case any questions are asked on this. Transport undertakings should also actively monitor X to see what is being said by passengers affected by the disruption and indeed by those stranded on trains. This can indicate the “mood” on board the train and whether passenger needs are being met, including for those who have additional support needs (e.g. medication). Where possible, those sending such messages should be asked specifically about on-board conditions, which train/coach they are in, etc. Attempts should be made to substantiate any significant information provided. By monitoring X, it may be possible to have an “early warning” of an uncontrolled evacuation of a train. Suitable messages can then be sent to passengers to discourage them from taking this course of action. Staff responding to incidents will often use X to monitor what is happening and again it is important that they are kept fully up to date.

	Transport undertakings and infrastructure managers should train their social media teams specifically in their policies on the management of stranded trains and the questions to ask those stranded on board a train. This should include ensuring they are alert to significant information and the need to pass this to the relevant Control office without delay. Further information on social channels and responses to major disruption can be found in RDG's Guidance Note 'RDG-GN039 - Social Media Response to Major Incidents and Disruptive Events'.
Websites	Whilst X and other social media sites are important channels of communication, their take up is not universal and many passengers will continue to want to use transport undertaking and the NRE websites to obtain information. It is vital that websites are kept up-to-date, even if the message is that the situation hasn't changed – stranded passengers and also anyone waiting for them need to know "the railway" is in control and has a plan. The NRCC should be on the standard distribution list for all updates so that the NRE website can be updated in real-time. This is particularly important as many transport undertakings now use a direct feed from NRE to update their own sites [H6]. The NRCC QA team can support in ensuring websites are accurate and consistent.
Telephone contact and station help points	Some passengers will prefer to call either NRE or transport undertaking customer service departments for updates. The NRE contact centres are updated by the NRCC, so it is vital that the NRCC is kept fully up to date with the latest developments. Those at stations meeting arriving passengers will often use help points to ascertain what is occurring and when a train is likely to arrive. It is therefore vital that those staffing the help points are provided with the latest information. Transport undertakings should have pre-agreed plans in place that allow them to extend the opening hours of their customer service centres in the event of disruption occurring at a time when they would otherwise be closed.
Use of Darwin (the National Real Time Database)	Where trains become delayed or stranded, and there is a reasonable estimate of when they are likely to be moving, this information should be communicated to Darwin so that passengers and those meeting them at stations who use live departure boards and other real-time journey planning tools can see the estimated delay and have their expectations managed [H3]. In addition, a feature within Darwin provides transport undertakings with the ability to apply an 'ad-hoc' alert specific to a train. Transport undertakings should adopt using this functionality so that passengers can benefit from specific information pertaining to them.
Wi-Fi	Transport undertakings should endeavour to remove any requirement for passengers stranded on trains to have to pay to use the functionality of Wi-Fi. At the same time, any bandwidth restrictions should be lifted if this will help with customer information. Priority should be given to maintaining the functioning of the train's Wi-Fi to allow passengers to access information as phone signals may be poor.

11.4 Passengers with additional support needs

In any incident involving passengers being stranded on trains, it is likely that some will be disproportionately affected and face individual risks based on their circumstances. Many of these will not present as 'vulnerable' in the usual sense of the word (though those who are 'vulnerable' may well have additional support needs) and their vulnerabilities may not be immediately obvious.

Those who have such additional support needs vary considerably.

i) One group comprises those who generally may need additional support quite independently of becoming a stranded passenger – for example, those with reduced mobility, who have poor vision or hearing or who are pregnant or accompanied by infants/young children.

ii) Others need additional support as a direct result of becoming a stranded passenger. This includes those who require frequent medication (including insulin dependence) but also those affected by anxiety, claustrophobia or who are neurologically diverse.

iii) Other groups include those with a poor understanding of and ability to speak English and those whose additional needs simply require a message to be got to someone – for example, a parent who is due to collect a child from school but is now unable to do so and who has no access to a functioning mobile phone (e.g. phone flat or no signal).

To the extent that resources are available, it may be possible to meet the above additional needs, at least partially. But there is one further group for which this is not possible – those attending e.g. a job interview, a wedding or funeral or en route to an airport to catch an international fight. In such cases there may be little that the traincrew or indeed wider rail industry can do other than resolve the stranding as quickly as possible, apologise and advise what compensation is appropriate.

A further complication is that some will have additional support needs only when stranded on board the train (e.g. someone who is claustrophobic), others will be fine while on the train but have special support needs in respect of evacuation (e.g. someone who is confined to a wheelchair) and others will have additional support needs in both cases (e.g. someone reliant on regular medication).

Identifying those with additional support needs is therefore likely to be challenging. Passenger Assist can provide information about those on the train who have booked assistance in advance of their journey but the majority will not have done, hence a member of traincrew or on-board staff will be required to walk through the train to identify anyone with additional support needs, including asking them to self-identify. Assistance with this can be sought from suitable responsible passengers, e.g. members of railway staff travelling passenger, members of the medical profession or members of the emergency services.

This information needs to be provided to the Stranded Passengers Champion or Control as it is a key component of risk assessment and hence determining the best option for evacuating/rescuing passengers.

When evacuating or rescuing passengers who have been stranded on a train, the key provision of the Equality Act 2010 needs to be respected, i.e. people should not be discriminated against, harassed or victimised based on eight protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation). This means, for example, that all the able-bodied passengers should not be evacuated leaving mobility-impaired passengers on the train without a plan being in place to provide them with on-going support and an alternative option for leaving the train.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of groups of individual passengers who may have additional support needs:

Passengers/groups with additional support needs	**Action**
Mobility-impaired passengers and those with hidden disabilities	Access to on-board toilet facilities - it may be necessary to ensure a through route to accessible toilets if the train is overcrowded.
Passengers with assistance animals e.g. guide dogs	It may be necessary to supply a bowl of water for an assistance dog, particularly in warmer weather.
Passengers on medication such as diabetics	It may be necessary to prioritise the provision of food for diabetics and those with other medical conditions.
Passengers with cognitive impairments	Instructions should be as simple and as clear as possible, without use of technical language or jargon.
English not first language	Use suitable staff or other passengers to help with passing on messages.
Hearing impaired	Use suitable staff or other passengers to help with passing on messages, including writing them down.

Hidden disability that cannot be identified	Some disabilities, such as autism or the need to use a colostomy bag, are not immediately obvious.
Anxious passengers, including those with neurodiversity, and unaccompanied children	Traincrew or on-board staff member to provide re-assurance and encourage fellow passengers to do the same.
Urgent message about delay needs to be sent	Attempt to send message on behalf of passenger.

11.5 Heating/air conditioning

Transport undertakings should have in place specific 'hot weather' and 'cold weather' plans to anticipate and mitigate the challenges that these conditions present to the operational railway and its passengers.

In the event of passengers becoming stranded on a train, an assessment of the environmental conditions in each vehicle should be undertaken and the results reported to the Stranded Trains Champion and Control. Suggested timescales/frequencies for this are as follows:

External temperature	Status of on-train heating/AC	Initial assessment	Periodic assessments
Cold (i.e. below 5°C)	Functioning	Within 30 minutes	Every 30 minutes
	Not functioning	As soon as possible	Every 20 minutes
Moderate (i.e. 5°C – 25°C)	Functioning	Within 30 minutes	Every 60 minutes
	Not functioning	Within 30 minutes	Every 30 minutes
Hot (i.e. above 25°C)	Functioning	Within 20 minutes	Every 20 minutes
	Not functioning	As soon as possible	Every 15 minutes

Traincrew training should include an understanding of how quickly on-board conditions can deteriorate to a potentially dangerous extent on a hot day (or in conditions of bright sunlight) in the event of the failure of the air conditioning. The build-up of humidity on a heavily loaded train can be especially problematic. RDG Guidance Note RDG-OPS-GN-015: Extreme Weather Arrangements, including Failure or Non-Availability of On-Train Environment Control Systems provides more information on options, including the opening of external doors to provide ventilation.

Modern rolling stock with monitoring equipment allows Control staff to understand how long the equipment will continue to run before load shedding (i.e. the deliberate progressive shutdown of elements of the train's power system necessary to prevent the failure of the entire system) occurs and it stops functioning.

If the loss of on train heating and other systems is due to icing of conductor rails preventing trains from drawing power, then local treatment with portable spraying equipment can allow restoration of the 3rd rail adjacent to the pick-up shoes, thereby restoring power to on train systems.

Transport undertakings may wish to provide emergency supplies of 'space blankets' on board trains during periods when extremely cold weather is forecast, particularly those operating over exposed/remote routes. In the event that train heating is unavailable during cold conditions, traincrew should seek to concentrate passengers together to generate/conserve heat.

11.6 Lighting

Total darkness is likely to cause distress and risk to passengers. Urban environments are likely to have some light from other sources, but rural and remote locations could be completely dark.

Traincrew should be provided with instructions on how to maintain minimum levels of lighting on board a train which becomes stranded without power either during the hours of darkness or in a tunnel. This might include concentrating passengers in certain vehicles and turning lighting off in other vehicles to conserve battery power or turning off a proportion of lights where this is provided for. Passengers should similarly be concentrated in the event that lighting fails completely as this will serve to reduce security risks/concerns and generally provide re-assurance.

The provision and use of light sticks is recommended to assist with management of passengers in darkness. As well as assisting with evacuation from the vehicle, light sticks can also be used to mark out the safe walking route to the egress point. Light sticks can last up to 12 hours dependent on the specification.

11.7 Access to and usability of toilets

Transport undertakings should ensure that traincrew are familiar with the particular characteristics of the toilets on the trains which they operate (e.g. type of toilet, whether reliant on electrical power, etc.).

Many modern toilets rely on electricity to flush. In the event of a loss of on train power, they will work off the train battery for a limited time but will be subject to load shedding fairly early on which will also affect powered toilet doors.

Traincrew should seek as far as possible to manage use of toilets to conserve water (e.g. through reducing flushing and encouraging passengers to use as little water as possible for hand washing).

Transport undertakings should have in place contingency arrangements for when passengers are stranded on trains with no access to a functioning toilet. The time in contingency plans to move passengers will need to be quicker if there are no working or fitted toilets.

With modern toilet systems, once either the toilet water tank is empty, or the controlled emission tank is full, flushing is no longer possible. This effectively means that once flushing has ceased, the toilet will effectively no longer be usable and will lock itself out of use.

11.8 Drink (and food)

In hot conditions, regular intake of liquids is essential. Access to drinks will gain in importance as the delay extends, particularly for young children and those with certain medical conditions. Access to food is less essential from a health perspective (other than for passengers with specific medical conditions) but may contribute to providing re-assurance and comfort to stranded passengers and will also be more important the longer they are stranded. Transport undertakings should consider the following means of making drink and food available to passengers stranded on trains, with the preferred method(s) for any particular fleet documented in the PSoT protocol:

1. Using existing supplies from the buffet car or catering trolley.
2. Using emergency supplies on board trains and/or at nominated stations. These may be in place either permanently or when extreme weather/temperatures is/are forecast.
3. Encouraging passengers to share any food/drink they have brought onto the train themselves.
4. Getting supplies to the train (either by means of another train, by road, or other means) to facilitate this. Transport undertakings should consider maintaining stockpiles of emergency supplies at nominated stations, either permanently or when extreme weather/temperatures is/are forecast.
5. Arranging for refreshments to be provided to passengers once evacuated from the stranded train.

11.9 Post rescue/incident

Support for passengers as described in this section (i.e. Section 11) should continue to be provided once they have been evacuated/rescued and maintained until they cease to qualify as stranded – see Section 13.3

12 Evacuation – developing and implementing the tactical plan

12.1 Introduction

Sections 10.4, 10.5 and 10.6 cover respectively the need for an early decision on whether or not to progress controlled evacuation, risk assessment and planning for such an evacuation. This section addresses the evacuation process itself.

12.2 Options for evacuation

Once the decision has been taken to evacuate a train, as opposed to rescuing it or repairing the fault, the next question in the Hierarchy of Options (see Section 10.2) is how to evacuate it.

It is always preferable to evacuate passengers to a station platform, if possible. Options for moving a train forward or back to get at least one door alongside a platform should be investigated at the earliest possible stage of the incident.

Passengers can be evacuated to another train on the same line by:

a. Bringing a rescue train to the front or rear of the stranded train and walking passengers through by means of end corridor connections; or by
b. Bringing a rescue train close to the front or rear of the stranded train and transferring passengers by requiring them to climb down to track level, walk between the two trains and climb up into the rescue train.

Passengers can be evacuated to another train on a different line by:

a. Bringing a rescue train directly alongside the stranded train and transferring passengers via an approved ramp or bridge placed between the two trains at train floor level; or by
b. Bringing a rescue train to a point nearby and transferring passengers by requiring them to climb down to track level, walk a short distance between the two trains and then climb up into the rescue train.

Passengers can be evacuated by requiring them to climb down to track level and escorting them along the track to a station or trackside access point. Evacuating passengers via the track is usually the least preferable option and will involve stopping all train movements in the area and switching off power supplies.

12.3 Pre-conditions for initiating the tactical evacuation plan

Before evacuation can safely commence, a number of pre-conditions should be met:

i) The infrastructure manager(s) and transport undertaking(s) concerned should be in agreement that an evacuation is to be carried out. This should be with the explicit support of the Stranded Trains Champion and Stranded Passengers Champion. If the emergency services are on site, they make the decision whether to evacuate, but this should be in conjunction with the rail industry representatives (including traincrew, RIO, TOLO and Control).
ii) Traction current has been isolated (essential for 3rd rail, may or may not be required for OHLE)
iii) All train movements on adjacent lines have been stopped.
iv) Suitable and sufficient staff* resources are in place on board the train to help prepare passengers to be evacuated and to organise, direct and re-assure them.
v) Suitable and sufficient staff* resources are in place to assist in the evacuation itself, e.g. assist passengers to climb down ladders from the train to the track or use train to train bridges.
vi) If evacuation is to or via trackside, suitable and sufficient staff* resources are in place to supervise passengers once they have been evacuated and direct them to a suitable access or assembly point.

viii) Suitable and sufficient staff* are on hand to receive and support passengers at the location(s) to which they have been rescued, e.g. stations.
ix) Suitable and sufficient equipment as required for the evacuation is available and in place – train to train bridges, ladders, lighting, etc.
x) The evacuation plan includes how the evacuation of passengers with additional support needs (see Section 11.4) is to be managed.
xi) Arrangements are in place for any passengers who cannot be evacuated using the evacuation method being deployed.
xii) Evacuated passengers should continue to be supervised by staff until they have been rescued, e.g. by staff being deployed to evacuation points to provide support for passengers awaiting onward transport.
xiii) All staff* involved in the evacuation have been briefed on the plan and what is expected of them.

* This may include members of the emergency services or others commandeered to assist

12.4 Communicating the tactical plan

Before the evacuation commences, the tactical plan should be communicated as follows:

i) Staff involved: All staff* involved in the evacuation should be briefed on the plan and what is expected of them – this includes not only those at the incident site but also those in Control offices, at stations, signallers, etc.

* This may include members of the emergency services or others commandeered to assist.

Where multiple trains are to be evacuated, this should include identifying who is being allocated to which train.

ii) Passengers: General advance advise that an evacuation is to take place will serve to demonstrate to passengers that the situation is being managed and hence serve to re-assure them and dissuade them from considering self-evacuation. Beyond this, individual passengers may have particular issues and concerns about their ability to evacuate (with elderly relatives, small children, animals, personal possessions, etc.) and hence need re-assurance.

iii) Emergency services: The emergency services if they are involved.

12.5 Passenger luggage

Transport undertakings should also consider what advice or instructions to give to passengers and staff concerning luggage and personal effects. Taking luggage will slow down the evacuation and may potentially give rise to additional risks, particularly if it has to be carried or wheeled for any distance. However, it should be expected that many passengers will not be prepared to leave luggage on the train as it will be unsecured, may contain essential or valuable items, will probably be unlabelled and they may well be unable to recover it for some time. Attempts to persuade or compel them to do so may give rise to altercations with staff.

If items of passenger property are left on an evacuated train, then steps must be taken to manage the security of those items until they can be removed from the train to a suitably secure location and/or returned to their owner. Labelling of such items will make return to the rightful owners easier.

12.6 Implementing the evacuation plan

In all cases of evacuation, but particularly when passengers have been evacuated to or via the track, care should be taken to ensure that all those evacuated have been accounted for i.e. have not become lost or unknowingly left behind in the process.

When a DOO train is involved, additional resources will be needed to support the driver.

Trained transport undertaking staff will usually manage evacuation from the train whilst infrastructure manager staff will be in charge of passengers once on the ballast. As soon as they have been conducted off the track – whether to another train, a station or an access point, then transport undertaking staff re-assume responsibility for them.

The person leading the evacuation should identify any passengers who cannot be evacuated, with or without assistance. These passengers should be supported, including providing them with information about how they will be removed from the train, the timescales involved, and the means of communication and facilities available to them. It is recommended that a member of staff or other suitable person should stay with or be available to anyone left behind following the initial evacuation, especially passengers with additional support needs. The assistance of the emergency services may be required in evacuating passengers where this is beyond the capabilities of the rail industry personnel available. Emergency services should be informed as soon as possible of any possible request for their assistance in the evacuation – see Section 8.6.

12.7 Stranded passengers once evacuated/rescued from the train

Support for passengers should continue to be provided once they have been evacuated/rescued and maintained until they cease to qualify as stranded – see Section 13.3.

13 Stranded passengers once evacuated/rescued

13.1 Maintaining contact and support

Arrangements for maintaining contact with passengers evacuated/rescued from a stranded train should be put in place. Where the rescue is onto another train or to a station, use can be made of the associated communication systems. If it is to trackside, a public highway or local authority care, then arrangements should be put in place, such as deploying staff to maintain communications.

Once passengers have been evacuated/rescued, whether to another train, replacement road transport, a station or some form of reception centre, the transport undertaking should as far as reasonably practicable ensure that their requirements as described in Section 11 continue to be met until such time as they cease to qualify as stranded (see Section 13.3). In particular, the following should be provided:

1. Information as to the arrangements for them to continue their journey (or be otherwise accommodated).
2. Toilet facilities.
3. Refreshments.
4. Medical facilities.
5. Assistance in contacting concerned friends/relatives.

13.2 Compensation

Passengers should be made aware of their entitlements to refunds, compensation, etc. and how these can be claimed, for example by giving out refund/feedback forms and/or weblinks.

Staff taking a proactive lead in this is likely to be received positively by passengers, conversely not doing so will serve to compound passenger ill feelings.

In order that inconvenienced passengers can be fairly compensated, and any subsequent claims properly addressed, passenger contact details and ticket numbers should be obtained whenever practicable.

13.3 When passengers cease to qualify as stranded

Being involved in a stranded train incident does not alter the need to travel for most passengers (though the intended destination may change as a result) and hence support should continue to be provided for and during onward travel until such time as the passenger ceases to qualify as stranded.

Passengers cease to qualify as stranded and hence no longer fall under the provisions of this Guidance Note:

i) When they have reached their intended destination* (acknowledging that this may have changed as a result of the delay incurred), whether by alternative rail services or replacement road services and potentially involving overnight accommodation; or
ii) If they elect to be picked up by family/friends rather than use replacement road services.

* While strictly speaking responsibility ends when the passenger completes the journey for which they hold a valid rail ticket, judgement is also required – leaving passengers who have missed the last connecting bus on from the terminating point of their rail journey to their final destination due to the delay to fend for themselves is not acceptable.

The above apply equally to any passengers who have elected to self-evacuate, with the caveat that in purely practical terms, identifying who such passengers are and maintaining/regaining communication with them may be challenging if not impossible to do on the day.

13.4 Formal investigations

If a passengers stranded on trains incident leads to a formal investigation or inquiry, the results should be shared with passengers to help to restore their confidence and regain their goodwill. Consideration should be given to the collection of passengers' names and contact information to allow contact post incident.

13.5 Post incident review and learning

Following closure of the incident a review should be undertaken to identify lessons learned – this should include identification of what went well and what went less well. Where learning is seen to have wider application, it should be shared across the industry.

14 Passengers Stranded on Trains Response Assessment Tool

RDG has developed a Passengers Stranded on Trains Response Assessment Tool (PSoTRAT) based broadly on RM^3 (the ORR's Risk Management Maturity Model). This is intended to provide assurance to the organisation completing it and to the wider industry that this Guidance Note is being followed in principle and in practice.

Version 1 of the PSoTRAT was based on the content of Issue 5 of this Guidance Note. It can be found here: Tool and the accompanying guide to its use here: Tool Guide

Version 2 will be aligned with this Issue (Issue 6) of this Guidance Note and is expected to be available on or around 31 March 2025.

15 Other sources of information and advice

15.1 Rail industry documents

The following rail industry documents include content that is relevant to meeting the needs of passengers stranded on trains. Where appropriate, specific cross-references are provided within the text of this Guidance Note.

15.2 RDG operations related documents

The following are RDG documents and can be found on the following page:
https://www.raildeliverygroup.com/our-services/cop-guidance.html

Document	Title/information
RDG-OPS-GN-015	Extreme Weather Arrangements, including Failure or Non-Availability of On-Train Environment Control Systems
RDG-OPS-GN-016	Competence of Train Operator Liaison Officers (TOLOs)
RDG-GN039	Social Media Response to Major Incidents and Disruptive Events
RDG-OPS-GN-063	Critical Incident Management

15.3 RDG Customer Information Pledges

https://www.raildeliverygroup.com/our-services/customer-services/pledges/all-the-pledges.html

15.4 Network Rail documents

Document	Title/information
NOP 4.15	Managing Stranded Passengers and Train Evacuation

15.5 RSSB documents and reports

Railway Group Standards and associated Guidance, in particular:

Document	Title/information
GERT8000	Rule Book
RIS-2730-RST Issue 1.1	Vehicle Fire Safety and Evacuation
RIS-3118-TOM Issue 2	Incident Response Planning & Management

All the above are available from the RSSB Standards Catalogue.

Research reports:

Document	Title/information
T626	Research into the management of passengers on trains stranded in high ambient temperatures 2006
T703	Facilitating shared expectations between passengers and front-line staff - 2009
T1065	Identifying and developing best practice in the making of on-train emergency announcements - 2016
S341	Understanding and Preventing Passenger Self-Evacuation from Trains – Knowledge search - July 2019

All the above are available from the RSSB website.

15.6 Rail Partners documents

Document	Title/information
RP-OPS-GN-50	Train Evacuation Equipment Provision and Deployment

The above is available (to Rail Partners members only) at https://url.uk.m.mimecastprotect.com/s/9SwkC81yLuYQrr9Tnf0FyrPoC?domain=railpartners.sharepoint.com

15.7 ORR/Transport Focus research reports

Document	Title/information
Meeting the needs of passengers when trains become stranded: How well is the industry doing?	Full research report produced by Steer – March 2024
Improving the passenger experience when trains become 'stranded'	Summary report and recommendations – August 2024

Both the above are available from https://www.transportfocus.org.uk/publication/improving-the-passenger-experience-when-trains-become-stranded/

15.8 Other documents

Further relevant information may also be found in the following external documents:

- Emergency Response & Recovery – Non-Statutory Guidance Accompanying the Civil Contingencies Act 2004
- Identifying people who are vulnerable in a crisis: guidance for emergency planners and responders

Appendix A – Timeline framework from when it is identified that a train is stranded

The following tables and flowchart provide an indicative timeline framework to meet the overall aim that passengers should be evacuated (or on the move again) within 90 minutes of a train becoming stranded unless there are clear safety, welfare and customer experience advantages in their remaining on the train.

A1 Infrastructure Manager roles

Provided below is a non-exhaustive list of key activities - reference must always be made to Rule Book requirements and any applicable instructions or company processes

Time after a train is identified as stranded	***Incident phase***	***Controlling signaller***	***Infrastructure manager's person in charge of managing the incident*** *(Incident Controller/RCM/SNDM/ RIC (if appointed) depending on Command & Control arrangements put in place)*	***Rail Incident Officer*** *(or equivalent role - typically a Mobile Operations Manager will assume the role of RIO once on site, but it can be undertaken by anyone with this competency)*	***Stranded Trains Champion*** *(or RIO or as assigned if Stranded Trains Champion not appointed)*
Within 10 minutes	***Planning***	• Identify stranded/potentially stranded trains and alert Control – including when a train is moving abnormally slowly for an extended period. • Take appropriate immediate action to prevent other trains from becoming stranded, e.g. divert them or hold them in platforms. • Act as the primary contact for the train driver, transferring information about the on train situation and the response.	• Activate Passengers Stranded on Trains protocol. • Start to consider options based on available situational awareness using the JESIP principles.		
Within 15 minutes	***Mobilisation and assessment***	• Attempt to get stranded train into platform - work through options with Route Control and/or RIO. • Maintain contact with the driver • Option to use PA to communicate with passengers on DOO services via the GSMR radio.	• Call out MOM. • Appoint RIO (and RIC if required). • Advise affected transport undertaking(s) of likely requirement for a Stranded Passengers Champion(s) to be appointed.	• Make way to stranded train. • Gain a detailed situational awareness of both the operational and passenger aspects through liaison with transport undertaking representatives.	• Acquire situational awareness. • Make contact and work closely with transport undertaking appointed Stranded Passengers Champion(s).

			• Appoint Stranded Trains Champion (should be appointed if two or more trains are involved, recommended when a single train is involved). • Strategic decision taken on whether to commence preparations for a controlled evacuation of passengers (either as the preferred option or in parallel with exploration of other options). • Write/lead prioritised plan to manage the incident. • Record events and key decisions with a rationale and timestamp together with any updates from site.	• Provide regular updates to the Incident Controller and request any support required on site. • Work with the Incident Controller, TOLO, signaller and traincrew to work through options. • Identify with the on-site team (including transport undertaking representative) options for the evacuation given the local hazards and resources available, working in conjunction with the controlling signaller and identifying what preparations may be required. • Start to prepare for evacuation of passengers from the train if so directed.	• Undertake initial risk assessment focused on the train and general situation (the Stranded Passengers Champion will focus on the situation on board the train). • Identify and assess options for movement of, rescue of and evacuation of passengers from stranded train(s) and feed this information into the decision making process (Route Control).
Within 30 minutes	***If evacuation required or potentially required:*** ***Prepare to evacuate*** *Where a controlled activation is to be undertaken, competent member of staff appointed for each evacuation and should ideally have reached their train(s).*	• Continue as above. • Apply appropriate protection (e.g. for opening of train doors, controlled or uncontrolled evacuation).	• Continue as above. • Review and update previously considered options for management of stranded passengers/stranded trains – will they meet the overall 90 minute target (see below)? • Progress controlled evacuation if this is, or becomes, the preferred option.	• Continue to monitor the situation, conduct dynamic risk assessments and liaise as described above. • Work with Stranded Passengers Champion(s) to assure passengers that evacuation/rescue is being organised and provide indicative timescales. • Work with Stranded Passengers Champion(s) to identify passengers with additional support needs and consider how these can be met (traincrew can support this and help make suitable announcements).	• Continue as above. • Update risk assessments on a dynamic basis.

				• Brief the on-site team (including transport undertaking representative and traincrew) about what is planned to take place and how it will be undertaken, agreeing a safe method of working, identifying local hazards and working in conjunction with the controlling signaller. • Work with the TOLO, signaller and traincrew to initiate evacuation of passengers from the train if needed.	
Within 60 minutes	***If evacuation required:*** *Evacuation to have commenced*	• Continue as above until operational incident resolved.	• Continue as above until all stranded passengers have been evacuated or are on the move again and all stranded trains have been recovered.	• Continue as above until all stranded passengers have been evacuated or are on the move again and all stranded trains have been recovered.	• Continue as above until all stranded passengers have been evacuated or are on the move again and all stranded trains have been recovered.
Within 90 minutes	***If evacuation required:*** *Evacuation Complete*	Overall aim is for passengers to be evacuated (i.e. evacuation to have been completed) or on the move again within 90 minutes of the train becoming stranded			
After closure of incident		Conduct a hot debrief of the incident for any lessons and disseminate accordingly			

N.B. Where reference is made to specific Network Rail roles – MOM, SNDM, RCM, RIC and RIO – it should be taken as applying equally to the equivalent roles within other infrastructure managers.

A2. Transport undertaking roles

Provided below is a non-exhaustive list of key activities - reference must always be made to Rule Book requirements and any applicable instructions or company processes

Time after a train is identified as stranded	***Incident phase***	***Information Controller***	***On Call Customer Service Manager (or equivalent role)***	***Stranded Passengers Champion***	***TOLO****	***Traincrew (driver/guard/train manager)***	***Transport undertaking's person in charge of managing the incident*** *(Duty Control Manager, transport undertaking Incident Controller, etc. depending on company Command & Control arrangements)*
Within 10 minutes	***Planning***	• Issue a holding message/route problem message to all concerned (including internal staff, other transport undertakings, to direct customer channels and the NRCC) highlighting the potential stranded train(s) and the line blockage it/they is/are causing.				• Contact signaller and Control to report actual or potential stranding of train. • Ensure safety critical communications with the controlling signaller are maintained and a clear understanding reached about movement of trains including on adjacent lines.	• Lead the transport undertaking element of the operational response, working with infrastructure manager's person in charge of managing the incident. • Ensure that all transport undertaking staff on site are fully appraised of the situation using the JESIP principles for joint situational awareness. • Record events and key decisions with a rationale and timestamp.

Within 15 minutes	***Mobilisation and assessment***	• Provide information to and receive information from site (including traincrew), Control and Stranded Passengers Champion(s). • Issue messages as required by the Customer Information Pledges. • Continue to ensure that the NRCC is updated on the situation.	• Make contact and liaise with Stranded Passengers Champion(s). • Maintain close contact with company responding staff and those directly involved in supporting the incident so as to maintain situational awareness. • Check/arrange supplies of water/food to site or a suitable location. • Provide welfare/ chain of care and offer practical support for staff who attend site and staff on the stranded trains/ significantly delayed trains.	• Acquire situational awareness. • Make contact and work closely with RIO and infrastructure manager Stranded Trains Champion(s) if appointed. • Maintain close contact with company responding staff and those directly involved in supporting the incident so as to maintain situational awareness. • Undertake initial risk assessment in respect of passengers and conditions on board the train. • Ensure that needs of stranded passengers are given primacy in the overall incident management.	• Make way to the site. • Report to the RIO on arrival. • Make contact and liaise with Stranded Passengers Champion(s). • Ensure that conditions on board the train are regularly monitored and reported back to the RIO.	• Undertake core duties to ensure the safety of the train and undertake fault finding in line with competencies and operator cut and run policies. • Where practicable, maintain regular contact with the Control centre via a designated contact. • Keep signaller, Control and Stranded Passengers Champion updated on conditions on-board the train, including numbers, needs and mood of passengers. • Act as primary point of contact on train for passengers and staff members, providing information, reassurance and assistance and including, where practicable, walk throughs.	• Continue as above. • Appoint a Stranded Passengers Champion and work with them to assess the situation on train, undertake risk assessment and formulate plans. • Mobilise transport undertaking resources and make sure they are in place, including staff and supplies of food and drink at the relevant locations.
Within 30 minutes	***In respect of a controlled evacuation:*** *Competent member of staff appointed for each*	• Continue as above. • Regularly issue appropriate messaging in line with company process and thresholds.	• Continue as above.	• Continue as above. • Update risk assessments on a dynamic basis.	• In conjunction with the traincrew and Stranded Passengers Champion, determine whether the situation on board the train is	• Continue as above.	• Continue as above. • Work with the local authority or other third party as appropriate if their assistance is likely to be requested.

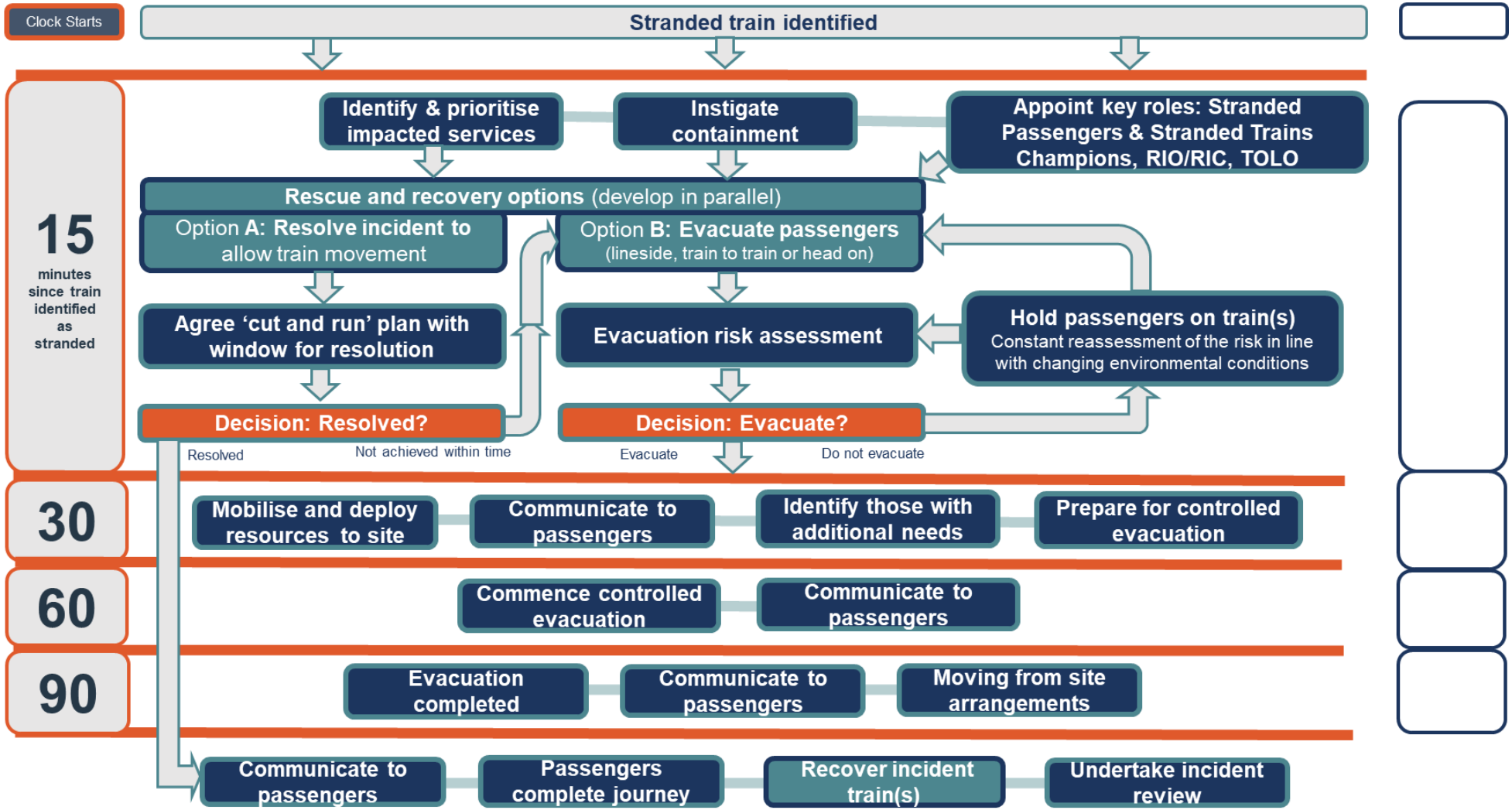
	evacuation and should ideally have reached their train(s) to assure passengers that the evacuation/ rescue is underway and to help with identification of passengers in need of additional support				such that an evacuation is required and recommend this to the infrastructure manager person in charge of managing the incident.		
Within 60 minutes	***Evacuation if required*** *Evacuation to have commenced*	• Continue as above until all stranded passengers have been evacuated or are on the move again and all stranded trains have been recovered.	• Continue as above until all stranded passengers have been evacuated or are on the move again and all stranded trains have been recovered.	• Continue as above until all stranded passengers have completed their journeys.	• Continue as above until all stranded passengers have been evacuated or are on the move again and all stranded trains have been recovered.	• Continue as above until relieved of duty.	• Continue as above until all stranded passengers have been evacuated or are on the move again and all stranded trains have been recovered.
Within 90 minutes	***If evacuation required:*** *Evacuation complete*	Overall aim is for passengers to be evacuated (i.e. evacuation to have been completed) or on the move again within 90 minutes of the train becoming stranded					
After closure of incident		Conduct a hot debrief of the incident for any lessons and disseminate accordingly					

* To be appointed by On Call Operations Manager (who can self-appoint) or as otherwise set out within individual company procedure)

N.B. Where reference is made to specific Network Rail roles – MOM, SNDM, RCM, RIC and RIO – it should be taken as applying equally to the equivalent roles within other infrastructure managers.

A3. Flowchart

Procedure following an incident which results in passengers becoming stranded on a single or multiple trains from initial identification of incident through to passenger evacuation/resumption of journey



Rail Delivery Group

National Rail

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