

Public Service Vehicles (Accessible Information) Regulations 2023 (the Accessible Information Regulations)

Contents

Source.....	1
Overview	2
NaPTAN	3
Operator Managing compliance checklist	4
Partially Compliant Vehicles	5
Route and destination directions	8
Upcoming stops.....	12
Service termination.....	14
Hail and ride sections on services.....	15
Audible information standards	18
Visible information standards.....	21
Providing additional accessible information	24
Exemptions.....	27
Complaints and enforcement	28

Source

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/providing-accessible-information-onboard-local-bus-and-coach-services/providing-accessible-information-onboard-local-bus-and-coach-services>

Overview

Mandatory installation of on-board real time passenger information on the majority of buses and coaches between 2024 and 2026.

As of 2021 to 2022, 46% of vehicles operating local services in England have the necessary equipment installed. This figure drops to 25% for England outside London, 34% in Wales and 22% in Scotland. Bus services in London already have the appropriate systems installed.

The following information (freely available [NaPTAN](#) database) must be provided in both [audible](#) and [visual](#) formats including: Stop common name; Town; suburb and Locality centre

The audible sound level will need to be adjustable and must be operated at 3Db above the prevailing general noise level – excess volume or levels of information must be avoided.

These regulations took effect on 1 October 2023 but the date in which they apply will depend on when the operator's vehicles were first used on local services. We consider that a vehicle was 'first used' on a local service when it first met the conditions in Section 2 of the Transport Act 1985, regardless of the jurisdiction within which it was operated.

- **Newer vehicles** first used on or after 1 October 2019 must comply with the regulations from 1 October 2024 onwards.
- **2010s vehicles** first used between 1 October 2014 and 30 September 2019 must comply with the regulations from 1 October 2025 onwards.
- **Older vehicles** first used between 1 January 1973 and 30 September 2014 must comply with these regulations from 1 October 2026 onwards.
- **Partially compliant** Vehicles that have a partially compliant status must comply with these regulations from 1 October 2031 onwards. See the partially compliant section for more information.

[Route and Destination Directions](#) - information about the local bus or coach route, and either the end destination or direction of the service, must be given to reassure passengers they are travelling in the direction intended.

The same information must be provided at bus or coach stopping places where passengers will board or alight the service.

If a vehicle does not stop at all, you do not need to provide this information to passengers.

Operators should use route and direction descriptions that would be known to passengers and should be consistent with timetables or journey planning platforms. It is recommended that stop names are sourced from the [NaPTAN](#) database to remain consistent. You do not need to use a specific name or form of words for route or direction descriptions.

Smaller bus operators – grant eligibility

The Accessible Information Grant, which totals £4.65 million, is available to smaller operators to support them in complying with the regulations.

See the [RTIG website](#) for information on the timetable, eligibility criteria and application process.

NaPTAN

The National Public Transport Access Nodes database (NaPTAN), which is available free of charge. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-public-transport-access-node-schema> The appropriate combination of data should be used from the following fields:

- stop common name
- town
- suburb
- locality centre

Different combinations of NaPTAN data fields may be appropriate depending on the nature of the service. For example, a service that stops only once or twice in each conurbation (continuous urban or industrially developed area) might announce stop names based on the town and locality. Another service entirely within a single town or city might use the stop common name or a combination of suburb and locality fields.

You may want to consider collaborating with local transport authorities on a common approach to names within a given area to ensure consistency.

Some operators may want to use equipment installed to meet these requirements to also provide contextual information or advertising to support the cost of installation. If you choose to do this, you should ensure you prioritise the information required by law first so it is given to all passengers who rely on it. Audible advertisements should not be provided by audio frequency induction loops so it avoids overwhelming passengers who use hearing aids. Any visual advertisements should be removed from view on screens, where relevant, when journey information is provided.

Operator Managing compliance checklist

- Operators should not consider it sufficient to install relevant equipment on board their vehicles to comply with the law. You must make sure it is used appropriately by staff responsible for managing or operating the vehicle and have management procedures to support this. You should also consider what staff training is required in order to ensure the regulations are complied with.
- All relevant information provided on your service must be consistent with regulations before any vehicle starts a scheduled route.
- The volume of audible information must not be reduced below the minimum threshold required by the regulations.
- If any equipment becomes inoperable, steps must be taken to rectify the issue as quickly as possible. Where alternative vehicles are available, these must be used to ensure all relevant information continues to be provided.
- If vehicles compliant with the regulations cannot be provided, drivers should be supported to assist disabled passengers. For example, telling passengers when to alight.
- Operators should have a clear audit trail to demonstrate to enforcement officers the steps they are taking to address any underlying issue.

Partially Compliant Vehicles

A partially compliant vehicle is one where, immediately before 1 October 2023, the following conditions were met:

- regulation 7, on the provision of information about the route, is complied with in full
- regulation 8 on information about terminating services is complied with in full, except for requirements relating to the playing of an alert
- regulation 9, on information identifying upcoming stops, is complied with in full
- the volume of audible information at 51% of seats on each deck of the vehicle is at least 3 dB higher than the live measured ambient volume or pre-measured ambient volume (as appropriate) but not louder than 84 dB
- there is an unobstructed line of sight between a display screen and 51% of the seats on each deck of the vehicle when no passengers are on board
- partially compliant vehicles are exempt from some parts of the regulations for 8 years from 1 October 2023 but must comply in full from 1 October 2031. The parts they are exempt from are:
 - regulation 8 requirements for playing an alert sound for terminating services
 - regulation 10 requirements for information relating to diversions
 - regulation 11 requirements for hail and ride sections of the route
 - regulation 13 requirements for audible information, except for related requirements indicated above
 - regulation 14 requirements for visible information, except for the requirements indicated above

Example A: audible and visual information unavailable in priority seats

An operator has been providing audible and visible information on board its services for several years. On double-deck vehicles, the lower deck display is routinely installed behind the bulkhead of the stairs, making it unreadable by passengers in the front priority seats. The vehicles otherwise meet the conditions to be considered partially compliant and are exempt from regulations 8 (2), 10, 11, 13 and 14 until 1 October 2031.

Example B: removal of equipment necessary to meet partially compliant status

A vehicle meets the conditions of the partially compliant status and is exempt from regulations 8 (2), 10, 11, 13 and 14 until 1 October 2031.

On 1 January 2028, the operator removes the speakers and screen from the vehicle. This means the vehicle can no longer meet the requirements of partially compliant status.

If the operator continues to use this vehicle to run services from 1 January 2028, they will be subject to enforcement action as they now must comply with the full regulations and be equipped to be fully compliant.

Community transport

Operators are not required to provide accessible information on any service:

- operated under a section 19 permit
- operated under a section 22 permit, where the vehicle was first used before 1 October 2023

This is because the sustainability of these services would be put at risk if they had to comply with the [regulations](#).

Relevant information must, however, be provided onboard Section 22 services using vehicles first used from 1 October 2023 onwards.

Excursions and tours

The regulations define ‘excursions and tours’ consistent with the Transport Act 1985.

Accordingly, they:

- are services that carry passengers together by road on a journey from one or more places to others and back again
- charge passengers separate fares
- may or may not include breaks

Passengers are typically provided with live commentary on the service.

Where audible information is provided without visible information, operators should consider providing both to support those passengers unable to hear the commentary. It is also recommended that you provide induction loops to support passengers who use hearing aids.

Exempt tour services

Some tour services are exempt from the regulations because they are not local services or because they comply with the definition of excursion or tours explained above. Passengers may, however, still benefit from accessible information on exempt tour services.

For example, on ‘hopper tours’ passengers may board and alight in different places and operators should consider providing relevant information to support passengers who may otherwise be disadvantaged.

Heritage services

A small number of vehicles may occasionally operate on local services due to their heritage status. For example, heritage vehicles operating under the local service permit regime in London or providing local service links to heritage transport tourist attractions.

If this is the case, providing accessible information on board may be unreasonably difficult or could detract from their heritage value.

Services using vehicles that were first used before 1 January 1973 are not required to provide accessible information to passengers.

However, it is recommended you should provide accessible information to passengers whenever possible to do so.

Demand responsive transport

If a local service is operating as a demand-responsive transport service, you do not need to provide accessible information on these vehicles as the regulations do not apply.

This is because it may be impractical to do so when the route and stopping places are not pre-defined.

However, disabled people who use these services are likely to experience a similar or greater need for accessible information – as they do with regular bus or coach services.

Operators should consider implementing appropriate measures to support these passengers to use these services easily and confidently.

Minibuses

Services operated by vehicles designed to carry 16 or fewer passengers are exempt from providing accessible information.

It is recommended that you, as an operator, should provide accessible information on board wherever possible. For example, minibuses may involve more interaction with the driver than would be the case on larger vehicles so staff may be able to personally ensure all passengers understand the main information about the journey.

This may not always be the case, however, for example with newer models of demand-responsive travel provision. Operators should consider all ways to ensure passengers have access to the information they need.

Long-distance services

Some long-distance coach services operate as local services for sections of their routes. For example, a service from Glasgow to Birmingham may include 2 stops in the West Midlands within 15 miles of each other.

When the majority of a service is local, operators must provide accessible information to passengers on those local service sections. If the total distance of the local service sections of a route accounts for at least 50% of the overall route distance, accessible information must be provided.

However, it is recommended that where operators need to provide accessible information on part of a route they should provide accessible information across the entire route.

Closed door, home to school transport

Closed door, home to school services are those that are for eligible passengers to travel to and from an educational establishment – one providing primary education, secondary education or further education, as defined in Section 2 of the Education Act 1996.

Eligible passengers in this case refers to people who are:

- travelling to and from the educational establishment to receive education or training
- supervising or escorting a person who is receiving education or training
- providing education or training at the establishment

Closed door, home to school services typically transport the same passengers and have the same driver each day. Passengers can communicate their needs to a driver and can reasonably expect a consistent level of service every day.

However, it is recommended that you as an operator should consider how to provide assurances that they will meet passengers' information needs if the regular driver of the route is not working on a given day.

These services are exempt from providing accessible information to passengers. This is because it is unlikely that providing this information would have a high impact.

All other types of home to school services are not exempt from the regulations. Operators must provide accessible information to their passengers if they provide local services not covered by another exemption.

Route and destination directions

Information about the local bus or coach route, and either the end destination or direction of the service, must be given to reassure passengers they are travelling in the direction intended. The same information must be provided at bus or coach stopping places where passengers will board or alight the service.

If a vehicle does not stop at all, you do not need to provide this information to passengers. Operators should use route and direction descriptions that would be known to passengers and should be consistent with timetables or journey planning platforms. It is recommended that stop names are sourced from the NaPTAN database to remain consistent. You do not need to use a specific name or form of words for route or direction descriptions.

Route direction at the start of the journey

Accessible information about the bus service and stops must be given when the passenger doors open at a bus stop to allow passengers to board or get off the vehicle.

You can choose how the route, destination and direction information is triggered. For example, electronically linked to the doors as they open or triggered by the driver pressing a virtual or physical button.

You are not required to conclude an announcement before the doors close and the bus pulls away from the bus stop. However, all drivers should be trained to offer appropriate assistance when needed and identify passengers who may be listening for the announcement at the doorway.

Some examples of acceptable accessible information given at the beginning of the bus journey are given below.

Example A: automatic triggering

A bus pulls up to a scheduled stopping place to allow passengers to alight and the opening of the passenger doors triggers the provision of information:

- an on-board display shows 'Route 1: Railway station'
- an audible voice announces 'This is a Route 1 service to the Railway station'

Example B: manual triggering

A bus pulls up to a scheduled stopping place to allow passengers to board. The driver presses a button to open the doors, and then presses a button to trigger the provision of information:

- an on-board display shows 'Cobalt 1 anti-clockwise'
- an audible voice announces 'Cobalt Route 1, anti-clockwise direction'

Example C: no requirement for accessible information to end before leaving stop

A bus pulls up to a scheduled stopping place to allow passengers to alight and the opening of the passenger doors triggers the provision of information:

- an on-board display shows 'Route 1: Railway Station'
- an audible voice announces 'This is a Route 1 service to the...'
- a passenger boards before the audible announcement finishes and no other passengers are waiting
- the driver closes the doors and moves away as the announcement concludes '...Railway Station'

Example D: no requirement to give accessible information when buses do not use the stop

- a bus passes a scheduled stopping place without stopping because no passengers wish to board or alight
- no route announcement is made

Upcoming stops

You must identify every upcoming scheduled stop on the service route, not just the main ones. This is so every passenger knows what to expect regardless of the service they board.

This information must be given so passengers have enough time to alert the driver if they wish to get off the service. All stops should use place names passengers will be familiar with from timetables and journey planning platforms and consistent with the NaPTAN database. You can choose when to give upcoming stop information to passengers as long as it meets the requirements by law. For example, you could set a standard distance from the previous or next stop to generate when that accessible information about the next stop is given. This will depend on the nature of the route and the proximity of stops to each other.

Case study

Transdev Blazefield uses a voice recording of a former local newsreader to announce each stop with a custom phrase on their services in the north of England.

This helps them break up the list of stops for the journeys they service. For example, they announce 'The next stop is the Cinema' and then 'Railway Station is the next stop'.

Operators can choose to include other details that may be helpful to passengers with relevant information on upcoming stops. For example, how close an attraction or popular location is or route or mode interchange opportunities.

You should provide this information both audibly and visually.

Figure 1: a screen showing the next stop and destination



Examples of acceptable accessible information about upcoming stops are given below.

Example A: including information linked to a previous stop

- accessible information is triggered automatically as a bus leaves a bus stop
- on-board displays show 'Next Stop: Cinema'
- an audible voice announces 'The next stop is Cinema'

Example B: including information linked to the next stop

- accessible information is triggered automatically as a bus approaches 100 metres of the next scheduled stopping place
- on-board displays show 'Bus Station'
- an audible voice announces 'Bus Station'

Service termination

All passengers must know when a local bus or coach service has terminated. This includes when the service has:

- reached its final scheduled destination
- terminated before reaching its final scheduled destination

This gives passengers the opportunity to seek further information or assistance from the driver, especially if they need to use alternative services to complete their journey.

You can choose the precise form of words used to indicate the termination of a service. But you must use an alert before the audible information is given.

You should provide further information, for example about ticket validity for passengers on journeys that end before the scheduled destination, if you can.

Examples of acceptable route termination information are given below.

Example A: final scheduled stopping place

- a bus approaches within 100 metres of its final scheduled stopping place and the provision of next stop information is triggered automatically
- on-board displays show 'Library'
- an audible voice announces 'Library'

Example B: service ending before scheduled stop

The bus then arrives at its final scheduled stopping place and the following information is triggered automatically:

- on-board displays state 'Final stop, all change please'
- an audible voice announces 'this is the final stop, all change please'

A bus arrives at a stop and the driver is advised by control that the service will terminate early.

The driver presses a button to trigger the provision of the following information:

- on-board displays indicate 'Service terminated. Ask driver for information'
- an audible voice announces 'this bus has terminated, please ask the driver for more information'

Example C: service ends before scheduled stop with manual announcement and speech-to-text functionality is used

A bus arrives at a stop and the driver is advised by control that the service will terminate early.

The driver makes the following announcement using a microphone:

- 'May I have your attention, please? I'm afraid this service is terminating here, but you can use your tickets on the next service, due in 20 minutes. All change please'
- on-board displays show the following text, generated automatically using a speech-to-text function: 'may I have your attention, please? I'm afraid this service is terminating here, but you can use your tickets on the next service, due in twenty minutes. All change please'

Hail and ride sections on services

A hail and ride section of a route is defined in the [regulations](#) as one where the places where the service stops are not defined in advance, but in response to passengers' indications of where they want to join and leave the service.

They are different from 'demand responsive travel' services, where the entire route is determined by where passengers want to get on and off the service.

Passengers may be confused about hail and ride sections as there will be no on-board information to indicate upcoming stops, and they may not know when to show they want to leave the service.

All operators must use accessible information to let passengers know that a hail and ride section is coming up. This must be provided at the last scheduled stop before the hail and ride section. Information about the end of a hail and ride section must be provided in time for passengers to let the driver know that they want to leave the service at the next scheduled stop. However, the service does not have to actually stop at the final stopping place before the hail and ride section, or at the first stopping place after it.

Operators can choose the precise timings of announcements and the form of words used, but you must use an alert before giving this information to passengers.

If a route starts as a hail and ride service, accessible information must be provided at the beginning of the service to let passengers know.

You can also choose to provide extra details to support passengers who may not be able to easily identify the location of the service. For example, announcing main roads on the hail and ride section of a route as they're approached.

Examples of acceptable accessible information given on hail and ride sections are below.

Example A: start and end of the hail and ride section

Start of the hail and ride section

A bus passes the final scheduled stopping place before the start of a hail and ride section and the following information is triggered automatically at the stopping place location:

- an alert sound plays
- on-board displays show 'Start of Hail and Ride'
- a voice announces 'Hail and Ride section starts here'

End of the hail and ride section

A bus has left a 'hail and ride' service of the route and passes a point 100 metres from the next scheduled stopping place. The provision of the following information is triggered automatically:

- an alert sound plays
- on-board displays show 'End of Hail and Ride'
- a voice announces, 'the hail and ride section has ended'

The bus then passes a point 50 metres from the next stopping place and the provision of the following information is triggered automatically:

- on-board displays show: 'High Street'
- a voice announces: 'the next stop is High Street'

Example B: additional information provided during hail and ride sections of route

A bus is travelling along a hail and ride section of the route and turns onto 'London Road'. The provision of the following information is triggered automatically:

- on-board displays show 'London Road'
- a voice announces 'London Road'

The bus then turns onto 'Station Road' and the provision of the following information is triggered automatically:

- on-board displays show 'Station Road'
- a voice announces 'Station Road'

Diversions

Sometimes bus and coaches may be diverted from its normal routes. When this happens, it can cause any passenger to feel concerned, especially those who rely on structure and familiarity to complete their journeys confidently.

Operators must ensure information about the diversion is provided to their passengers at the start of the diversion when they know that stops will be missed.

They should also provide this information to passengers when they do not know whether stops will be missed but consider this to be a possibility (such as for unplanned diversions).

If drivers know about a diversion in advance, you must ensure that passengers are told about it in time to signal their wish to leave the bus at the final scheduled stopping place before the diversion. This will give passengers time to make alternative arrangements or ask the driver for more information.

If a diversion is unplanned, you must let passengers know about the beginning of the diversion when it starts or as soon as possible. You may choose the specific form of words to use to communicate this, but you must provide an alert before announcing the diversion.

You are not required to provide specific information about reaching the end of a diversion as the restart of usual accessible information about upcoming stops should let passengers know the bus is back on its usual route. However, passengers may find it useful if you do provide end-of-diversion information.

Operators may choose to provide additional information about route stops that will be missed from the route, or additional stops on the route during a diversion.

If you use a manual announcement system to provide additional diversion information, you should ensure the information can be displayed to passengers unable to hear the announcement too. For example, using speech-to-text software, or a driver using a written notice that can be displayed to passengers.

Some diversions on routes may last several months. When this occurs, a diversion is typically registered by a Traffic Commissioner and is therefore treated as the scheduled route for the purposes of complying with the regulations.

If this is the case, you do not need to provide diversion information, but you should consider how you will ensure passengers understand the change.

If there is a closed stop on a bus's normal route you can give additional information about this. It may be helpful to provide this before the bus reaches the stop before the closed one. This is so passengers can choose whether they exit the bus before or after the closure.

Examples of acceptable diversion information are below.

Example A: planned diversions

A bus driver has been alerted to a road closure on the bus route they drive by the control centre. As the bus approaches the road closure, the driver presses a button that triggers the following information:

- on-board displays show 'Diversion begins after next stop'
- a voice announces 'this bus will shortly begin a diversion. Ask the driver for further information'

Example B: unplanned diversions

A bus driver rounds a corner and faces a blocked road ahead. The driver turns onto an alternative road and presses a button that triggers the following information to play and display:

- on-board displays show 'Bus on diversion'
- a voice announces 'this bus is on diversion'

Example C: provision of additional information

After the bus stops at the stopping place preceding a diversion, the driver makes a manual announcement using the microphone and says:

- 'this bus will be on diversion and miss out the next 2 stops. Passengers for the cinema and Railway Station may wish to leave the bus here and complete their journey on foot'

The same information is displayed on board which is generated by a speech-to-text facility:

- 'This bus will be on diversion and will miss out the next 2 stops. Passengers for the cinema and Railway Station may wish to leave the bus here and complete their journey on foot'

Example D: no requirement to give accessible information when buses do not use the stop

- a bus passes a scheduled stopping place without stopping because no passengers wish to board or alight
- no route announcement is made

Upcoming stops

You must identify every upcoming scheduled stop on the service route, not just the main ones. This is so every passenger knows what to expect regardless of the service they board.

This information must be given so passengers have enough time to alert the driver if they wish to get off the service. All stops should use place names passengers will be familiar with from timetables and journey planning platforms and consistent with the NaPTAN database. You can choose when to give upcoming stop information to passengers as long as it meets the requirements by law. For example, you could set a standard distance from the previous or next stop to generate when that accessible information about the next stop is given. This will depend on the nature of the route and the proximity of stops to each other.

Case study

Transdev Blazefield uses a voice recording of a former local newsreader to announce each stop with a custom phrase on their services in the north of England.

This helps them break up the list of stops for the journeys they service. For example, they announce 'The next stop is the Cinema' and then 'Railway Station is the next stop'.

Operators can choose to include other details that may be helpful to passengers with relevant information on upcoming stops. For example, how close an attraction or popular location is or route or mode interchange opportunities.

You should provide this information both audibly and visually.

Figure 1: a screen showing the next stop and destination



Examples of acceptable accessible information about upcoming stops are given below.

Example A: including information linked to a previous stop

- accessible information is triggered automatically as a bus leaves a bus stop
- on-board displays show 'Next Stop: Cinema'
- an audible voice announces 'The next stop is Cinema'

Example B: including information linked to the next stop

- accessible information is triggered automatically as a bus approaches 100 metres of the next scheduled stopping place
- on-board displays show 'Bus Station'
- an audible voice announces 'Bus Station'

Service termination

All passengers must know when a local bus or coach service has terminated. This includes when the service has:

- reached its final scheduled destination
- terminated before reaching its final scheduled destination

This gives passengers the opportunity to seek further information or assistance from the driver, especially if they need to use alternative services to complete their journey.

You can choose the precise form of words used to indicate the termination of a service. But you must use an alert before the audible information is given.

You should provide further information, for example about ticket validity for passengers on journeys that end before the scheduled destination, if you can.

Examples of acceptable route termination information are given below.

Example A: final scheduled stopping place

- a bus approaches within 100 metres of its final scheduled stopping place and the provision of next stop information is triggered automatically
- on-board displays show 'Library'
- an audible voice announces 'Library'

Example B: service ending before scheduled stop

The bus then arrives at its final scheduled stopping place and the following information is triggered automatically:

- on-board displays state 'Final stop, all change please'
- an audible voice announces 'this is the final stop, all change please'

A bus arrives at a stop and the driver is advised by control that the service will terminate early. The driver presses a button to trigger the provision of the following information:

- on-board displays indicate 'Service terminated. Ask driver for information'
- an audible voice announces 'this bus has terminated, please ask the driver for more information'

Example C: service ends before scheduled stop with manual announcement and speech-to-text functionality is used

A bus arrives at a stop and the driver is advised by control that the service will terminate early. The driver makes the following announcement using a microphone:

- 'May I have your attention, please? I'm afraid this service is terminating here, but you can use your tickets on the next service, due in 20 minutes. All change please'
- on-board displays show the following text, generated automatically using a speech-to-text function: 'may I have your attention, please? I'm afraid this service is terminating

here, but you can use your tickets on the next service, due in twenty minutes. All change please'

Hail and ride sections on services

A hail and ride section of a route is defined in the [regulations](#) as one where the places where the service stops are not defined in advance, but in response to passengers' indications of where they want to join and leave the service.

They are different from 'demand responsive travel' services, where the entire route is determined by where passengers want to get on and off the service.

Passengers may be confused about hail and ride sections as there will be no on-board information to indicate upcoming stops, and they may not know when to show they want to leave the service.

All operators must use accessible information to let passengers know that a hail and ride section is coming up. This must be provided at the last scheduled stop before the hail and ride section. Information about the end of a hail and ride section must be provided in time for passengers to let the driver know that they want to leave the service at the next scheduled stop.

However, the service does not have to actually stop at the final stopping place before the hail and ride section, or at the first stopping place after it.

Operators can choose the precise timings of announcements and the form of words used, but you must use an alert before giving this information to passengers.

If a route starts as a hail and ride service, accessible information must be provided at the beginning of the service to let passengers know.

You can also choose to provide extra details to support passengers who may not be able to easily identify the location of the service. For example, announcing main roads on the hail and ride section of a route as they're approached.

Examples of acceptable accessible information given on hail and ride sections are below.

Example A: start and end of the hail and ride section

Start of the hail and ride section

A bus passes the final scheduled stopping place before the start of a hail and ride section and the following information is triggered automatically at the stopping place location:

- an alert sound plays
- on-board displays show 'Start of Hail and Ride'
- a voice announces 'Hail and Ride section starts here'

End of the hail and ride section

A bus has left a 'hail and ride' service of the route and passes a point 100 metres from the next scheduled stopping place. The provision of the following information is triggered automatically:

- an alert sound plays
- on-board displays show 'End of Hail and Ride'

- a voice announces, 'the hail and ride section has ended'

The bus then passes a point 50 metres from the next stopping place and the provision of the following information is triggered automatically:

- on-board displays show: 'High Street'
- a voice announces: 'the next stop is High Street'

Example B: additional information provided during hail and ride sections of route

A bus is travelling along a hail and ride section of the route and turns onto 'London Road'. The provision of the following information is triggered automatically:

- on-board displays show 'London Road'
- a voice announces 'London Road'

The bus then turns onto 'Station Road' and the provision of the following information is triggered automatically:

- on-board displays show 'Station Road'
- a voice announces 'Station Road'

Diversions

Sometimes bus and coaches may be diverted from its normal routes. When this happens, it can cause any passenger to feel concerned, especially those who rely on structure and familiarity to complete their journeys confidently.

Operators must ensure information about the diversion is provided to their passengers at the start of the diversion when they know that stops will be missed.

They should also provide this information to passengers when they do not know whether stops will be missed but consider this to be a possibility (such as for unplanned diversions).

If drivers know about a diversion in advance, you must ensure that passengers are told about it in time to signal their wish to leave the bus at the final scheduled stopping place before the diversion. This will give passengers time to make alternative arrangements or ask the driver for more information.

If a diversion is unplanned, you must let passengers know about the beginning of the diversion when it starts or as soon as possible. You may choose the specific form of words to use to communicate this, but you must provide an alert before announcing the diversion.

You are not required to provide specific information about reaching the end of a diversion as the restart of usual accessible information about upcoming stops should let passengers know the bus is back on its usual route. However, passengers may find it useful if you do provide end-of-diversion information.

Operators may choose to provide additional information about route stops that will be missed from the route, or additional stops on the route during a diversion.

If you use a manual announcement system to provide additional diversion information, you should ensure the information can be displayed to passengers unable to hear the announcement too. For example, using speech-to-text software, or a driver using a written notice that can be displayed to passengers.

Some diversions on routes may last several months. When this occurs, a diversion is typically registered by a Traffic Commissioner and is therefore treated as the scheduled route for the purposes of complying with the regulations.

If this is the case, you do not need to provide diversion information, but you should consider how you will ensure passengers understand the change.

If there is a closed stop on a bus's normal route you can give additional information about this. It may be helpful to provide this before the bus reaches the stop before the closed one. This is so passengers can choose whether they exit the bus before or after the closure.

Examples of acceptable diversion information are below.

Example A: planned diversions

A bus driver has been alerted to a road closure on the bus route they drive by the control centre. As the bus approaches the road closure, the driver presses a button that triggers the following information:

- on-board displays show 'Diversion begins after next stop'
- a voice announces 'this bus will shortly begin a diversion. Ask the driver for further information'

Example B: unplanned diversions

A bus driver rounds a corner and faces a blocked road ahead. The driver turns onto an alternative road and presses a button that triggers the following information to play and display:

- on-board displays show 'Bus on diversion'
- a voice announces 'this bus is on diversion'

Example C: provision of additional information

After the bus stops at the stopping place preceding a diversion, the driver makes a manual announcement using the microphone and says:

- 'this bus will be on diversion and miss out the next 2 stops. Passengers for the cinema and Railway Station may wish to leave the bus here and complete their journey on foot'

The same information is displayed on board which is generated by a speech-to-text facility:

- 'This bus will be on diversion and will miss out the next 2 stops. Passengers for the cinema and Railway Station may wish to leave the bus here and complete their journey on foot'

Audible information standards

Audible information standards are designed to ensure this information is available to as many passengers as possible. The standards also provide operators with flexibility on how they provide it.

These standards apply whenever relevant information is announced and provided, with the exception of services covered by partial compliance provisions .

If operators choose to provide additional information, we recommend this information should also meet these standards.

You can choose how audible information, including stop names and related announcements, is generated including:

- pre-recording relevant information
- using text-to-speech software to generate them automatically
- the driver announcing information manually

In all cases, operators should ensure these announcements are clear, concise and relevant information can easily be differentiated from any other information that may be provided.

You should consider the pronunciation of any names used to maximise understanding of and credibility with passengers. This is particularly important when using text-to-speech software to generate announcements.

Information must be provided within the frequency range of 300 hertz (hz) to 3000hz. If it is not possible to monitor this frequency – such as when a driver makes a manual announcement – operators should be able to demonstrate that processes have been implemented to ensure audible information is ordinarily provided within the prescribed range.

Volume levels

Passengers should be able to hear audible information wherever they are on the vehicle.

The precise manners in which you achieve this will depend on whether the system you use for providing audible information has the ability to vary the volume level based on ambient audio levels. We call this process ‘adaptive volume control’.

Requirements for vehicles with and without adaptive volume control are summarised below.

Scenario 1 – adaptive volume control is available

The audio volume at any seat or wheelchair space is required to be 3 decibels (dB) above the live measured ambient volume.

The live measured ambient volume is an average of the volume when the vehicle is in use, with passengers on board, and measured at:

- front of lower passenger saloon
- rear of lower passenger saloon
- front of the upper passenger saloon – where relevant
- rear of the upper passenger saloon – where relevant

The maximum permitted volume is 84 dB.

Scenario 2 – adaptive volume control is not available

The audio volume at any seat or wheelchair space is required to be 3 dB above the pre-measured ambient volume.

The pre-measured ambient volume is an average of the volume when the vehicle is empty of passengers and travelling on one of the operator's routes at both 5 miles per hour (mph) and 20mph, with measurements taken at:

- front of lower passenger saloon
- rear of lower passenger saloon
- front of upper passenger saloon – where relevant
- rear of upper passenger saloon – where relevant

The maximum permitted volume is 84 dB.

Audio frequency induction loops

People who rely on hearing aids must be able to access audible information. This is so they can benefit from relevant information they need even if they cannot see or read a visual display.

This means relevant information must be made available to someone that uses a hearing aid in conjunction with an audio frequency induction loop – known as an induction loop – when they are seated in a priority seat or wheelchair space. Any further information you choose to provide in addition to what is required by law should also be available via induction loops.

You should work with your suppliers to avoid audio interference and to ensure audible information can be understood when accessed through this method.

We recommend establishing a schedule for regularly testing functionality because its operation may not be apparent to a driver or engineer who does not use a compatible hearing aid.

You should provide appropriate and clear signage next to priority seats and wheelchair spaces to indicate an induction loop is present. This should be some version of the international reference symbol which is shown in the photo below (Figure 2).

Figure 2: international reference symbol for hearing loops

The 'T' reminds users to switch to the 'T' (Telecoil) setting.



You should consider providing an additional separate induction loop to make it easier for passengers who are deaf or hard of hearing to communicate with the driver at the point of boarding or alighting the service. You should install appropriate signage to indicate this is available.

Visible information standards

The visible information requirements are intended to provide bus operators with flexibility on how the standards are met.

Older bus vehicles

We hope in many cases compliance for older vehicles can be attained using one display screen on each deck of the vehicle for the use of forward-facing passengers.

On vehicles that were first used on local services before 1 October 2024, when they are empty of passengers there must be an unobstructed line of sight between a display screen and:

- 51% of seats on each deck of the vehicle
- each priority seat
- each forward-facing wheelchair space

Newer bus vehicles

For vehicles first used on or after 1 October 2024, as well as the unobstructed line of sight required for older vehicles, there must also be an unobstructed line of sight between a display screen and all other wheelchair spaces.

Wheelchair spaces

When you are thinking about whether there is an unobstructed line of sight, you should consider the position of any stanchions, handholds and bulkheads, and whether they would prevent a seated passenger from reading visible information without having to move from their seat or wheelchair space.

Information that is visible to passengers in rearward-facing wheelchair spaces should be accessible to a range of passengers who might need to use this space, including those passengers with limited movement.

For example, a display that faces inwards from the side of the vehicle may technically meet this requirement but might be difficult for passengers with limited head or neck movement to read, depending on its placement.

Text minimal requirements

Relevant visible information must be displayed using characters at least 22 millimetres (mm) in height. Any further information that you choose to provide in addition to what is required by law should also use at least a 22mm minimum character height. This minimum height applies to all characters, not just capital letters.

This is so all visual information is readable by as many passengers as possible, including those who are visually impaired.

Text must provide a good contrast with the background so the text is readable for as many people as possible under as many possible lighting conditions. For example, black text on a white background provides a clear contrast.

You can use the [Web content accessibility guidelines \(WCAG\)](#) to test whether 2 colours provide enough contrast.

Text displays to avoid

You should avoid using colour alone to display relevant information. For example, using red text to convey a particular stopping place is the final stopping place on the route, because some passengers may be unable to distinguish between colours.

Information required by law must not be displayed entirely in block capitals – for example, ‘BUS STATION’ instead of Bus Station.

Words that scroll across a screen should also be avoided unless it is absolutely necessary.

Any further information that you choose to provide in addition to what is required by law should also not be displayed using block capitals or scrolling text.

This is because people who are visually impaired or neurodiverse may find information presented in this way to be difficult to read.

Figure 3: an LED display on the top deck of a bus reading ‘Seven Dials’



Lengthy service information

If a service message cannot be displayed in one instance because it is too long for the display screen, we recommend refreshing the information – alternating between 2 parts of the message – rather than scrolling.

You should consider if abbreviations or stop names could enable all the information to be displayed without scrolling. We recommend you use the abbreviations in the NaPTAN user guide.

If you anticipate needing to use scrolling text, you should use displays that maximise readability and consult with a range of potential users to identify an appropriate scrolling speed.

Messages that require screen refreshes or scrolling to communicate may need to be shown multiple times throughout a service in case a passenger misses the first part of the message.

Welsh language requirements

Neither the regulations nor the Equality Act 2010 make specific provisions for providing audible and visible information in the Welsh language.

Where Welsh language requirements apply, they would override any accessible information-specific requirements.

Operators of local bus services that run in Wales for any part of their route should ensure they understand their duties with respect to the provision of information in the Welsh language. They should also decide if it would be appropriate to provide relevant information in both English and Welsh.

Providing additional accessible information

There are further steps you can choose to take to enhance the accessibility of your services or to improve the information already offered to passengers.

If you choose to do this, you should avoid creating information overload for passengers.

Audible information for boarding passengers

The regulations require that audible and visible information that indicates the route and direction of a service is provided at the point of boarding. This is intended to:

- inform passengers as they board the service
- reassure passengers already on board the service

Sometimes this information may be difficult for passengers to access while boarding, for example if they need to queue before embarking.

Visually impaired passengers may find it difficult to identify the service they wish to join as they may not be able to read the service blinds – route number and end destination.

This issue is amplified at bus and coach stops served by multiple routes where services may ‘stack up’ during busy periods.

External speakers

To address this issue, some operators use external speakers that play audible information about the route and direction to passengers outside the vehicle as well as on board.

If you choose to do this, you should consider the impact the speaker sound will have on ambient sound levels and on nearby homes and businesses.

Drivers should be trained to recognise passengers who may struggle to identify a vehicle and to announce themselves to these passengers when appropriate.

Audible information at stop stations

Some operators may work with local authorities to improve the provision of accessible information at bus and coach stations and stops. We recognise use of ‘Next bus’ displays is increasing, but these are not accessible to some visually impaired passengers unless audible information is also provided.

Information can be provided both visually and audibly either automatically or on demand, for example by initiating it with a:

- key fob
- push button
- smartphone application

This will help passengers travel with confidence and ensure everyone has access to up-to-date departure information.

QR codes

Some operators use QR codes to link live departures information which can support passengers to access the information they need in a way that suits them.

If you choose to do this, it is important to be aware that the proportion of disabled people with access to smartphone technology remains significantly lower than for the population as a whole.

It may also be difficult for some passengers to locate the QR code unless it is located consistently at each stop and marked in a tactile manner.

Using more than 1 solution will help ensure information will be available to as many passengers as possible.

Connecting services

You may choose to provide passengers with information about connecting services. This could be through either static or live accessible information.

Static information might, for example, identify stops served by other routes, or which are located close to railway stations, tram stops or other modes.

Live information could, for example, provide information about the routes and destinations of the next 3 buses to depart from the next stop on the service or upcoming departures from a nearby railway station.

Figure 4: a screen displaying National Rail and London Overground from Peckham Rye Station



If you choose to provide additional information, you should provide this information in audible and visible formats so that as many passengers as possible can benefit.

You should also provide information in a non-discriminating manner avoiding, for instance, showing only connecting services operated by your company.

Screens for passengers in rearward-facing wheelchair spaces

The regulations require all new vehicles to be equipped to provide visible information within the line of sight of a wheelchair user positioned in any rearward-facing space on a vehicle.

However, providing this on a voluntary basis onboard existing vehicles would make a significant difference to wheelchair users, as they would be able to access the same information as other passengers.

We suggest operators should consider including this provision when planning the installation of relevant equipment on their vehicles.

Exemptions

The Secretary of State for Transport has the power to exempt certain operators, vehicles and services from the regulations. There are 2 main types of exemptions.

Class exemptions

These are exemptions for vehicles of a certain description, operators of a certain description and local services of a certain description.

The exemption powers have been used within the regulations to exempt, for example, services operated by vehicles first used before 1 January 1973. This means that these services do not have to comply with the regulations.

Any other exemptions will need to be made with a Statutory Instrument laid in Parliament. We do not expect to use this power routinely in future.

Ad hoc exemptions

Some exemptions can be made without the need for a Statutory Instrument and might be used, for example, where it would be unreasonable for a specific vehicle to have equipment fitted to provide the relevant accessible information.

We do not expect to use the ad hoc exemption power routinely. We expect you to prepare in good time to comply with the regulations.

When complying with the regulations is not possible due to extraordinary circumstances not anticipated by the regulations, you may apply to DfT for an ad hoc exemption.

The department will consider at least the following information when deciding on an application for an ad hoc exemption:

- if a conscious decision was taken to include services, vehicles or operators of this type when the regulations were developed
- if having an exemption would place the operator at a competitive advantage over other comparable operators
- if an operator has taken all reasonable steps to comply with the regulations on time
- if a failure to grant an exemption will directly contribute to a permanent withdrawal of local services

If ad hoc exemptions are granted, they are likely to be issued for a temporary period, for example, to give you more time to comply with the law. An exemption does not mean you will not need to comply with the regulations at any point.

DfT is likely to ask for evidence to support any request for an exemption. For more details on the ad hoc exemption application process and the exemption application form, email PSVAR@dft.gov.uk.

Complaints and enforcement

Non-compliance with the regulations will be identified in 2 ways:

- complaints from individuals or their representative
- the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) enforcement

Individual and representative complaints

Individuals or representatives may complain about a service with an issue they believe is not compliant with the regulations. Typically, this process should occur in the following order.

1. Operator complaint

An individual may raise this complaint to the bus or coach operator, where the operator should respond within 14 days of the complaint submission with acknowledgement and next steps. You should provide clear information to passengers on how they can complain onboard.

2. Bus Users UK and London TravelWatch arbitration

Where a complaint has not been responded to within 14 days, or the complainant feels that the issue is unresolved, they can refer it to Bus Users UK for complaints concerning services outside London, and London TravelWatch for services within London. Bus Users UK or London TravelWatch will investigate the complaint and decide on the next steps. Where there appears to be a sustained and significant issue, potentially including deliberate or negligent non-compliance, cases will be referred to DVSA for further investigation.

3. DVSA investigation

DVSA will investigate cases that are reported to it, where further information will be sought out as required. If the case concerns sustained, deliberate or negligent non-compliance, or it is otherwise serious in nature, DVSA may escalate it to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner.

4. Traffic Commissioner

Traffic Commissioners are responsible for the ultimate regulation of respective legal requirements. Operators can appeal the Traffic Commissioner's decision to the Upper Tribunal.

DVSA investigations

As well as looking into complaints raised by individuals or their representatives, DVSA may initiate investigations into operator compliance with the regulations based on their own intelligence. Typically, these investigations would focus on sustained, negligent or deliberate non-compliance.