

| Rail Customer Experience Survey

Delivery partners



Rail Delivery Group



Frequently Asked Questions

December 2025

Outcomes

What are the aims of the survey?

The overall aim of the Rail Customer Experience Survey (Rail CX Survey or RCXS) is to provide regular, robust, and consistent customer insight data to the rail industry including Train Operating Companies (TOCs), Transport Focus, DfT, Network Rail, devolved authorities, the public and other key stakeholders. This dataset is intended to:

- Support targeted investment of available funds to drive customer satisfaction and revenue growth.
- Be locally actionable within TOCs and Network Rail, and suitable for policy and strategy development, to allow aligned targets and plans throughout the industry.
- Provide a benchmarked view of customer experience that is consistent across operators.

How does RCXS relate to the industry's previous customer surveys?

RCXS has replaced three previous industry level surveys:

- NRPS, which stopped in 2020 with Covid.
- Wavelength, which will be discontinued in November 2025 after a period of overlap with the new survey,
- Transport Focus's Rail User Survey (RUS), which stopped in July 2025 when RCXS was launched.

The updated methodology used by the RCXS combines the best elements of NRPS, Wavelength and the RUS, providing a single source of truth for the industry.

RCXS aims to be complementary to operator insight programmes where they exist, and the key benefit is to provide a single currency/language around customer experience for the whole industry to work with. This will enable more cross-industry collaboration around driving customer experience, for example through aligned priorities, and shared best practice.

How can the data from the NRPS and Wavelength surveys be combined with the new data to create a time series?

NRPS ran for over 20 years, and there is value in having this long time series. Wavelength was launched in late 2019 and continued to run until the end of Rail Period 8, four rail periods after RCXS was launched. This period of overlap between Wavelength and RCXS is expected to provide enough data to be able to correlate the two against each other and allow a high-level hybrid time series – though the differences in methodology and metrics will mean this will have limitations.

How long will RCXS run for?

There is no proposed end date for the survey at this point. Its continuation is of course dependent on the continued support from funders.

Programme

Who is leading the programme?

The RCXS is a collaboration between RDG, DfT, Transport Focus, Network Rail and the Customer and Revenue Growth Team (CRG, formerly part of GBRTT), working closely with industry stakeholders such as TOCs and devolved authorities. CRG are responsible for the delivery of industry data and reporting.

What programme governance is in place?

The programme governance consists of a Steering Group, Programme Board, and Strategy Group. Membership includes representatives from DfT, CRG, Transport Focus, RDG, Network Rail, and owning groups.

The Steering Group oversees the programme and holds accountability and decision-making authority for the survey. When required, the Steering Group delegates decisions to the Programme Board, which manages the technical details of the programme. The Strategy Group provides senior industry input and guidance on key decisions. Where does the Insight Hub fit in?

The Insight Hub is a forum with industry subject matter experts (SMEs) on customer insight and customer experience, together with members of the Survey Programme Board. It meets each period to discuss the survey programme, and other areas of mutual interest around customer insight. It does not have a formal role in the governance structure but plays an important role in briefing/consulting with SMEs, and discussing technical areas of the survey.

When did the survey go live?

The survey went live on 20 July 2025, with first weighted results available in Autumn 2025.

Who is the supplier for the survey?

The survey will be delivered through [Potentia Insight](#), along with their sub-contractors InsightX (fieldwork) and Silverlining (sampling and weighting). RDG hold the contract.

Questionnaire and methodology

How long does the questionnaire take to complete?

The median completion length of the survey is around 8.5 minutes.

What does the questionnaire cover?

The questionnaire collects headline measures such as customer satisfaction, net promoter score, and value for money, as well as more detailed touchpoints across the customer journey. It also

collects detailed segmentation data such as journey purpose, ticket type, demographics, origin/destination and many other areas.

Can you share the questionnaire?

Yes, the full questionnaire is on our website <https://raildata.org.uk/download/rcxs/online-questionnaire.pdf>.

Can the questionnaire be changed?

We will look to keep the questionnaire as stable as possible, to maximise the value from a long time series. There will be a process however for requesting additions or changes to the questionnaire for the programme governance to consider. This will be set out as part of the BAU governance for the programme. The team are cognisant of the need to keep the survey short, to ensure a good response rate.

What data collection methodology will be used?

After an extensive exercise examining and analysing c. 60 potential methodologies for delivering the survey, against criteria including scalability, coverage, costs, and practicality, the selected methodology for the survey is face-to-face recruitment on trains, with digital completion of questionnaires via QR codes or email collection. This gives an effective way of reaching a very high proportion of rail's customers, and a fair comparison across different markets and operators. Digital collection of responses means unweighted data will be available almost immediately to our partners within the industry. A small number of paper questionnaires are carried by fieldworkers for any customers who do not wish to complete a digital questionnaire.

Is the survey continuous, or in discrete waves?

The survey is continuous, with fieldworkers in the field most days throughout the year.

What is the sample size ?

The target sample is 10,000 responses per four-week rail period, across the GB network. The target sample per TOC is shown in the technical guide on our website <https://raildata.org.uk/download/rcxs/technical-report.pdf>. In the first few periods of fieldwork, we have consistently achieved a sample well in excess of 10,000, though we expect this to reduce slightly as we adjust sampling in response to early results until March 2026.

Is it possible to boost the sample for certain services or regions?

Yes, this will be something we can support, and have made provision for in the contract with our supplier. Please note, we will not offer boosts within the first six periods of fieldwork, so we will open discussions on this from early 2026. Any boosting would need to be funded by the requesting party. The criteria that need to be met for boosting have yet to be decided.

Are you incentivising responses to the survey?

Yes, the agency offers optional entry into a prize draw as part of the recruitment process. Initially this will be for 5 x £200 high street vouchers per 4-week rail period, but we may experiment to see if other variants drive a better response rate.

Is the survey accessible?

We have carried out a Diversity Impact Assessment for the survey and have commissioned an agency to review our questionnaires from an accessibility angle. This review ensured that the digital version of the questionnaire is compatible with screen readers, and the paper questionnaire is well formatted for those who do not wish to complete the survey digitally. We have also obtained Crystal Mark accreditation for the online and paper versions of the survey, ensuring it is written in plain English, avoiding unnecessary jargon. Please note that for services wholly or partly within Wales, a Welsh version of the questionnaire is available.

Scope

Are open access operators in scope for the survey?

Yes, Lumo, Hull Trains, Grand Central and Heathrow Express are in scope. The intention is to add any new open access TOCs (subject to scope considerations below) as and when they launch.

Are sleeper or international services in scope?

No, GWR's Night Riviera, Caledonian Sleeper and Eurostar are out of scope for the survey.

Are rail replacement bus services in scope?

No – the on-train section of the questionnaire is not compatible with a rail replacement bus service.

Are rail colleagues able to take part in the survey?

Yes, we are interested in colleagues' experiences too. We have a number of ways to identify whether responses come from colleagues.

Data and reporting

How are data and reporting managed?

Data and reporting are managed in-house by a dedicated analytics team within CRG, supported by RDG's technical team.

What reporting is planned for the survey?

Four types of reporting are planned for the survey.

- Periodic reporting – PDF reporting shared with the rail industry once per period, 2-3 weeks after period end, via the RCXS newsletter distribution.
- Cross tabs – an industry cross tabs report is being developed, allowing users to interrogate the data without working directly with the response-level data.
- Interactive dashboards – web-based dashboards visible to the public, with filters to allow interaction with the data. We expect these to be available from January 2026.

- Marquee reports – 6-monthly deep dive reports on the industry, compiled by Transport Focus using RCXS data, and published on the Transport Focus website. These may attract press attention.

Transport Focus also intend to start using RCXS data in their quarterly operator scorecards.

How is response-level data shared?

Survey data will be made available to the industry¹ and the general public through two different channels.

- Industry API (application programming interface) – this allows a direct ‘pipe’ of data from the survey into third-party data warehouses, to allow analysis and visualisation by systems such as Tableau, Power BI, Excel, SPSS, R, Python, etc. Unweighted data is refreshed daily, with weightings added once a 4-week period, around a week after period end.
- Flat files. We will also provide flat files containing weighted data in csv/Excel format. These will be provided once per 4-week rail period. These files will be made available from December on Rail Data Marketplace

Please email rcxs@networkrail.co.uk if you would like access to the industry API or industry cross tabs, and we will arrange access.

Will all responses be shared?

Yes, to promote transparency and sharing of best practice, anyone within or outside the industry that wishes to can see response-level data for the whole network. However, a small number of fields will be redacted – for example, only the operator in question will be able to access verbatim (free text) responses. Users will need to sign an NDA to access verbatim comments, and fields with personal data, such as age, gender and ethnicity, and these will not be available to the general public. Note that verbatim comments will be run through scripts to remove personally identifiable data before being shared.

Will unweighted data or reporting be shared?

Weightings will be produced each four-week rail period a few days after rail period end – our target for this in BAU is the Friday of Week 1, though it will be longer initially. To allow TOCs and other stakeholders the ability to continuously monitor and act on data, we will not wait until the end of the period to share data but make unweighted data continuously available within industry. We impose conditions on anyone accessing the response data not to publish unweighted results.

Outside industry, data will only be published once weightings can be appended, i.e. a few days after period end. With response-level data, it is always possible to calculate unweighted scores, either intentionally or by mistake – this is an unavoidable consequence of sharing response level data. However, we will provide detailed documentation around the data to ensure those accessing the data are well-briefed and understand how to use the weightings. Again, we will impose conditions on anyone accessing the response data not to publish unweighted scores.

¹ We consider organisations to be in the rail industry if they have full membership of the Passenger Demand Forecasting Council

How will the data be weighted?

We weight the data to make it as representative as possible of rail journeys. We weight by day part, age, gender, and geography, with weights proportional to passenger journeys each rail period. More detail on weighting can be found in the technical guide on our website.

Will you be running key driver analysis?

Yes, we will run key driver analysis at regular intervals and share our methodology so it can be replicated by third parties. We will explore how key drivers differ between key subgroups, e.g. by age, gender, journey purpose or disability. We expect to run analysis for individual train operators too. The first KDAs will be available in early 2026.

Will the data constitute Official Statistics?

The 6-monthly reports published by Transport Focus will be published as Official Statistics, or Official Statistics in Development. The project team is working with the Office of Statistics Regulation to this end. Longer term, the intention is for Transport Focus to seek 'Accredited' status for the Official Statistics (equivalent to the previous designation of National Statistics). In addition, the programme team has Voluntary Compliance status for the wider programme with the Office of Statistics Regulation. This will demonstrate that we are following OSR's [Code of Practice for Statistics](#), and meeting their Trustworthiness, Quality and Value standards.

Industry alignment

How will industry be briefed and trained?

We have developed a comms and training plan for the survey. We deliver regular training sessions and workshops, alongside Insight Hub meetings, to train industry stakeholders to use the data.

How will fieldworkers access the rail network?

We have secured all-lines passes for fieldworkers, backed up by photo ID and a letter of authority. We are ensuring TOCs are well briefed in terms of what they need to do to support fieldwork. We also have a process to ensure fieldworker 'clash' with other survey programmes can be avoided.

Further information

How can I find out further information?

Please visit our website for more information here www.raildata.org.uk/rcxs or contact us at rcxs@networkrail.co.uk.

=ENDS=