

Consultation letter

PRM NTSN clause 4.2.1.2.3(2) – Tactile surfaces for wayfinding

30 September 2021

Dear stakeholder,

RSSB and the Infrastructure Standards Committee are seeking to understand views from users and affected groups of the current mandatory requirement to provide tactile surfaces for wayfinding for visually impaired users.

This requirement is contained in section 4.2.1.2.3 of the [Persons with Reduced Mobility \(PRM\) National Technical Specification Notice \(NTSN\)](#), which outlines requirements for the ‘Obstacle-free route, Route identification’. Point (2) states that: ‘Information on the obstacle-free route shall be given to visually impaired people by tactile and contrasting walking surface indicators as a minimum. This paragraph does not apply to obstacle free routes to and from car parks.’ This requirement was originally from the EU’s PRM Technical Specification for Interoperability (TSI) and was replicated in the PRM NTSN to preserve the same technical requirements in domestic legislation following the UK’s withdrawal from the EU.

We are aware of concerns that providing tactile surfaces for wayfinding may be unhelpful and detrimental in some cases and recognise that there is a need to understand views from users and affected groups. We are therefore seeking to understand the following:

- What are your views on wayfinding at stations for visually impaired users?
- Do you have feedback from visually impaired users to support this, or other evidence for any issues?
- Do you consider the current requirement in 4.2.1.2.3(2) to be satisfactory for visually impaired users and do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Please note, these questions relate only to tactile surfaces for the purpose of wayfinding at stations between facilities, not as a hazard marker at the platform edge.

The outcome of this consultation will be used as the evidence base to develop the case for any potential changes to the PRM NTSN, which will be considered by the Department for Transport (DfT), the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) and RSSB. The current requirement in the PRM NTSN ensures a harmonised solution to the implementation of wayfinding for visually impaired users. It is important that any change to this requirement also ensures a harmonised solution with clear and consistent application across the railway, so responses should be cognisant of this.

We would like to hear from you – please use the comments form provided. The deadline to submit your comments is **28 October 2021**. We may not be able to respond to comments received after that date.

Your comments and personal information (name, job title and organisation) will be circulated to the relevant standards committees and other interested parties in the rail industry to assist informing the responses to your comments.

All consultation comments and personal information is published on the consultation website (<https://consultations.rssb.co.uk/>) unless you ask us not to publish your personal information. Please submit consultation comments to consultation@rssb.co.uk.

If there are specific issues about this project that you would like to discuss before submitting consultation comments, please get in touch with me.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

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