

Disabled passengers set for more accessible journeys at sea

- Maritime Minister launches new passenger rights toolkit in Liverpool
- operators called upon to make journeys better for disabled passengers and staff
- continues the UK's internationally-leading plans for fully-accessible transport

Journeys by sea for thousands of disabled passengers are to be improved thanks to the government issuing new guidance on improving accessibility to operators.

Maritime Minister Nusrat Ghani announced the publication of the [Passenger Rights toolkit](#) during a visit to Liverpool today (22 January 2020) where she met key stakeholders including Mersey Maritime, Wirral Waters and Port of Liverpool.

The toolkit provides operators in England and Wales with a high-level guide on what they must do to comply with passenger rights regulations, as well as recommendations on how maritime transport can be made more accessible.

It will apply to services such as ferries operating from Liverpool and makes recommendations on how maritime transport can be made more accessible to make journeys better for disabled passengers and staff.

Maritime Minister Nusrat Ghani said:

I am delighted to be launching our Passenger Rights toolkit today in Liverpool which shows how making small changes has the potential to make a huge impact on the lives of disabled passengers.

This is one of the commitments set out in our Inclusive Transport Strategy, and I am proud we are leading the way with this work to complement the UN's sustainable development goals – helping make the world more inclusive for disabled people.

I encourage as many operators as possible to support our vision to make sure disabled people have the same access to transport as everyone else.

The toolkit covers the whole journey experience, from accessing information at the booking stage through to arriving at the final destination. It highlights the challenges disabled people can face in travelling by sea, whether their disabilities are visible or hidden.

Maritime transport already benefits from comprehensive passenger rights regulation and this is enforced by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA).

The toolkit provides guidance to support the regulations and will help industry to comply with them.

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) conduct inspections on operators and ports to ensure compliance with passenger rights regulations and they can be prosecuted in the courts and fined if they don't comply.

Keith Richards, chair of the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC) said:

DPTAC welcomes the launch of this toolkit which delivers an important commitment the DfT made in its Inclusive Transport Strategy.

In turn it will help the industry deliver better access for disabled people, not just by bringing some much-needed clarity to what the law already requires on accessibility, but by promoting ideas on what good practice looks like.

This will help the industry tap into a large and growing market of disabled people who simply want to spend their money on maritime services and have the confidence to enjoy the same access as everyone else.

Bob Sanguinetti, Chief Executive of the UK Chamber of Shipping, said:

It should be a basic entitlement that everyone has the option to travel independently and we are delighted to see the launch of this new passenger toolkit.

We will work with our members to ensure disabled passengers travelling by ship have the same access as everyone else.

At the end of 2018, the MCA carried out its first survey of disabled passengers' experience when travelling by sea and the results were used to inform the recommendations made in this toolkit.

The department worked closely with the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC) and industry representatives including the UK Chamber of Shipping and British Ports Association in its development.

The development of the toolkit was a commitment in the [Inclusive Transport Strategy](#), which was published in July 2018. It sets out the government's ambition for disabled people to have the same access to transport.

It's everyone's journey

It's everyone's journey is a communications campaign developed by the Department for Transport in association with disability, transport and

charity partners. The campaign aims to improve the public transport experience for disabled people by creating a more considerate and supportive travel environment.

If you're interested in learning more about 'it's everyone's journey' or becoming a campaign partner, visit gov.uk/everyonesjourney follow [@IEJGov](https://twitter.com/IEJGov) or email everyonesjourney@dft.gov.uk.