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Department for Transport

Audio Visual Announcement System Programming Roundtable

2 September 2026, 10:30 - 15:30

Millenium Point, Curzon St, Birmingham, B4 7XG

https://www.millenniumpoint.org.uk/getting-here/

Book a place: https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1998345877313

Purpose of the roundtable

The Audio Visual Announcement System Programming Roundtable will bring together operators, authorities, suppliers and transport stakeholders to explore how the process of creating, maintaining and deploying audio visual announcement content can be simplified and made more efficient.

While AVA systems are now mandator, many organisations continue to face operational challenges associated with maintaining route information, stop sequences, announcement content and service updates. These challenges can result in duplicated effort, inconsistent data, increased administrative overhead and delays in deploying changes.

The roundtable will examine opportunities to streamline processes, improve data flows, reduce manual intervention and identify practical approaches that make AVA systems easier to configure and operate and support compliance with the Public Service Vehicles Accessible Information Regulations 2023.

Business problem

Operators and authorities may need to support AVA equipment from multiple suppliers across their fleets. At present, each supplier system may require separate programming through its own management environment. This creates duplicated effort, increases the opportunity for inconsistencies, and can introduce errors where the same route or announcement information has to be maintained in more than one place.

A second challenge arises where services are arranged at short notice, for example emergency or late-notice rail replacement bus operations. In these cases, the route may not be confirmed until close to the time of operation, which makes it difficult to prepare AVA

content in advance. The roundtable will consider how AVA systems can be supplied with the right announcement information quickly, simply and reliably in these circumstances.

Key Question

How can the public transport industry move towards a more efficient, scalable and maintainable approach to AVA management, where information is easier to create, update, share and deploy while supporting accurate passenger information and regulatory compliance?

Challenge 1: Delivering AVA Information in Dynamic Operating Environments

Services do not always operate exactly as planned. Service changes, diversions, special events, rail replacement operations and emergency arrangements can require information to be created or modified at short notice.

The challenge facing the sector is how AVA systems can be supported in environments where operational information may change rapidly, while still ensuring that passengers receive accurate and timely announcements. Rail replacement and other short-notice operations create a data-readiness challenge.

The roundtable will explore:

- What information is needed to support AVA operation in changing service environments.
    - How rail, operators and suppliers can each contribute to a workable approach for AVA on routes that are not known in advance.
    - Whether pre-programming is practical for predictable rail replacement patterns, and where it may not be sufficient.
- How route and stop data can be provided more efficiently to vehicles and onboard systems.
- The balance between pre-configured information and dynamically generated information.
- Opportunities to reduce manual data preparation.
- The role of automation in supporting short-notice operational changes.
- What process or data handover points are needed between rail, intermediaries, operators and system suppliers.
- Practical examples of good practice from operators and suppliers.

Challenge 2: Programming once and using across systems

Many organisations operate complex fleets, networks and operational environments. Programming and maintaining AVA systems can involve significant effort, particularly where information must be entered, checked or updated through multiple processes.

The sector increasingly requires approaches that reduce administrative burden while maintaining data quality and consistency.

The roundtable will explore:

- Opportunities to reduce duplicated effort when maintaining AVA information.
- Re-use of existing operational and scheduling data.
- Improving data exchange between systems and organisations.
- Approaches to reducing manual configuration and intervention.
- Opportunities for greater standardisation of AVA-related data.
- The tools, processes and governance needed to support more efficient lifecycle management of AVA content.
- What role operators, authorities and suppliers should each play in defining, maintaining and validating AVA-ready route data.

Stakeholders to be represented

The roundtable will capture perspectives from each part of the delivery chain, including rail, rail replacement intermediaries, operators, authorities and suppliers.

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Workshop structure

Morning session: defining the problem

The morning session aims to establish the regulatory, operational and data context for the roundtable. This includes the requirements of the Public Service Vehicles Accessible Information Regulations 2023, the definition of rail replacement routes in scope, what data is available and when, and problem statements from rail, rail replacement intermediaries, operators, authorities and suppliers.

We aim to achieve:

- A shared understanding of the regulatory and operational requirements.
- A common description of the rail replacement and short-notice operating scenarios.
- A view of when that data becomes available.
- A set of stakeholder-specific problem statements.

Afternoon session: options, actions and delivery routes

The afternoon session will focus on the practical options for addressing the identified challenges. We will have table-based discussion looking at different aspects of the challenge and the issues that need to be overcome.

The objective should be to identify:

- Actions that can be taken quickly.
- Areas where technical development is required.
- Process changes that could improve the current operating model.
- Working groups needed to progress specific aspects topics.
- What level of standardisation would reduce supplier-specific rework?

Desired outcomes

By the end of the roundtable, participants should have a structured view of the current challenges, the options available to address them, and the areas requiring further collaboration including:

- A shared problem statement for AVA programming across multiple supplier systems.
- A shared problem statement for rail replacement and other short-notice services.
- An initial view of the data needed to support reliable AVA announcements.
- A list of short-term actions that could reduce immediate operational friction.
- A list of longer-term technical or process changes requiring sector development.
- Recommendations for any working groups needed to take forward specific workstreams.