



## Transport

A smart digital solution that enables the effective and cost efficient implementation, management and compliance, with the DfT mandated Service Quality Regimes (SQRs)

[mpro5.com](https://mpro5.com)

Are you on the right track  
for the rail revolution?



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### 3 Introduction



BIG changes are coming down the line for Britain's railways and the industry need to be aware of the new standards they are expected to adhere to in order to run a more effective, efficient and customer focused service.

Following publication of the Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail, the DfT will award profit to train operating companies (TOCs) for successfully hitting performance targets that measure the customer experience.

With train operators now having strong financial incentives to focus on the customer experience, most will need to seriously rethink their existing operations and start gearing them towards a Service Quality Regime (SQR) if they are to get paid.

And it's not enough just to meet the new standards: you need to provide digital evidence that you are. So, if you're still using pen and paper checklists to monitor cleanliness, this could be just the time to switch to a more modern workflow automation system.



#### **Further reading**

The Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail

## 4 The Williams-Shapps plan in a nutshell

This major report sets out the government's plan for a revolution on the railways in Great Britain.

It intends to “make railways the backbone of a cleaner, more environmentally friendly and modern public transport system across the country”.

The ambitious plan aims to do that by replacing franchising, accelerating innovation and integrating the railways to deliver an efficient, financially sustainable railway that meets the needs of passengers. This has taken on new importance since the pandemic accelerated the shift to home-working. With many commuters now working at least part of the week from home rather than commuting, the only way to increase

passenger numbers is to make train travel more appealing so people want to travel by train.

The plan places a heavy emphasis on embracing technology. Many principles and the way the railway operates are still based on the philosophies that were around when railways were invented in Victorian times. Despite the huge advances in technology that have taken place since, some aspects of the rail system haven't really moved on.

A newly-created, state-controlled body, Great British Railways (GBR), will integrate the railway system, owning infrastructure

and collecting fare revenue. GBR will also be in charge of planning works on the network as well as setting fares and timetables.

The plan has broadly met with guarded approval from rail bodies such as the Railway Industry Association, Transport for the North and the Rail Delivery Group. However, it has been criticised – some would say predictably – by the RMT for the involvement of many of the private companies linked to the railway's fragmentation.



## 5 What the changes mean for you

GBR will specify timetables, branding, most fares and other aspects of the service, and agree a fee with the passenger service operator (formerly known as a train operating company) to provide the service to this specification.

The quality of each train operator's customer service will be monitored under new Passenger Service Contracts, and **incentive and reward structures will be developed based on performance and passenger satisfaction.**



## 6 Five steps to readiness

The new, heavily mandated process requires train operators to implement a technology solution to gather data on your SQR performance and manage your improvement journey.



### 1 Identify where you're starting from

You first need to determine your baseline so you can measure future service improvements.

This means you need to start asking questions: Where are you currently on meeting SQRs? How realistic is it going to be to achieve targets? Do you have the right data and tools in place to measure this? Even if it's an internal process and you don't yet have a digital solution in place, start gathering the right data.



### 2 Build a true picture of your assets

Check the accuracy of your asset register because train operators are going to have to account for everything, from train carriages and lighting to signage and the vending machines outside the station. Without an up-to-date asset register compliance will be more challenging. Even an out-of-date poster could result in an immediate fail.



### 3 External inspections to track progress

It's now compulsory to commission external auditors to conduct mystery shopper-style inspections on pre-agreed criteria. These should measure what's important under the new system: cleanliness, assets being in good repair, and ease and comfort of travel. If you start this process now, you'll hit the ground running when the SQR is officially implemented.

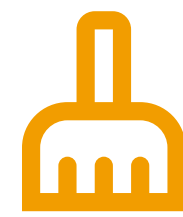
## 7 Five steps to readiness



### 4 Make customer experience everyone's job

With around 1,200 unstaffed stations in the UK, station cleanliness and maintenance issues often aren't seen or reported because, in many cases, there's literally no one to see or report them. Even when a member of staff notices a problem, they have neither the time nor the remit to take action.

If reporting a defect involves a series of manual processes – sending emails, filling out logbooks and so on – the hassle factor is simply too high. But with a workflow automation system installed on handheld devices, it takes seconds to raise an alert and instantly let the right team know what needs fixing.



### 5 Tackle cleaning inefficiencies

Let's take station toilets as a current example of cleaning inefficiency as their condition is one of the main ways passengers assess the overall cleanliness of the train. The state of your toilets has a huge impact on their perception of the journey.

Toilets are typically checked and cleaned on a pre-set schedule, which could be hourly for staffed stations or three times a week for unstaffed. But if no passengers have visited your station's washroom since it was last cleaned, does it make sense to send in cleaners? Conversely, if hundreds descended on your loos minutes after their last clean, chances are they'll need quite a bit of attention that definitely can't wait until the next scheduled clean.

A combination of Internet of Things (IoT) sensors, call buttons and staff devices can be used to make your cleaning responsive rather than routine, making the best use of your resources to clean only when it is necessary.

By making it easy for every team member to report maintenance issues and flag where cleaning or repairs are needed, a workflow automation system can transform your SQR performance.

**Is it time for you to get on board?**

## 8 Find out more



mpro5 is a digital transformation solution that improves operational effectiveness, ensures process compliance and drives productivity gains and cost-savings for the rail industry.

This award-winning software platform is already in widespread use throughout the transport sector. Clients including Network Rail, Chiltern Railways and Northern Rail rely on it to link teams, automate reporting, digitise paperwork, create workflows and more to ensure a consistently exceptional customer experience.

If you'd like to find out more about how we help the transport industry, visit:  
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