

RESEARCH SUMMARY

Title	Disabled commuters' journey experiences		
Objective	To understand more about the journey experiences of disabled commuters on London Underground, buses and London Overground, and how their experience may differ from that of off peak disabled passengers		
Date	June 2010	Agency	Accent
Methodology	Disabled commuters assessed their regular journey to work or education during peak hours. Sixty-one assessors provided 132 bus journey assessments, 110 Underground journey assessments and 18 Overground journey assessments		

Abstract

The key issues faced by disabled commuters, relate to accessibility of information, physical accessibility of transport infrastructure, staff behaviour and attitudes and the attitude of fellow passengers. These issues can be exacerbated during peak times due to overcrowding and unexpected events.

Key findings

- Disabled commuters are less satisfied with information available during their journeys than off peak travellers. Obstruction of screens by fellow passengers is particular problem at peak times. The additional reassurance provided by iBus is important to for disabled commuters. Conversely inconsistent visual and audio information leads to confusion.
- Disabled commuters were less able than off peak passengers to identify the number of the approaching bus or to get on the first bus, less satisfied with the closeness of the bus to the kerb (boarding and alighting) and less likely to have reached a seat or designated wheelchair area before the bus moved away. They were more likely to encounter obstacles at station entrances and exits. Non operational ramps and poor lighting were also an issue.
- Disabled commuters reported mixed attitudes amongst staff, but it was clear that helpful and supportive staff make a significant difference to the quality of disabled commuters' travel experience.
- Commuters are typically focused on fighting their own way through crowds and can be less aware of fellow passengers. A commuter with a disability is likely to be overlooked or seen as an inconvenience. Crowds on stairs and passengers walking against the flow are particularly problematic.

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