National Rail Enquiries

Developer Guidelines

Version 05.01

Contents

1   Introduction

1.1   This Document

This document offers guidance on the use of the National Rail Enquiries ("NRE") information feeds ("feeds") and on the terms and conditions ("licence") under which You as the licensee ("You") have been granted access. It is intended solely as a guide for the user community to help set expectations and behaviours.

1.2   Our Aspiration

NRE has taken the decision to make Information openly available for developers to use and innovate with. Our decision to release the data is intended to balance the industry need to provide widely-available, high quality, accurate, timely and consistent information to the travelling public across as many potential customer touch points as possible.

Our aspiration is to maximise the benefit of partnerships to increase the reach of our Information and ultimately the availability of quality information about travelling by train. We will always use reasonable endeavours to provide high quality information to our existing and prospective developer partners.

1.3   Our Approach

We encourage the use and re-use of our feeds in Your products and services. If we are unhappy about how You are using our feeds, we will attempt to make contact with You to discuss it. Our preferred approach to discussions will always be to try and reach a mutually agreeable outcome. If we are unable reach an agreement, or if we are unable to contact You, we may have to limit, throttle or suspend Your access, where Your use of the feeds materially breaches the terms of Your licence. To get in touch with You, we will use the details that You provided in Your registration. It is important that You keep us updated if contact details change.

2   **Licence Conditions**

The Licence, relating to this document, that grants You access to use NRE Information feeds is based on the Open Government Licence (OGL) version 2.0 with specific variations for NRE. For the avoidance of doubt, this section seeks simply to clarify those additions and amendments made to the OGL.

NOTE: If You are in the slightest doubt about any of the conditions under which You are granted access, please contact us for clarity at nationalraildatafeeds@raildeliverygroup.com.

2.1   **SECTION – Using Information under this Licence**

Addition(s):

2.1.1   *"Your right to access NRE Information feeds is personal to You and may not by assigned or novated by You to any other person or party".*

This means Your rights to access the feeds are unique to You and should not be passed on to anyone else, except for those instructed by You to work with the data on Your behalf. If You distribute Your access credentials to parties not included in Your agreement with us, or not working with the data on your behalf, we have the right to suspend or turn off Your access.

2.2   **SECTION – Rights**

Addition(s):

2.2.1   *"You are free to adapt the format of the Information (as long as You do not amend its content)"*

This means that You have the right to change the format that information from the feeds is displayed within Your End User Products. You are prohibited, however, from altering the content of the feeds itself.

2.3   **SECTION – Requirements**

Addition(s):

2.3.1   *"You must ensure that Your information, provided on registration, is true and accurate to the best of Your knowledge"*

This means that when You register for the feeds online it is important that the details You provide are accurate so that we can contact You in relation to the feeds if we need to. Should this information become inaccurate You should expect to receive no notification of changes to the feeds or the access terms and conditions.

2.3.2   *"You must ensure that all forecasted arrival and departure times, provided by Your End User Product(s), are consistent with Darwin forecasts, as per the Developer Guidelines."*

If You display or transmit forecasted train arrival or departure times through any End User Product that incorporates information derived from Darwin, those forecasted data must be consistent with Darwin forecasts.

Darwin provides the Industry's official designated real-time customer timetable. All of the franchised GB Train Operating Companies supply Darwin with information about when   they

expect their trains to arrive and depart any given station. Information from Darwin is then published downstream to all users of Darwin feeds.

The Industry aim is to achieve a consistent view of train running across all customer facing channels that use Darwin information. This objective is a core element of the industry's Customer Information Strategy, under which, the industry has invested in linking Darwin with rail industry systems all across the network, including the screens at stations. Where Your end user product uses Darwin information, it will be consistent with all station screens, the NRE Website, Trainline.com, all TOC digital channels and hundreds of other 3rd party products.

In support of the Strategy, and as a valued citizen of the developer community, we ask that You contribute to improving quality by reporting any errors, anomalies and/or omissions in the feeds to service.desk@nationalrail.co.uk so we can fix issues at source for the benefit of everyone.

2.3.3   *"You must ensure all Time-Bound Data, used in Your End User Product(s), are displayed as directed in the Information, as per the Developer Guidelines"*

Occasionally Time-Bound Data will become available through NRE feeds before it is ready to be published to the public. In such instances, direction will be given within the feed on when you are permitted to publish this information.

One such example of Time-Bound Data is platform numbers. Early display of platform numbers, particularly at origin and destination stations, can lead to platform overcrowding and/or staff not having sufficient time to prepare the train for oncoming passengers. In some instances, platform numbers will be available in Darwin before being displayed on screens in stations.

In such examples, users must follow the directions within the feed by supressing the display of platform numbers on customer facing products until such a time as permitted. All NRE customer facing channels are bound to follow these directions, therefore it is an important requirement that all downstream users of NRE feeds also follow these directions.

2.3.4   *"You must not use the Information for any unlawful purpose nor promote unlawful use of the Information through Your End User Products"*

This means that Information derived from Darwin feeds must not be used by You for any purpose that is against the law. Nor may it be used in any of Your End User Products that promote use of the information in an unlawful way.

One such example of unlawful use would be the creation of an automated delay/repay engine that systematically claimed compensation from a train operating company for journeys which a customer did not travel on.

2.4   **SECTION – Exemptions**

Addition(s):

2.4.1   *"the Information is provided to You in a certain format and will not be tailored, reformatted or modified in any way to meet Your specific requirements. NRE reserves the right to amend this format from time to time"*

We include this provision to make clear that we will not change the format of the information to meet the specific needs of You or any other user, however we may change the format in the future should we need to. This is a free feed with many users; as such it is made available as is.

2.4.2   *"NRE accepts no obligation to provide the Information continuously or at all and no commitment is given regarding its freedom from interruption"*

This means that the terms under which You have been granted access to the feeds don't include any commitment from NRE about uptime, availability or continued supply of the feeds. We have included this clause to protect us from any unexpected change to our ability to provide the feeds. Our intention is to use reasonable endeavours to maintain the availability and reliability of the feeds; however this is not a guarantee.

2.4.3   *"NRE provides no maintenance or support services, whether relating to the Information or any services and/or products developed by You which incorporate the Information"*

This means that the terms under which You have been granted access to the feeds don't include any maintenance or technical support services. This is a free service which includes no provision of support or guidance on how to use the feeds, other than that which is in the technical documentation provided upon registration.

However, should you identify errors, anomalies and/or omissions in the feeds, you can report this to us directly at service.desk@nationalrail.co.uk.

Note: If You require any commitment regarding a supported service, levels of availability and/or the continued supply of the feeds You should contact nationalraildatafeeds@raildeliverygroup.com to discuss a commercial arrangement for a supported service.

3   **Making Best Use of Feeds**

This section offers guidance on the appropriate way to use each type of feed in order to best preserve the service. As we provide feeds to a large number of developers it is important for us to look after the interests of the majority by protecting the stability of our servers. We offer different types of feed, each of which is designed for a different type of use. We encourage You to use the feed that is most suitable for Your product and do so in such a way so as not to cause unnecessary load on our servers wherever possible. The following notes of guidance are indicative of the types of use we recommended for each feed.

3.1   **Web Service Feeds**

When using our web service feeds in Your products or services we prefer that requests are user driven rather than automated, with some exceptions where light automated use is acceptable, as laid out below. If in any doubt, contact us to discuss Your proposal and we will attempt to clarify our position for You.

3.1.1   Webservices are appropriate:

- To display live departure boards via digital screens, where the information is self-refreshing;
- To push live departure boards to a smart device based on geo-location (for example);
- For other low-volume automated uses up to a maximum of 5000 requests/hr.

3.1.2   We may regulate or limit Your access if You:

- Make automated or systematic requests to the web service to obtain large volumes of data to populate a database for analysis (for example);
- Use the webservice for deep dive analytics.

3.2   **Push Feeds**

The Push Feeds continuously stream information to the user, so long as the user is connected to the service via a queue. These feeds **are** appropriate for high volume data mining or trawling and can be used for deep dive analytics. They can also be manipulated for the same sorts of use as our web services.

3.2.1   Push feeds are appropriate:

- To capture, store and analyse large volumes of data;
- To continuously monitor live data, for use in real-time alerting services (for example).

Note: We have a limited number of queues available for use at any one time. Once you have registered for an account, you will be allocated a queue through which you will receive the data. If you leave your message queue idle for an extended period, i.e. you do not connect your STOMP client to pull data down, your queue will be deleted. The unused queue expiry period is currently set to 100 days. If your queue has been deleted due to a period of inactivity, you will receive a notification email. This will not affect you right to access the feed in the future and you will be able to re-register for a new account at opendata.nationalrail.co.uk.

4   Attribution

The user of NRE feeds must acknowledge NRE as the source of information, where possible, by providing a link to the NRE website and by displaying the "Powered by National Rail Enquiries" logo in accordance with the NRE Brand Guidelines and the following conditions:

- Where an NRE feed is displayed as the predominant or standalone information in Your product or service, NRE attribution should be shown directly alongside, above or underneath the Information derived from the feed;

- Where an NRE feed is combined with other data feeds and/or is not the primary information being displayed, NRE branding may be shown on an attribution page;

- Where NRE feeds are displayed on a dot matrix screen, the words "Powered by National Rail Enquiries" should be used as static or scrolling text.

In some circumstances it may not be possible to display the NRE branding in accordance with these recommendations or, in Your view, it would have a detrimental impact on the end-user experience of the applicable product. In such instances You should contact us to discuss alternatives and/or to be granted an exemption. We will always endeavour to take a reasonable approach when considering alternatives.

5   User Guidance

User guidance for National Rail Enquiries open data feeds can be found at the National Rail Open Data Wiki page. The technical user guide for the Darwin webservice SOAP API is available here. In order to correctly interpret the data you should code using the guidance on these pages.

6   Good Practice

When using NRE Information in the public domain there are a number of recommendations that You should consider; these recommendations are examples of good practice that we encourage You to adopt in order to support the industry to achieve consistency. However these recommendations do not form part of your licence.

Examples and recommendations of good practice can be found in the "Good Practice Guide for Customer Information". The document is an industry manuscript, complied by the TOCs, about recommended good practice in the display of information to customers about rail travel. It has been informed by six years of customer research, is updated annually and can be found by clicking here.