



National Rail Enquiries

Developer Guidelines

Version 06.01

Contents

1	Introduction.....	2
1.1	This Document.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.2	Our Aspiration	2
1.3	Our Approach.....	2
2	Licence Conditions	2
2.1	SECTION – Using Information under this Licence	2
2.2	SECTION – Rights	3
2.3	SECTION – Requirements	3
2.4	SECTION – Exemptions	4
3	Making Best Use of Feeds.....	6
3.1	Web Service Feeds.....	6
3.2	Push Feeds	6
4	Attribution.....	6
5	User Guidance	7
6	Good Practice.....	7

1 **Introduction**

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.

1.1 **Our Aspiration**

NRE has taken the decision to make information openly available for developers to use and innovate with. This decision is intended to balance the industry’s need to provide widely available, high-quality, accurate, timely, and consistent information to the travelling public across as many customer touchpoints as possible.

Our aspiration is to maximise the benefits of working in partnership to extend the reach of our information and, ultimately, to increase the availability of high-quality rail travel information. We will always use reasonable endeavours to provide reliable, high-quality information to both our existing and prospective developer partners.

1.2 **Our Approach**

We encourage the use and re-use of our feeds within your products and services. If we have concerns about how the feeds are being used, we will make reasonable attempts to contact you to discuss the matter. Our preferred approach is always to work collaboratively to reach a mutually agreeable outcome.

If we are unable to reach an agreement, or if we are unable to make contact using the details provided during registration, we reserve the right to limit, throttle, or suspend access to the feeds where their use materially breaches the terms of the licence.

To ensure we can contact you if required, we will use the contact information supplied at the time of registration. It is therefore important that you keep these details up to date.

2 **Licence Conditions**

The licence associated with this document, which grants you access to use NRE information feeds, is based on the Open Government Licence (OGL) version 2.0, with specific variations applicable to NRE. For the avoidance of doubt, this section is intended solely to clarify the additions and amendments made to the OGL.

Note: If you have any uncertainty about the conditions under which access is granted, please contact us for clarification 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 be assigned or transferred to any other person or party.*

This means your access is unique to you and should not be shared, except with individuals you have authorised to work with the data on your behalf. If you provide your access credentials to parties not covered under your agreement with us, or who are not working on your behalf, we reserve the right to suspend or revoke your access.

SECTION – Rights

Addition(s):

2.2.1 *You are free to adapt the format of the information, provided that you do not alter its content.*

This means you may change how the information from the feeds is presented within your end-user products. However, you are strictly prohibited from modifying the actual content of the feeds.

SECTION – Requirements

Addition(s):

2.3.1 *You must ensure that the information you provide during registration is true and accurate to the best of your knowledge.*

This means it is important that the details you submit when registering for the feeds are correct, so we can contact you regarding the feeds if necessary. If your information becomes inaccurate, you should not expect to receive notifications about changes to the feeds or to 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, in accordance with the Developer Guidelines.*

If you display or transmit forecasted train arrival or departure times using any end-user product that incorporates information derived from Darwin, those forecasts must match the Darwin data.

Darwin provides the rail industry's official real-time customer timetable. All franchised GB Train Operating Companies supply Darwin with their expected train arrival and departure times for each station. This information is then published downstream to all users of Darwin feeds.

The industry aims to maintain a consistent view of train running across all customer-facing channels that use Darwin information. This objective is a key part of the Customer Information Strategy, under which significant investment has been made to link Darwin with rail systems across the network, including station displays.

When 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 third-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 that all Time-Bound Data used in your end-user product(s) is displayed in accordance with the instructions provided in the information, as outlined in the Developer Guidelines.*

Occasionally, Time-Bound Data may become available through NRE feeds before it is ready to be published to the public. In such cases, the feed will provide guidance on when the information may be published.

A common example of Time-Bound Data is platform numbers. Displaying platform numbers too early—particularly at origin and destination stations—can lead to platform overcrowding or insufficient time for staff to prepare the train for arriving passengers. In some cases, platform numbers may be available in Darwin before they are shown on station screens.

In these instances, you must follow the directions provided in the feed and suppress the display of such information on customer-facing products until publication is permitted. All NRE customer-facing channels adhere to these instructions, so it is essential that all downstream users of NRE feeds do the same.

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 any data derived from Darwin feeds must not be used in ways that violate the law. Similarly, your end-user products must not encourage or facilitate unlawful use of the information.

For example, creating an automated delay/repay engine that systematically claims compensation from a train operating company for journeys a customer did not actually take would constitute unlawful use.

SECTION – Exemptions

Addition(s):

2.4.1 *The information is provided to you in a specific format and will not be tailored, reformatted, or modified to meet your individual requirements. NRE reserves the right to amend this format from time to time.*

This provision clarifies that we will not adjust the format of the information for you or any other user. However, we may update the format in the future if necessary. As this is a free feed used by many users, it is provided on an “as-is” basis.

2.4.2 *NRE accepts no obligation to provide the information continuously, or at all, and makes no commitment regarding its freedom from interruption.*

This means that your access to the feeds does not include any guarantee from NRE regarding uptime, availability, or continued supply. This clause is included to protect NRE in the event of unexpected changes that affect our ability to provide the feeds. While we intend to use reasonable endeavours to maintain the availability and reliability of the feeds, this cannot be guaranteed.

2.4.3 NRE does not provide maintenance or support services in relation to the information itself, or for any services or products you develop that make use of the information.

This means that while we make the feeds available, the terms of access do not include any maintenance or technical support services. The feeds are provided as a free service, and we are not able to offer ongoing support, troubleshooting, or guidance on how the information is used within your own systems or products, other than the technical documentation provided at the time of registration.

If you identify any errors, anomalies, or omissions in the feeds, you can report them directly to us at service.desk@nationalrail.co.uk.

Note: If you require any guarantees regarding a supported service, levels of availability, 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 provides guidance on the best way to use each type of feed to help maintain the service. Since our feeds are used by a large number of developers, it's important to protect the stability of our servers and look after the interests of the majority.

We offer different types of feeds, each designed for a specific type of use. We encourage you to select the feed that is most suitable for your product and to use it in a way that minimises unnecessary load on our servers.

The guidance below outlines the recommended uses for each feed type.

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).

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, compiled 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](#).