



Transport Committee

Lord Davies of Gower
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Department for Transport

By email

11 January 2024

Dear Lord Davies,

Maritime accessibility

You will be aware that the Transport Committee is undertaking an inquiry into Accessible transport: legal obligations, in connection with which we recently took oral evidence from your ministerial colleagues.

As Parliamentary Under Secretary of State with responsibility for the maritime sector, I would be grateful if you could provide some further information on your approach to accessibility and the work of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency in its role as the National Enforcement Body for Regulation (EU) 1177/2010.

Questions

- 1) How have you approached ensuring that passenger services in the maritime sector will be in a position to meet the Department's target of equal access to transport for disabled people by 2030?
- 2) What is your approach to working with disabled people and advisory groups, like DPTAC, when formulating policy?
- 3) What is your assessment of the impact of the *Maritime passenger rights: industry toolkit* on accessibility since its introduction in 2020?
- 4) As the DfT and MCA maritime passenger accessibility survey 2022 was promoted via the customer databases of maritime operators, it only reached people who had travelled, rather than people who may face barriers which prevent them travelling in the first place. It was also not comparable to previous results due to the changes in methodology.
 - a. How does the Department intend to obtain the views of people for whom accessibility barriers may prevent them from travelling or considering travelling on ferries in the first place?
 - b. Will future versions of the survey be comparable with the 2022 version?
- 5) Many complaints from maritime travellers are resolved by the Voluntary Complaint Handling Bodies, before reaching the Maritime and Coastguard Agency. What is your assessment of whether settling cases in this way limits learning and improvement opportunities?



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- 6) Statistics on the number of disability-related complaints made to Voluntary Complaints Handling Bodies appear to have last been published in 2019 (for the period 2017-18).
 - a. How many complaints have been made to Complaints Handling Bodies since the last publication.
 - b. What is the Department's plan for regularly reporting these figures in the future?
- 7) While the majority of complaints are resolved before reaching the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, we would be grateful for information on what action, if any, MCA has taken itself in relation to accessibility concerns:
 - a. How many a) significant breaches of and b) persistent failures to comply with Regulation (EU) 1177/2010 have been found by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency related to the rights for disabled and reduced mobility passengers.
 - b. How many a) cautions and b) improvement notices have been issued by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency for breaches of the rights of disabled and reduced mobility passengers set out in Regulation (EU) 1177/2010.
 - c. How many criminal investigations and prosecutions have been triggered by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency for breaches of the rights of disabled and reduced mobility passengers.

Kind regards,

Iain Stewart MP
Chair of the Transport Select Committee