



Customer Journey Modernisation Review

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Customer Journey Modernisation Station Review

Introduction.

On the 15th of September 2017 Arriva Rail London (ARL) announced that it would be reviewing the roles of ticket offices and looking to close them in an attempt to make staff more visible. Part of this process was to upgrade ticket vending machines and reduce the number of agency roles and create more permanent roles. The restructuring is called "Customer Journey Modernisation" (CJM).

The RMT and TSSA met with ARL management on the 31st of October 2017 and expressed concerns over the safety implications of ticket offices closing and the impact it could potentially have on staff and passengers.

We the trade unions requested assurances that all existing staff terms and conditions and rosters were protected and negotiable before discussing ARLs proposal regarding Customer Journey Modernisation. ARL management gave reassurances for existing staff in several CJM meetings and this is reflected in the minutes. The trade unions were also concerned about compulsory redundancies and potential de-staffing of stations, as had been the case when Transport for London made the same announcement for London Underground Limited (LUL) stations. An error which led to a large number of safety critical roles having to be re-instated. ARL management have stated that there are no compulsory redundancies. ARL were, and still to this day reluctant to discuss proposed staffing levels.

Before the trade unions could agree to look at proposed roles or accept the proposal to close ticket offices on the London Overground network, we insisted ARL carry out a station by station review of the network. This was to look at the current working arrangements in an attempt to identify any safety risks around ARLs proposal. We could then constructively and clearly be able to look at the mitigations that may be needed to be put in place prior to any further talks, or before any changes to working environments were agreed.

At the CJM meetings which followed it was established that a smaller group of RMT and TSSA representatives along with ARL management would carry out the station reviews. This would include talking to staff about any safety concerns they may have regarding ARL's proposal, as it would affect all those grades who currently work in customer services and not just those staff in ticket offices.



Customer Journey Modernisation Station Review

Terms of reference.

In an attempt to work constructively it was agreed that a "Joint Working Group" (JWG) would be formed to carry out the station by station reviews. From the staff side it would consist of a mixture of health and safety representatives and industrial representatives from both the RMT and TSSA.

The ARL management side would consist of the CJM team, local management teams (IOSH qualified) and senior customer experience managers. The JWG would also appoint subject matter experts to support the group as required. It was also stated that the full-time officers for both trade unions would attend the reviews where appropriate.

We would like it noted that at no point during the reviews were any subject matter experts or senior customer service experience managers in attendance. Neither full time officer were invited to attend any review by ARL.

All those who attended the station reviews on behalf of ARL, were picked solely by the ARL management side of the JWG.

It was agreed that the terms of reference presented by ARL would not be prescriptive and in places would be flexible. This was necessary as when the process of reviewing stations commenced the initial scope of stations changed. This was due to ARL's admission that those stations which are currently staffed by agency would be staffed internally. It was also stated in the initial 20 station management report that those stations in which other staff such as traincare are present on platforms they could fill the role of platform supervision. Therefore, we felt it was imperative to include these stations as part of the review process. ARL management declined to carry out reviews at these stations.

ARL management carried out 82 station reviews with the trade unions. The trade unions have carried out an additional 6 station reviews.

ARL management did agree to speak to the Customer Service Ambassadors, Revenue Protection Inspectors, and Ticket Vending Machine teams on the request of the trade unions. Again, this was due to the admission that the restructuring would also affect these grades.

The RMT and TSSA have 88 station review documents as evidence to refer back to, to support our Customer Journey Modernisation Report and Conclusion.



Customer Journey Modernisation Station Review Report.

The RMT and TSSA joint working group (JWG) consisting of Representatives:

Jonathan Mortimer	RMT
Beverleigh Thomas	RMT
Liam Nixon	RMT
Samuel Addo	RMT
Theresa Opoku-Ware	RMT
Ray McDonagh	TSSA
Abdulhai Mulla	TSSA

The RMT and TSSA representatives with Arriva Rail London (ARL) management have now completed the station by station reviews of the London Overground network and spoken to those staff members affected by the proposed restructuring of roles and closures of ticket offices. These included all 82 stations in the terms of reference and 6 additional stations. Alongside this we had separate feedback sessions with Customer Service Ambassador, Revenue Protection, and Ticket Vending Machine teams.

Whilst visiting each station and consulting with the staff, the trade union reps along with ARL management set out to review the stations and the impact closing a ticket office would have on staff/passenger safety including but not limited to; Staffing levels, roles, facilities, exposure to elements, lone working threats, figures for crimes on the railway (BTP), crimes surrounding our stations (MET), crowd control/pinch points, repetitive strain risks, events, local amenities, local developments, and Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA).

All the information below provided by ARL and sourced by the trade unions was accurate during the time of the reviews. Our conclusions based on these reviews are as follows;

Staffing Levels:

We found that at all the stations we reviewed the staffing levels were extremely low. According to The Office of Rail and Road (ORR) ARL has a decreased staffing level of 3.6% since November 2017. Most stations and all other customer service facing roles, have had vacancies for many years and are currently being filled with agency staff and the reliance of overtime from existing staff to cover shifts. These vacancies, along with those shifts covered by agency need filling before any proposed staffing levels are discussed.

The agency staff work extended hours and split shifts over a 24-hour period. Their potential fatigue puts those members they are working with and passengers at risk of an accident/incident, the risk is higher if they are left at a lone working station unsupervised. The level of competence coupled with the large area agency staff cover leaves them reliant on the knowledge and experience of internal staff, adding to the already increasing workload of our members. The issues around agency work patterns has been raised by the trade unions with ARL through the appropriate machineries. ARL have neglected to resolve this issue.

Stations where traincare/train presentation are present, they act as a station presence for passengers and often carry out customer service. These are often at some of the busier stations on the network including but not exclusive to; Gospel Oak, Highbury and Islington, Kensington Olympia, Liverpool Street, Dalston Junction, and Stratford. The reliance on their support, going above and beyond their roles masks the staff shortage at these locations.

The above shows us the importance of Platform Supervisors and the need for more, especially at interchange stations. During disruptions, evacuations and other emergencies, it is important to have a person in charge. The Ticket Office staff on duty are currently responsible for the stations in which they work at, as are Station Assistants.

Stations where there are Platform Supervisors their sole responsibility is to provide a safe station environment. They prevent suicides, manage crowd control, MIP/VIP, contractors and maintain a high visible presence.

At Stratford we currently have Operation Supervisors and Operation Assistants. These roles are safety critical roles and we believe should under no circumstances be replaced. This is the same for Train Dispatchers and those Station Assistants who also dispatch trains at other locations. Again, the staff working in these roles go above and beyond and currently assist with customer service duties outside their job descriptions. Majority of concerns were around abusive behaviour from passengers when it came to ticket issues. All staff from these grades stressed the importance of having ticket offices to refer passengers to. Staff in these operational roles also stated the concern of the additional work load which has increased due to staff shortages and increased footfall.

During disruptions and in the event of an emergency we believe that our members are currently at a high risk of physical/verbal assaults and injury due to the current low staffing levels. Those stations that are currently lone working the risk is increased, and even more for those lone working outside.

Staff are left unaided for many hours of the day and have raised concerns over stress levels, exhaustion, the increase in workload (caused by increase in footfall and shortage of staff), and feeling vulnerable, especially during peak hours. The lack of support and visibility from management is adding to this.

Those members currently working in a ticket office raised concerns that they felt safer carrying out roles from within the ticket office, especially when working alone.

Ticket office hours are based on "schedule 17" (mandatory ticket office operating hours as set by the National Rail Ticketing and Settlement Agreement). However, at numerous locations the staff have stated the ticket office remains open past the schedule 17 hours due to the high demand of the services they offer. Some of these ticket offices open at weekends when not required due to the demand, a practice which up until now has been supported by ARL and previously LOROL (London Overground Rail Operations Limited).

Customer Service Ambassadors and Revenue Protection Inspectors stated they use ticket offices to diffuse altercations by referring passengers to them and rely on the staff working in ticket offices for additional support and knowledge. Majority of staff from both grades stated they felt safer knowing that a member of ticket office staff was available for support.

Customer Service Ambassadors carry out a safety critical role on the platforms during peak times. At certain locations on the network they have been removed, which has increased the work load of staff working at those stations. Staff at the stations which currently have Customer Service Ambassadors working have stated the additional member of platform staff has improved issues such as crowd control, disruptions/evacuations, prevented accidents and suicide attempts.

Currently ARL have no lone working policy.

ARL have chosen to present the information of staffing levels as "full time equivalent" rather than an overall head count with each station/grade vacancies attached. Full time equivalent is based on hours worked. Those that have family friendly arrangements/flexible working and those that are part time roles show as decimal points. We have requested ARL still present a simplified version of this as established roles. We would like to see a headcount and grades of all internal roles, vacancies and those roles covered by agency staff.

The information provided we believe is not entirely accurate and the vacancies may be higher. Woodgrange Park for example shows 2.42 for gateline staff, yet there are no internal staff who work on the gatelines. Dalston Junction has 4 vacancies for Customer Host grade, but this is only shown as 2.00 by ARL. GOB (Gospel Oak to Barking) RPI shows as 0 vacancies, but 4.00 with agency cover. The 4.00 which agency staff cover is in fact the vacancies, this is a reoccurring issue across the figures provided. There are more discrepancies with the information provided as above, therefore we cannot at this time fully assess all the issues surrounding current/proposed staffing levels.

We would have preferred a more accurate graph, which shows our current establishment (minuted positions) and vacancies across the network.

From the figures provided we can see that currently according to ARL there are 150.82 vacancies across the network with a further 212.51 roles being filled with agency staff. This gives us a total of 363.33 vacancies being covered with agency or internal staff as overtime. As stated before we believe that these vacancies which have not been filled over a long period, and the reliance of agency staff has a detrimental effect on our members and puts their wellbeing and safety at risk.

Below are all the current estimated staffing levels/vacancies, figures provided by ARL.

[illegible]

Lone working:

Having visited/reviewed ARL stations, observed and consulted staff who work at single staffed stations, we believe the lone working model is not safe and strongly advise against it.

The footfall at our stations (please see **Crowd Control**) has increased and is trending to continue to do so. This increases the risk to staff and passengers for assaults/accidents.

Staff that work outside and away from ticket offices/cabins in the stations we reviewed have large distances between themselves and points of refuge/safety. This risk is heightened at lone working stations as there is no additional staff to assist. Blind spots on stations are an issue (unless CCTV is being monitored by colleagues from the ticket office/cabin). Staff at certain locations do not have the equipment (radios) to stay in constant contact when in areas which are out of sight of their colleagues.

The staffing levels are low that staff currently must split up to carry out tasks such as security checks, MIP/VIP, putting themselves at risk. Whilst carrying out the mentioned tasks, passengers have no one else to assist them. This often leads to a delay in their journey and can cause conflict for lone working staff.

Many stations have local amenities close to them that serve alcohol to the public that put staff outside at higher risk of anti-social behavior. Again, those members of lone working staff feel more vulnerable when dealing with intoxicated passengers.

Ticket Vending Machines (TVM) are all on the unpaid side of the gatelines and most in and around station entrances/exits. Staff at certain locations are expected to assist passengers with TVMs despite being next to or over the boundaries of station lease areas. Staff are required to empty these regularly and cannot be lone working when carrying out this task.

Lone working/panic devices vary across the network. The West Anglia stations had mobile panic devices for when staff are required to work outside, although a lot of staff stated they were not briefed/trained on the use of them. The London Overground "classic" stations there are no mobile panic devices. All ticket offices however have panic buttons in them making them the current safe place of work.

Other forms of lone working devices such as mobile phones again varied across the network. A lot of the stations experience poor phone signal or WIFI coverage issues. Most of the East London Line core route that are underground have limited signal making the phones redundant in an emergency. In these stations the staff would have to rely on the landline and CCTV in the ticket office being monitored by colleagues. Staff radios vary across the network with stations that are lone working having them, and those that have more than one staff not having any at all. The distribution of these needs addressing company wide.

Roaming PA devices, we believe are an essential tool for all ARL stations, especially those which are lone working. Currently station staff at lone working stations rely on returning to the ticket office/cabins to make announcements.

Stations that have a high suicide attempt rate, such as the DC & West London Line currently could not be lone working. These stations have designated Network Rail staff acting as suicide prevention. The need for these additional staff leads us to believe that currently these ARL stations are under staffed.

We noted a small number of gated stations that are currently lone working. We advise against this practice as it puts the staff at a heightened risk of assault. It also puts passengers safety at risk due to staff not being able to monitor the gates effectively whilst carrying out other duties.

There are numerous stations on the network that require staff to walk on public footpaths due to the multiple entrances/exits they have. This is a dangerous practice as staff are currently not insured outside station boundaries and in the event of an accident/assault would have to claim through a third party. This is also an issue when staff are requested to take VIPs or vulnerable people to rail replacement services alone. Rail replacement bus stops are large distances away from stations and are not covered by CCTV.

The EqIA (Equality Impact Assessment) requested by the unions for ARL to undertake would partially cover which staff could potentially lone work and the impact on passengers at those stations proposed to have a decrease in staffing levels.

Once again Arriva Rail London's lack of a lone working policy is something we believe needs rectifying.

Crimes on stations:

The British Transport Police (BTP) figures provided by ARL were limited and only covered February 2017 to February 2018. Because of this we were not able to assess the risks staff face fully, and if staff safety/wellbeing would be at threat. We are unable to see whether there has been an increase or decrease in crime on stations.

Both trade unions have requested more data from ARL.

The data we as trade unions have been able to source from the British Transport Police is as follows:

Violent crime stats for all 83 Stations

36 Stations have shown an increase in violent crime by 42.5%.

26 Stations have shown a decrease in violent crime by 31.5%.

21 Stations have remained the same which is 26% of our network.

Station crime stats on all 83 Stations

53 Stations have shown an increase in crime by 63.5%

21 Stations have shown a decrease in crime by 25.5%

9 Stations have remained the same which is 11% of our network.

On train crime stats on all 83 Stations

43 Stations have shown an increase in crime by 51.5%

28 Stations have shown a decrease in crime by 33.5%

12 Stations have remained the same which is 15% of our network.

Looking at the above as a whole there has been a large increase on crimes on our network.

Averaging the percentages shown there is an increase of crime by 52.5% overall on ARL.

There has been a significant reduction in British Transport Police officers on the overground. The lack of visibility and support from BTP has been a concern at all stations and that of the Revenue Protection Inspectors and Customer Service Ambassadors.

For staff who work in environments such as ticket offices into customer facing roles, the risks of verbal and physical assault must be addressed fully, and safeguards put in place.

Staff have raised concerns over how the reporting of antisocial behaviour and the lack of support has left them feeling vulnerable and unable to carry out their various roles. When staff report assaults they have fed back that the emphasis is put on them and not the perpetrator. The lack of support and empathy from management has led to staff stating they are now reluctant to report a crime. This not only influences morale but has led to crime figures not being a true reflection of the current levels.

Crimes surrounding stations:

Again, the figures for Metropolitan crime and other constabularies provided by ARL were limited, this time only providing a snap shot of crime figures for November 2017. Again, because of this we were not able to assess whether there has been an increase or decrease in crime surrounding the stations. We were not able to assess the risks staff face fully, and if staff safety/wellbeing would be at threat.

Both trade unions have requested more data from ARL.

Both trade unions have found data for the last 12 months for crime rates surrounding our stations. Below is an average of reported crimes per month, per line.

Met crime stats on a monthly average

North London Line (between Stratford and South Acton) 64.5 crimes.

East London Line Core and Southern stations (Dalston Junction and West Croydon/Crystal Palace/Clapham Junction) 51 Crimes.

Gospel Oak and Barking Line (Upper Holloway and Barking) 46 Crimes.

DC Line (between South Hampstead and Watford High Street) 41 crimes.

West Anglia inners (between Bethnal Green and Chingford/Cheshunt/Enfield Town) 51.5 crimes.

West London Line (Willesden Junction and Clapham Junction) 81 Crimes.

We as trade unions also looked at crime rates in the 30 boroughs that our network covers.

Below is the London Boroughs crime rates over a 12month period, February 2017 to February 2018.

Camden	27.35%	↑	Waltham		
Redbridge	17.02%	↑	forest	6.23%	↑
Westminster	15.97%	↑	Hammersmith		
Islington	15.71%	↑	and Fulham	5.98%	↑
Richmond	14.88%	↑	Hackney	5.35%	↑
Newham	10.89%	↑	Barnet	5.35%	↑
Kingston	10.80%	↑	Greenwich	5.34%	↑
Bexley	10.57%	↑	Wandsworth	4.92%	↑
Enfield	10.04%	↑	Merton	4.25%	↑
Hounslow	9.33%	↑	Tower Hamlets	4.21%	↑
Kensington and			Southwark	3.99%	↑
Chelsea	9.07%	↑	Harrow	3.76%	↑
Brent	9.05%	↑	Lewisham	1.94%	↑
Hillingdon	8.99%	↑	Croydon	0.70%	↑
Havering	7.91%	↑	Ealing	0.47%	↑
Haringay	7.15%	↑	Lambeth	0.41%	↓
Barking and					
Dagenham	6.24%	↑			

Out of the above 30 London Boroughs 29 have increased crime rates over the last 12 months and have only seen one decrease in the same period.

Crime rates around our stations must be taken into consideration by ARL. Austerity does not stop at the boundaries of a station and the surrounding environment has an effect on our members safety and security. Those working outside are at a greater risk than those in the safety of a ticket office.

Points of Refuge/Safety:

On all London Overground stations reviewed we have found that the main point of refuge/safety is the Ticket Offices/staff cabins.

These areas all have a panic button, landline and a secure lockable door. There are issues in certain locations regarding the quick access to ticket offices once staff are outside. Staff are able to monitor CCTV if needed, i.e. In times when observing antisocial behaviour from a secure safe distance.

Although ARL staff are currently not first aid trained, ticket offices are where first aid supplies are kept and ill passengers are often taken there whilst waiting for paramedics.

Fire extinguishers are stored in ticket offices and staff need quick access to these in an emergency.

All contractors and visitors are briefed from the ticket office and sign in and out from there. Ticket offices are the main points of safety and point of contact for all those that come onto stations.

The majority of stations had no other points of safety along platforms (with the exception of some stations on the south section of the ELL core). We believe our members currently working outside and those proposed to do so are currently at risk, especially those roles that require staff to work on platforms.

Some stations have other offices/store rooms on stations/platforms that could be converted into places of safety in an emergency but would need to be assessed on a station by station basis.

Not all gatelines have booths/pods for staff. Those that did, have issues with access and securing the doors. This leaves staff open to risks such as not being able to access the points of refuge or secure themselves safely and quickly in the event of an assault.

During busier periods and disruptions staff working away from points of refuge are at a higher risk of assault due to not being able to get back to any point of safety. There is a lack of help points (emergency buttons) towards the far ends of platforms.

CCTV coverage needs addressing as many of the stations (especially on West Anglia route and ELL south) had numerous blind spots and areas with no coverage.

With the installation and positioning of the new TVM machines, concerns have been raised as to the distance between the ticket office and machine. This also creates issues of staff having blind spots and safety issues. The risk is increased when staff are required to carry money to and from the TVM.

All the above concerns add to the safety risks when staff are working away from ticket offices/staff cabins.

Footfall data/Crowd control/Pinch points:

The footfall data provided by ARL during the reviews sourced from The Office of Rail and Road (ORR) is inaccurate and misleading.

Firstly, it is an “estimation” of station usage as stated by the ORR. The information provided only accounts for those passengers that enter/exit London Overground stations using their Oyster cards. It does not include the following:

- Passengers that travel via ungated stations.
- Interchanging passengers (who may use the station and ticket office for information purposes)
- Persons who use stations as a walkway or right of way.
- Members of the public who purchase tickets from ticket offices or TVMs but do not use our services (ticket on demand/prepaid, one day bus pass)
- Passengers traveling on event days when gatelines are left open to help with crowd control issues
- Periods of the service when gatelines are not in operation and the wide gate is left open
- Members of the public using stations and ticket offices for information and customer service purposes only
- The figures do not account for passengers who use contactless bank cards or apple/android pay services.
- Large booked groups of people with letter of authority to travel.

Secondly the data provided by ARL was for only one year (2016/2017). We were unable to ascertain whether the footfall at stations had periodically increased/decreased. This is vital information that we would need before looking at proposed staffing levels. This would allow us to estimate the rate of natural increase (RNI).

All stations reviewed experienced crowd control issues at the ticket office windows and by the TVMS. These were more apparent during peak times. Shortage of staff at ticket offices windows has left some stations with just one window. This causes a larger single queue and increases the work load of current staff. The placement of new CUBIC machines on certain locations causes queuing conflicts with ticket office windows and gatelines.

Tops/Bottoms of stairs and lifts are also reoccurring pinch points for all stations on the network. These areas again are busiest during peak times. Limited stations have queuing systems for stairs, something we feel should be mandatory at all stations to prevent accidents and overcrowding.

Platforms have areas that are too narrow (pinch points) and when they become over crowded, not only are they not safe, but restrict the members of platform staff to one area and obstruct their view and path to points of safety.

Waiting shelters and passenger behaviour cause pinch points and crowd control issues. During bad weather passengers tend to congregate in waiting areas and under stairs for shelter. This leads to passenger conflict with those exiting and entering trains. Having observed passenger behaviour on platforms, regular users tend to use the same train doors which leads to congestion.

ELL core is the only route to have Integrated Safety Management Systems in use (ISMS), something we feel all stations need. Most stations on the network have trains arriving within close proximity of each other causing additional overcrowding and strain on those working outside. The overcrowding issues on all stations have staff stating they feel more vulnerable when working outside.

No ARL stations reviewed have any form of a working queuing system in place which was reflective of the layout or manageable by staff. We feel those that have narrow platforms/walkways or smaller booking halls/gateline could benefit from these. They would help in an emergency/evacuation and for general crowd control purposes especially during peak times.

Noise Levels:

For those working outside the ticket office there is a reoccurring concern regarding noise levels and prolonged exposure. We could not source anything in the current task risk assessments to show this has been assessed. Trains including freight, run at 80 decibels at 15 metres away on average. Our staff working on platforms and outside are much closer than this which we believe may bring the noise levels above 85 decibels.

The minimum requirement before noise must be assessed in the workplace is 80 decibels, with 85 being the level employers must provide protection. This is based on the advice of the control of noise at work regulations act 2005.

With the addition to this we have frequent public announcements on stations and during the peak times large crowds.

The majority of ticket offices are next to busy roads and bus stops. This again adds to the noise levels.

Contractors currently working on stations, including fault fixing, maintenance and upgrade work, using drills and other power tools are allowed to do so without any assessment made on the effects to staff wellbeing.

The only staff safeguarded from this currently are those working in ticket offices.

Exposure to elements:

Unlike London Underground Stations (LUL), ARL stations are more open and exposed to weather conditions. The majority of the London Overground network are not section 12 (sub-surface) stations.

The working environment for those not in ticket offices is dependent on the weather and the hazards associated with this vary on a daily basis.

Thermal comfort has two extremes. Firstly, the cold weather in winter months and secondly the sun/heat in summer months.

The low temperatures can cause cold stress to staff and long exposure to this can be detrimental to the immune system. Thermals which are provided do not protect staff from prolonged exposure to cold and wind.

The hot temperatures during the summer months can attribute to heat exhaustion.

Both hot and cold conditions have left staff complaining of fatigue, and the Management for Attendance (MFA) procedure does not accept these factors. Staff state they feel penalised for going off sick with cold and flu like symptoms.

The current task risk assessments for those working outside do not cover "thermal comfort" and any preventative measures to reduce risks associated with its effects.

Lack of shelter on stations puts staff at further risk. One of the risks is the exposure to ultra violet rays. Staff that currently work outside of ticket offices have little protection from this and there are no mitigations put in place. Items such as sunglasses to protect eyes are an example of what staff stated they feel would be beneficial.

ARL does not provide suitable changing and drying facilities for staff working outside. Staff have also raised the concern for the lack of waterproof clothing. A water-resistant jacket is the only current personal protective equipment supplied to those who request it.

The overall uniform has been a reoccurring concern raised during the reviews. There is only one uniform supplied to frontline staff at present. The trousers for example are only suitable for those who work in an air-conditioned environment i.e. ticket office. Staff have stated the trousers are too thick and heavy especially when working outside in hot temperatures. LUL staff are provided polo shirts as an alternative to buttoned, tucked in shirts to help with heat. This matter has been brought up on a number of occasions with ARL, but they have repeatedly stated that the uniform has been implemented by TfL.

Members of staff that work on gatelines have overhead heaters provided. At certain locations the heaters are not placed where the member of staff is required to stand. The heaters are insufficient in windy conditions, and we believe due to their size are insufficient.

There are no heaters or booths for staff working on platforms and all other areas outside.

Before any further staff are proposed to work in these environments, ARL needs to address the above issues and put in place necessary reasonable measures to protect staff's health and wellbeing. Ticket office staff are the only grade protected from these risks.

Repetitive strain:

Staff members are at a high risk of repetitive strain across all stations. This is mostly caused by the overall size of stations including; large station entrances, surrounding boundaries, length of platforms, and flights of stairs/ramps. Those lone working have an increased risk due to the additional workload.

Grades that stand for long periods of time especially Station Assistants, Gateline, RPI, CSA, and Train Dispatch are at a higher risk of injury. Standing for long periods on a regular basis can cause sore feet, swelling of the legs, varicose veins, general muscular fatigue, low back pain, stiffness in the neck and shoulders, and other health problems. Standing effectively reduces the blood supply to the loaded muscles. Insufficient blood flow accelerates the onset of fatigue and causes pain in the muscles of the legs, back and neck (these are the muscles used to maintain an upright position).

Prolonged and frequent standing, as with gateline staff, causes blood to pool in the legs and feet. When standing occurs continually over prolonged periods, it can result in inflammation of the veins. This inflammation may progress over time to chronic and painful varicose veins. Excessive standing also causes the joints in the spine, hips, knees and feet to become temporarily immobilized or locked. This immobility can later lead to rheumatic diseases due to degenerative damage to the tendons and ligaments (the structures that bind muscles to bones).

Stations that have rosters with just one day rest between late to early shifts have less time to recover and this can heighten the risk to the above.

Adding to this, shift lengths and break times/frequency are a concern to staff.

The weight staff are expected to carry is a risk that is increasing. Firstly, there are more MIPs on the network and the frequency of lifting heavy ramps has increased. With additional TVMs being introduced there are larger weights being carried across lengthy distances. RPI's are required to carry heavy rucksacks with equipment including, oyster validators, notebooks, ticket printers, and spare batteries. CSAs and GPRs also have to carry their personal belongings with them as they have no hub or lockers.

Another repetitive strain issue staff member's deal with is opening stations on their own and having to manually open large gates. Opening/closing of heavy shutters on TVM cages. These cages do not have handles and are awkward.

Security checks must be carried out 1 - 4 hourly and covers the whole station usually by one person. This includes multiple flights of stairs and full lengths of platforms. Those stations that have secondary means of escape (SME) are part of the security checks and often are long distances. At some stations the security checks can take up to 35 minutes.

Current PPE provided:

Employers must provide the correct Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for staff and ensure it is looked after. We have noted that this is not the case for many staff on the London Overground network.

Staff across the network are provided thermals. As stated above we do not believe they are sufficient for prolonged exposure to the cold. No staff currently are provided suitable waterproofs or places of changing/drying and storage.

Safety shoes are dependent on the location and the tasks required. We believe staff should be provided safety shoes throughout the network and they should be suitable for long periods of standing/walking.

Gateline staff have anti-fatigue mats which relieve some of the pressure on muscles and joints for short periods. Those working on platforms for extended periods or those mobile members of staff do not have anything to lower the risk of muscle fatigue. Not all gatelines have perches/seats for staff to take a comfort break.

All ticket offices have panic buttons. Incorporated West Anglia stations have roaming panic buttons for when required to leave the ticket office. Station Assistants informed us they used to have these, but they were removed, despite being lone working outside.

As stated above briefly in **Exposure to elements** the current uniform is not fit for purpose for those working outside. Staff have raised concerns over the weight of items including trousers, and the insufficient warmth during the winter. As a matter of safety staff are requested to wear HI-Visibility jackets and these once placed over coats can become restrictive. They are also non-breathable, and in the summer make staff sweat more and dehydrated. The fabric and weight of uniform is something that must be addressed.

PPE across the network needs addressing before any proposed change of work due to the inconsistency provided and relevance to tasks.

Equality Impact Assessment (E.q.I.A):

An Equality Impact Assessment has not yet been carried out by ARL. We are concerned about this not being done before proposing to close ticket offices, as we do not know how it will impact those individual members of staff/passengers who are disadvantaged or vulnerable.

The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is to make sure any proposed changes do not discriminate and that, where possible, promotes equality. It should cover the impact of any proposed changes to staff and passengers using our services.

ARL has a legal responsibility or duty to assess and then protect people from discrimination on the basis of the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Marriage or civil partnership

This involves anticipating the consequences of any proposed changes to staff and the effect to them and services provided to passengers. Making sure that, as far as possible, any negative consequences are eliminated or minimised and opportunities for promoting equality are maximised.

Ticket offices, TVMs and Ticketless Travel:

Although for the most part the station by station review looked at the safety implications on staff and passengers if the ticket office were to close and associated risks, we also assessed the services provided.

Passengers using the ticket offices at present can:

- **Encode Exchange.**

Once the magnetic strip is damaged or the information on the front of a ticket has faded this can be replaced, to then work on gatelines and be read by Revenue Protection Inspectors.

- **Pay via Warrants.**

Those passengers who are usually vulnerable passengers and are given warrants by social services, probationary services and local councils, can redeem these at ticket offices only. HM forces and businesses also use this service.

- **Duplicate tickets and changeovers.**

When a passenger loses a season ticket they can have a duplicate issued. If a passenger wishes to change the zone or destination of a ticket the ticket office can change it (changeover). Currently there is no other efficient way of rectifying these issues.

- **Advanced purchase tickets.**

Currently ticket offices are the only means of buying a ticket for a destination up to 3 months in advance and be able to rectify the date if required. You can also upgrade a ticket.

- **SILK arrangements.**

SILK (Stranded Information Location Known) is when a passenger (sometimes vulnerable) has no means of payment for a ticket. Someone on their behalf can go to a ticket office in a different location and purchase their ticket for them for a fee. (The trade unions were informed SILK is being withdrawn across the network, at functional level.)

- **Rectifying Oysters.**

During disruptions or if a passenger accidentally taps in on a validator the ticket office can correct this transaction. This is not the same as a refund.

- **Non Issues and Ticket Cancellations.**

Non issues are tickets that have been incorrectly purchased and the passenger would like to exchange it for a different one. The ticket office can cancel this and reimburse or exchange the ticket if the ticket had just been purchased at that station.

- **Excess fare.**

Passengers who wish to change the destination of a ticket can extend the journey or change it from a single to a return by paying the difference. You can also upgrade a ticket.

- **Short change vouchers.**

If a ticket machine does not have sufficient change it will produce a voucher which can only be redeemed at ticket offices.

- **Photocards & national railcard replacements.**

Certain tickets need a photocard to travel with. Replacement photocards can be printed and authorised at ticket offices. This is also applicable to those who lose railcards.

- **Interpret tickets/Oyster.**

Passengers requesting printouts and information regarding oyster cards can obtain this information at ticket offices only. When a Revenue Protection Inspector disputes a ticket the ticket office staff can check the authenticity of the ticket via the FASTIS.

- **Staff Privilege tickets.**

Staff requesting discounts of up to 75% must do this via the ticket office. This includes point to point, and season tickets.

- **Applying discounts to Oyster.**

Passengers who wish to add discounts to oysters such as; Bus and tram and National Railcards.

Ticket offices functions are more than just selling tickets and oysters. They are an information HUB and are the only location on stations with the tools to give accurate and up to date information without having to carry expensive IT equipment on your person.

Ticket offices are where most passenger announcement systems are located. These are mainly used during evacuations and disruptions.

Train Management Information System (TMIS) is located in all ticket offices.

As stated earlier the ticket office is equipped with CCTV which staff can monitor passenger behaviour from a secure location.

After the closure of ticket offices on London Underground Limited, by 2015 a report by Labour Group, Greater London Authority (GLA) claimed there had been an increase in ticketless travel by up to 200%.

ARL have provided ticketless travel figures but these are solely based on surveys and are snapshots of the network.

Station staff including those who operate the gatelines, Customer Service Ambassadors, and Revenue Protection Inspectors stated that they have stopped challenging those who push through gatelines and fare evade and have also stopped reporting it due to lack of support and safety concerns (as also stated in **Crimes on stations**). This leads us to believe that ticketless travel is potentially higher than the figures provided.

Revenue Protection Inspectors in a feedback session all stated that the lack of BTP has led to them feeling unable to challenge those fare evading. The dependency of agency staff and the lack of ticket knowledge for agency staff was a concern. The agency staff are more dependent on the knowledge of ticket office staff when working without ARL RPIs.

There has been a suggestion by management to RPIs that they may introduce body cameras as a deterrent. We are against this as we believe increasing numbers of staff is a safer alternative. CCTV only can tell you who has committed a crime and there are conflicting opinions on whether body cameras act as a deterrent or makes fare evaders more hostile. All RPIs at these sessions and station staff we have spoken to are opposed to body cameras.

Ticket Vending Machines (TVMs) and CUBIC machines are an alternative to ticket offices and only mirror or compliment the services provided by ticket offices.

Some staff that work outside of ticket offices and assist at TVMs have basic knowledge of tickets and have not been trained on the different types of tickets, and oyster services. Station assistants have taught themselves through trial and error and have requested training regarding tickets.

Staff whenever they have issues with TVMs, tickets, oyster rectification or warrants have to refer passengers to ticket offices. Without this option they would be left vulnerable to verbal and physical assault.

Staff at all the stations we reviewed stated that there are currently massive reliability issues with TVMs and when faulty are not fixed in a reasonable time.

Common reoccurring issues (not exclusive) are;

- Note/coin jams
- Machines freezing and stalling
- Short-change issues
- Loss of monies
- Oyster "hi jack" issues
- Screen visibility in sunlight
- CUBIC machines once full of change, the machine shuts itself down
- Card only or cash/coin only issues
- Problems loading coin and note boxes, including weight of boxes
- Machines are exposed to adverse weather which means staff are also if assisting at one.
- CUBIC 24-hour delay for rectifying faults
- Different cashing up/TVM shift sheets for different machines
- LOOMIS collection can sometime cause faults
- TVM positioning on stations and risks associated
- Passengers are not familiar with functions of TVMs

The TVM team who are the first point of contact raised the concern of the small size of their team and the increased workload with additional machines being installed daily. They also work in constant fear of assault and robbery due to sorting out money related issues on TVMs that are all placed on the unpaid side of gatelines. They have no personal panic alarms.

Staff who have been briefed on the new CUBIC machines have fed back that they do not feel safe having access codes to opening the machines put on their personal staff Oysters.

Stations that are lone working cannot open TVMs even if they are trained due to the risk of robbery.

Before any ticket office closure proposals are put forward we strongly advise ARL to look deeper into the implications towards ticketless travel, TVM issues and fare evaders.

At this time there has been no task risk assessments carried out for the new CUBIC machines, and at certain locations Worldline TVMs.

Events/Local amenities:

All ARL stations are direct routes or connections to large events and shopping centres/High streets i.e. Notting Hill Carnival, festivals, Westfield shopping centres, London Marathon and sporting events. For larger events, stations which are close by or adjacent to venues have additional staff support. This is not the case for all events and some staff have complained that the additional workload and security threat leaves them feeling vulnerable

As referenced in **Local development** there will be an increase of passengers due to capacity improvement at some venues which host events. These upgrades will allow venues/locations to increase the frequency of events. Notting Hill Carnival has also grown in capacity with up to 2 million in attendance. Wireless and Love Box are also held in close vicinity to many ARL stations.

At stations where there is currently lone working such as Crouch Hill, staff deal with these large crowds on their own putting staff members at risk as platforms can become over crowded keeping them from their points of refuge. All events pose a high risk to safety, this is not only due to additional footfall and overcrowding. Events serving alcohol can lead to higher antisocial behaviour. In the warmer weather those passengers who are intoxicated can become dehydrated leading to illness. These examples are just some of the reasons why we believe staff should not be lone working during events.

Staff are at a higher risk of theft and assault whilst using expensive IT equipment, especially when assisting passengers during large events. Ticket offices and cabins are a more secure location to provide this information, especially to those who are under the influence of alcohol. Once again ARL will need to address these concerns before proposing to close ticket offices and bring those staff outside and away from a safe environment.

Local development:

The population of London has grown twice the national rate of the U.K since 2011 and in the next ten years the Office for National Statistics (ONS) predicts that the population in London could reach in excess of 10,000,000. Last year there were 8,552 new homes built in close proximity to London Overground stations with a further 12,526 expected to be completed by 2019. Newham, Waltham forest, Barking and Redbridge, and Hackney being examples of boroughs already affected.

Due to the upgrades and increased frequency of ARL services, living in close proximity of the stations has become desirable for many commuters and has prompted more development works.

As stated above in **Events/Local amenities** Venues which host events has increased as has the capacity of some of the venues. This poses a safety risk to those working outside and the current staffing level to deal with these events.

Transport links and services are changing and should be factored into the station review.

Using Dalston and Hackney as an example, local bus routes including the 277 and 48 have been reduced. This will have an increase in passenger's using our services. Transport for London is advising passengers who use the 277 to use alternative routes such as the London Overground between Dalston and Highbury.

There are also new train services planned, including the extension to Barking Riverside, which also has new homes being constructed.

Inline with the increase of the population in London there has been new Westfield shopping centres built with another currently being constructed close to West Croydon station. This with other various projects is to accommodate the ever-growing population such as the conversion of the Olympic village into residential properties, and the regeneration of Hackney Wick. London again has seen a retail spending increase by 2.2% average for the last three years. The largest in Europe.

The increase in all developments show the need for an increase in staffing levels on all London Overground stations.

Facilities:

The facilities available for staff on stations varied across the network. Out of the 82 stations we reviewed the majority (65) had ticket offices, which offered the full range of tickets and services.

Not all the stations had separate mess rooms away from ticket offices/work stations for staff to take an uninterrupted break away from their place of work. Those that did not have separate mess rooms have uncomfortably small or restricted work environments. We noted a high level of clutter in most ticket offices/work stations, including poster bins, ticket stock, service disruption kits (boxes), "A" frames, TVM coin/note boxes etc.

Large IT equipment including PC towers, printers, server cabinets for CCTV, and customer information screens not only take up space but cause additional concerns. They are often noisy and produce additional heat which can make the work environment more uncomfortable over long periods. Stations where there are more than one member of staff working can prevent colleague's from having an uninterrupted break during their shift.

If staff work at a poorly designed workstation it can have a detrimental effect on their wellbeing and risk further health complications. We believe a lot of the work stations do not comply with the 1992 DSE Health and Safety regulations. We therefore request all managers re assess the current work stations staff in ticket offices are required to work from.

Staff raised concerns regarding the lighting and ventilation of mess rooms and work stations. The heat from electrical equipment and the lack of non-controllable lights (sensors) adds to staff discomfort. The lack of ventilation in work areas and mess rooms is inadequate with the only source of fresh air coming from the small opening on ticket offices windows. Air conditioning units have caused staff to raise concerns over dust and allergies, this is not the same at all locations, but as mentioned above each station will need to be assessed and again mitigations put in place.

Toilets at certain ticket offices/work stations were next to the place of work (less than 1 meter) with no partition or separate door. Some of these (Gospel Oak to Barking line) have vents on the door leading to the work stations, where staff are also expected to take breaks. This is unhygienic and prevents staff from using these work areas once someone has used the toilet.

There should be suitable seating areas for staff to take breaks and it should be clean and located in an area where food will not get contaminated. Looking at the above concerns raised by staff and station reviews this is not the case.

Store rooms on stations, only a few have lighting or suitable flooring. These areas which contain grit or winterisation equipment also doubled up for cleaners supplies and were next to electrical equipment. Finchley Road and Frognal as one example had a tap installed next to the server cabinets. These areas are hazardous and staff if required to use should at a minimum be provided safety footwear. The store rooms without lighting such as Dalston Kingsland should not be accessed by staff.

No stations have changing and drying facilities or suitable areas to store any personal protective equipment. Currently staff at their own risk are advised by ARL to use toilets for changing. There is no drainage in the toilets, and it is unhygienic.

Facilities provided including the above mentioned have been neglected over time and if ARL are proposing to improve the service provided for passengers they must first improve the working environment for staff. This will reduce sickness/injury and help improve productivity and morale.



Customer Journey Modernisation Station Review

Conclusion.

Based on the evidence and findings contained in the RMT and TSSA **Customer Journey Modernisation Report**, and 88 station reviews our conclusion is as follows;

We the trade unions do not see the benefits to passengers or staff regarding Arriva Rail London proposal to close ticket offices and restructure grades. We believe it poses a safety risk to both the staff that work at these stations and passengers who use our service.

The closure of the ticket offices, restructuring of grades, and potential de-staffing of stations would reduce the customer service level provided and increase the threat of verbal/physical abuse, accidents, and terror threat level.

ARL are currently operating their stations with a minimal staffing level model. Due to the high numbers of vacancies and those roles covered with agency staff. To modernise or enhance the customer experience, we believe keeping ticket offices open and having more staff to provide customer service and a station presence from first to last train is important. These staff should be internally trained staff, be safety conscious, and above all else be provided the facilities and tools to carry out their roles safely. Currently the only grade with the tools to safely carry out their role are those that work in ticket offices.

The continuous failure to consult trade unions regarding health and safety and reduction in staff over the years, has led to the overall working conditions to deteriorate. The risks to members and passengers health and safety have increased as a result of this.

The London Overground Network has expanded over the last 10 years. Since the time of the network being taken over from Silverlink in 2007 the network and services provided has increased. This includes the incorporation of Southern services in 2009, the opening of the East London Line in 2010 and the incorporation of West Anglia routes in 2015. The frequency of services on these and all other routes has increased due to the demand with some services running 24 hours at weekends. The population surrounding our stations has risen during this time. Due to its success and high demand the passenger numbers have therefore increased and so has the risks associated with the larger numbers. Unfortunately, with the increase in numbers there has been a decrease in staffing levels. The risk assessments and mitigations in place have stagnated. Once again, we believe this is due to the lack of engagement with the trade unions.

Crime has increased on not just the network but also in the boroughs that our services serve. The unwillingness from ARL to provide more in-depth British Transport Police crime figures over a longer period and no "Urban" crime figures during the station reviews has been unacceptable. With no evidence to suggest otherwise, based on our **Customer Journey Modernisation Report** findings

regarding crime and footfall, we cannot accept the proposal to move those staff out of safe working environments such as ticket offices. Coupling with this ARL have reduced the number of BTP officers on the network to save cost since 2016. In the last six months ARL have had to re-establish some officers due to the increase of crimes and begging on the network. Currently there are only 6 designated British Transport Police officers to cover the entire London Overground network. Those staff that are required to challenge ticketless travel and antisocial behaviour have been left more exposed and reluctant to do so.

CCTV needs improving on stations in areas on the network, but we do not suggest staff are reliant on the use of it, as it will only tell you who committed the crime and may not deter offenders. The mitigations put in place should always be preventative and not reactive.

Other than the ticket offices, the only other suitable place for staff to work from are those stations that have staff cabins. The risks associated from working away from these locations is again outlined in the **Customer Journey Modernisation Report**.

Station layouts and the lack of safe places of refuge are a major concern, as is the overall level of communication devices, and personal protective equipment provided. There are numerous blind spots away from colleagues and areas in which mobile device signal/Wi-Fi does not work. Again, these concerns have been raised through other machineries, with no resolution.

We believe that increasing the staffing levels would help with staff fatigue and provide additional support during our busier periods (peak times). Additional staff during disruptions/events in which passengers can become abusive or ill is essential to diffusing situations or controlling crowds more efficiently.

The weather conditions staff are exposed to has not been addressed fully anywhere in ARLs task risk assessments. The concerns raised by staff across the network seem to have until now been ignored.

There are a lot of services that ticket offices provide which ticket vending machines currently cannot. These are outlined in our **Customer Journey Modernisation Report**. This demonstrates the customer service value ticket offices provide.

Most importantly closing ticket offices will mean no brightly lit focal point – particularly at night for passengers to go to, and without them it may encourage crime in areas to encroach onto our stations.

During this process the trade unions have requested data from ARL including; crime figures on and around stations/trains, staffing levels (current and proposed) and vacancies, ticketless travel, Lennon data (Latest Earnings Network Nationally Over Night), current and proposed equality and impact assessments (for staff and passengers). The information requested has not been forthcoming or complete. A lot of it has many inaccuracies as highlighted in our **Customer Journey Modernisation Report** and has left us unable to fully and practically assess safety risks associated with ARLs proposals.

The body of evidence contained in our **Station Reviews** and **Customer Journey Modernisation Report** has highlighted across the network currently and proposed, safety is being left to chance.

We therefore advise ARL to reconsider the proposal of closing ticket offices. Firstly, look at the current working environment and practices before continuing with customer journey modernisation restructuring. ARL then must put in the necessary mitigations to safeguard passengers and our members before looking at proposed working models based solely on priced options.



Customer Journey Modernisation Station Review

Acknowledgements and abbreviations.

The staff side CJM team consisted of;

John Leach & Brian Whitehead RMT (Regional Organisers)		Mel Taylor time official)	TSSA (Full
Jonathan Mortimer	RMT	David Kavule	RMT
Beverleigh Thomas	RMT	Richard Crossman	RMT
Liam Nixon	RMT	Daljit Dhanoa	RMT
Samuel Addo	RMT	Sellathurai Sivathanan	RMT
Theresa Opoku-Ware	RMT	Ray McDonagh	TSSA
Wale Agunbiade	RMT	Abdulhai Mulla	TSSA

The staff side JWG team consisted of;

Jonathan Mortimer	RMT	Theresa Opoku-Ware	RMT
Beverleigh Thomas	RMT	Ray McDonagh	TSSA
Liam Nixon	RMT	Abdulhai Mulla	TSSA
Samuel Addo	RMT		

ARL	Arriva Rail London
BTP	British Transport Police
CSA	Customer Service Assistance
DC	Direct Current
DSE	Display Screen
ELL	East London Line
EqlA	Equality Impact Assessment
FasTIS	Flexible and Secure Ticket Issuing System (Cubic)
GLA	Greater London Authority
GPR	General Purpose Relief
IOSH	Institution of Occupational Safety and Health
ISMS	Integrated Safety Management Systems
IT	Information Technology
JWG	Joint Working Group
LENNON	Latest Earnings Network Nationally Over Night
LUL	London Underground Limited
MET	London Metropolitan Police
MFA	Management for Attendance
MIP	Mobility Impaired Person
ONS	Office of National Statistics
ORR	Office of Rail and Road
PA	Public Announcement
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
RMT	National Union Of Rail Maritime and Transport Workers
RNI	Rate of National Increase
RPI	Revenue Protection Inspector
SME	Secondary Means of Escape
Stats	Statistics
TMIS	Train Management Information System
TSSA	Transport Staff Salaried Association
TVM	Ticket Vending Machine (Cubic)
VIP	Visually Impaired Person

