

Date issued: 16 June 2021

## Freedom of Information Request

We are writing in response to your Freedom of Information request. Your request has been considered in accordance with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act and our information access policy.

### You asked for the following information:

*It is government advice that when people from different households are indoors together it is important to provide good ventilation. The government guidance for public transport operators says "Where possible, transport operators and businesses should ensure that a fresh air supply is consistently flowing through vehicles" and you could consider "opening doors and windows where possible and safe to do so". When I travel on your class 150 trains the windows are normally mostly shut. For my peace of mind, can you point me to the evidence that sufficient ventilation is achieved with the windows closed?*

### Having reviewed your questions, we are able to provide the following information:

At Transport for Wales we work with Industry experts to assess the risks to passengers and introduce measures to reduce this risk based on the most up to date information.

As members of several industry bodies including the Rail Safety & Standards Board (RSSB) and work with them to apply current research from across the UK including the community infection rates, number of passengers on trains and passenger behaviours in regard to face covering and social distancing compliance, cleaning measures, population with antibodies and ventilation (natural through door opening, windows and ventilation systems).

This research is not generally published as you can appreciate the picture changes daily with more people vaccinated, new variants etc, so we could not maintain an actual live risk score, however we do apply the learning and any additional measures. We can also see national statistics for Covid 19 are continuing to reduce, again noting the risk of variants of concern.

RSSB have information on their website that is available that shows during August last year the risk from Covid was 1 in 11000 for the whole network including England, Wales and Scotland [Rail still safer than road during Covid-19 \(rssb.co.uk\)](#) This has improved vastly and the last report was less than 1 in 56000. When we apply our own factors with cleaning regimes, regional differences in infection rates, train and carriage types, journey types, face and social distancing we know that our risk profile is approximately 40 to 50% lower than the overall UK.

In regard to ventilation the majority of our carriages have air conditioning which draws in fresh air, research shows that the door opening at stations also reduces the risk significantly as well as opening windows. Unfortunately, due to weather and passenger behaviour these do get closed, and as a result of social distancing our staff cannot reach over occupied seats to open them, we have to rely on our announcements and during quieter times we can re-open them. For safety design principles we are not allowed to lock windows open.

We would also like to assure you that we have additional cleaners completing thorough cleans at night and additional touchpoint cleaning during the day with anti-covid materials, on trains and

stations. We have our teams out reminding people to wear a face covering unless exempt and hopefully you will have seen all our information and signage on social distancing to help everyone stay safe. To ensure we maintain these standards we have internal quality checks and we always respond to feedback for our valued customers.

We hope this information is of use to you.

Yours sincerely,

**Transport for Wales**

#### **Appeal Rights**

If you are unhappy with the way your request has been handled and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision, please write to the Head of Freedom of Information at either Transport for Wales, 3 Llys Cdwyn, Pontypridd, CF37 4TH or freedomofinformation@tfw.wales. Your request must be submitted within 40 working days of receipt of this letter. If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision.

The Information Commissioner (ICO) can be contacted at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or you can contact the ICO through the 'Make a Complaint' section of their website on this link: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>

The relevant section to select will be "Official or Public Information".