

# Updated FAQ

February 2025

[transport.nsw.gov.au](https://transport.nsw.gov.au)

# Trial Process and Expectations

## Selection and Onboarding

- **What are the key criteria for selecting the solutions for the trial?**

The Innovation Challenge Guidelines outlines that proposals will be evaluated based on criteria such as innovation, feasibility, impact on customer experience, and alignment with Transport for NSW's objectives. Please refer to the innovation challenge guidelines for details.

- **Will there be any mandatory onboarding sessions or workshops for selected participants?**

Selected participants will be required to attend onboarding sessions and workshops to familiarise themselves with the trial process and expectations. You can find detailed information on these sessions in the deliverables section of the innovation challenge guidelines.

- **Will participants have direct access to mentors or Transport for NSW experts during the trial?**

Transport for NSW may provide access to subject matter experts during the trial to support participants.

## Trial Timeline and Milestones

- **Can we propose our own project timeline for the trial, or is there a set schedule we need to follow?**

Participants can propose their own project timelines, but these should align with the overall schedule of the Innovation Challenge.

- **What are the key milestones or deliverables expected throughout the trial period?**

Specific milestones and deliverables will be outlined in the trial agreement, and participants are expected to adhere to these. You can find more details on these milestones in the innovation challenge guidelines.

- **Will there be interim check-ins or progress reviews, and if so, how frequent are they?**

Regular check-ins or progress reviews will be scheduled to monitor development and provide feedback. You can find detailed information on these sessions in the deliverables section of the innovation challenge guidelines.

- **Are there any specific dates for presenting interim results or receiving feedback from Transport for NSW?**

Dates for presenting interim results or receiving feedback will be communicated during the onboarding process. However, there is a guide in the deliverables section of the innovation challenge guidelines.

- **How will funding be disbursed?**

Funding will be paid in line with the following milestones:

- Milestone 1, \$10,000 Upon entering incubation phase, March 2025
- Milestone 2, \$15,000 Upon completion of incubation and approval of trial readiness plan, April 2025
- Milestone 3, \$15,000 Upon submission of mid-trial progress report, June 2025

- Milestone 4, \$5,000 Upon completion of trial period, June 2025
- Milestone 5, \$5,000 Upon completion of trial period, July 2025

## Trial Location and Scope

- **Can we propose our own trial location, or will Transport for NSW determine the test areas?**

Participants can propose trial locations, but final decisions will be made in consultation with Transport for NSW to ensure suitability.

- **Are trials expected to run across the entire Transport for NSW network, or should we focus on specific modes of transport (e.g., buses, trains, ferries)?**

Trials can be conducted across specific modes of transport or regions, depending on the proposal and approval from Transport for NSW. Not all modes or regions need to be included.

- **Are there restrictions on where or when the trial can take place (e.g., peak vs off-peak hours, certain transport routes)?**

Any restrictions regarding trial locations or times will depend on the solution and will be detailed in the trial agreement.

## Access to Transport Infrastructure and Data

- **Will Transport for NSW provide access to operational teams or infrastructure for testing?**

Transport for NSW will facilitate access to necessary operational teams or infrastructure required for testing. This will depend on the solution and be detailed in the trial agreement. At this stage the availability of operational teams cannot be specified. Any connection within internal teams will be subject to TfNSW policies and approval processes.

- **Can we request additional datasets or API access beyond what is publicly available if required for the trial?**

No, additional dataset will not be made available. Please contact us if you have any questions about a specific dataset.

- **Will we be given access to a test environment before launching in a live setting?**

No, if a test environment is required as part of your solution you will need to facilitate this yourself.

## Customer Interaction and Feedback

- **Are we expected to engage directly with transport customers during the trial?**

Yes, customer interaction may be required depending on the nature of the solution being trialled. If your solution involves user-facing components such as notifications, journey planning, or customer alerts, direct engagement with transport customers could be part of the trial process.

- **Will Transport for NSW facilitate customer feedback collection, or do we need to manage that ourselves?**

You must independently gather and manage feedback from trial participants. Any engagement with customers must align with Transport for NSW's privacy policies and approval processes.

- **Is there a standard process for obtaining approvals if we want to conduct user testing or surveys?**

Yes, all customer engagement activities, including surveys and user testing, must be approved by Transport for NSW before implementation.

## Technical and Operational Support

- **Will there be Transport for NSW staff available to assist with operational challenges during the trial?**

Transport for NSW will provide a point of contact or liaison officer for each trial, who can help navigate operational challenges. Access to specific teams (e.g., network operations, customer service, or IT) may be arranged on a case-by-case basis, depending on the trial's requirements.

- **What level of technical support can we expect from Transport for NSW, particularly regarding API and data integration?**

Transport for NSW provides technical documentation, API guides, and a developer support forum via the Open Data Hub. If your solution relies on API access, you will need to register for API keys and review the available developer resources. Direct support for troubleshooting API issues may be available but is typically limited to standard API queries and access issues. Any additional data access requests beyond the publicly available datasets may require a formal application and approval.

- **Are we allowed to deploy our own hardware or sensors as part of the trial, if needed?**

Deployment of any physical hardware or sensors on Transport for NSW infrastructure must be approved in advance. Proposals involving new hardware will need to undergo a feasibility and compliance assessment to ensure compatibility with existing systems and adherence to safety regulations. If approved, installation may require collaboration with Transport for NSW's engineering and operations teams.

## Success Metrics and Evaluation

- **What key performance indicators (KPIs) will be used to assess the success of the trial?**

KPIs will be determined based on the specific objectives of the innovation challenge but may include:

- Accuracy and reliability: How well does the solution predict or respond to disruptions?
- Customer impact: Does the solution improve customer experience (e.g., reduced travel delays, improved journey planning)?
- Operational efficiency: Does the solution reduce workload or improve coordination for Transport for NSW staff?
- Scalability: Can the solution be expanded across different transport modes or regions?
- Data insights: How well does the solution integrate with existing datasets and provide actionable insights?
- 

- **Will Transport for NSW conduct their own independent evaluation, or do we need to provide self-assessments?**

Transport for NSW will conduct its own evaluation of the trial, based on predefined KPIs. Participants will also be expected to provide self-assessment reports, detailing performance metrics, challenges faced, and user feedback. Regular progress reviews and a

final trial assessment will help determine whether the solution is viable for broader implementation.

- **How will insights from the trial be shared with other stakeholders?**

Transport for NSW may compile trial results into a report shared with key stakeholders, including transport operators and other government agencies. If your solution involves sensitive or proprietary data, confidentiality agreements may be established to protect intellectual property. Participants may also be invited to present their findings at post-trial workshops or industry briefings.

## Post-Trial Opportunities and Commercialisation

- **If the trial is successful, what are the next steps for scaling or commercialising the solution?**

If a solution proves successful, Transport for NSW may explore opportunities for further deployment, which could include:

- Expanding the trial to a larger customer base or additional transport routes.
- Partnering with Transport for NSW or its operators for long-term implementation.
- Seeking additional funding or investment opportunities to refine and commercialise the solution.

There are no guarantees of any next step after the trial ends. Please read our terms and conditions.

- **Will there be opportunities to secure further funding or ongoing partnerships with Transport for NSW?**

Depending on the success of the trial, Transport for NSW may offer additional funding through grants or partnerships. Other government funding opportunities may also be available for scaling solutions. Successful projects could be integrated into broader digital transformation programs within Transport for NSW. There are no guarantees of any next step after the trial ends. Please read our terms and conditions.

- **What rights do we retain over the intellectual property developed during the trial?**

Solutions developed by participants remain the property of the creators. Any proprietary technology or data integration aspects should be clearly defined in the project scope and funding agreement to ensure clarity on IP rights.

## Technical Questions

### Data Availability and Access:

- **What specific datasets related to unplanned transport disruptions are available through the Transport for NSW Open Data Hub?**

You can view a list of relevant datasets in the Innovation Challenge Brief.

- **Are there historical datasets that detail past unplanned disruptions, including their causes and durations?**

Historical unplanned disruptions are not explicitly recorded, however can be determined from service alerts data.

- **Is real-time data on current unplanned disruptions accessible via the Open Data Hub?**

Real-time data on current unplanned disruptions can be accessed through the GTFS-realtime feeds available on the Open Data Hub.

## API Access and Usage:

- **What are the steps to obtain an API key for accessing Transport for NSW APIs?**

To access Transport for NSW APIs, you need to register for an account on the Open Data Hub, log in, and create an API key by selecting 'API Tokens' under your user profile.

- **Are there specific APIs that provide real-time alerts or notifications about unplanned disruptions?**

The GTFS-realtime APIs provide real-time alerts and notifications about service disruptions.

- **Is there a sandbox environment available for testing API integrations before deploying applications?**

The Open Data Hub does not offer a sandbox environment for testing. However, developers can test API integrations using the provided API keys and available documentation.

## Data Specificity and Granularity:

- **To what level of detail does the disruption data go? For example, does it include specific locations, affected routes, and estimated resolution times?**

The GTFS-R Alerts data includes information such as vehicle positions and trip updates, which can be used to infer specific locations, affected routes, and estimated resolution times.

- **Is there data available on the operational impacts of unplanned disruptions, such as delays or service cancellations?**

There are no specific datasets on the operational impacts of unplanned disruptions however, available GTFS-R data can provide insights into delays and service changes.

## Historical Data and Predictive Analysis:

- **Can historical disruption data be used to analyse patterns and predict future unplanned disruptions?**

Developers can use historical GTFS data to analyse patterns and potentially predict future disruptions.

- **Are there any existing tools or frameworks recommended by Transport for NSW for conducting predictive analysis on disruption data?**

We suggest using GTFS Studio to browse and analyse GTFS data, which can aid in predictive analysis.

## Customer Experience Data:

- **Is there data available on customer feedback or satisfaction related to unplanned disruptions?**

Specific datasets on customer feedback related to unplanned disruptions are not available on the Open Data Hub.

- **Can we access information on customer communication channels used during disruptions, such as notifications or alerts sent to passengers?**

Information on customer communication channels during disruptions is not provided in the available datasets.

### Data Update Frequency and Latency:

- **How frequently is the disruption data updated in the Open Data Hub?**

Real-time data feeds, such as GTFS-realtime, are updated approximately every 15 seconds.

- **What is the typical latency between a disruption occurring and the data being available via the API?**

The typical latency between a disruption occurring and the data being available via the API is approximately 15 seconds, corresponding to the update frequency.

### Data Licensing and Usage Constraints:

- **Are there any licensing restrictions or usage constraints associated with the data provided through the Open Data Hub?**

Most datasets are provided under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 license, allowing for reuse and redistribution with proper attribution.

- **Can the data be used for commercial applications, or is it restricted to non-commercial use?**

The Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 license permits commercial use, provided appropriate credit is given.

### Support and Resources:

- **What support channels are available if we encounter issues or have questions during development?**

For data or technical questions, you can review the [Developers pages](#) or post questions in the [Forum](#). For account-related issues or to report outages, contacting [OpenDataHelp@transport.nsw.gov.au](mailto:OpenDataHelp@transport.nsw.gov.au) is recommended.

- **Are there any developer forums, documentation, or sample code repositories provided by Transport for NSW to assist in integrating the APIs?**

The Open Data Hub provides [documentation](#), [user guides](#), and a [forum](#) to assist developers in integrating APIs.

## Understanding Unplanned Disruptions

### Definition and Determination:

- **How does Transport for NSW define an ‘unplanned disruption’?**

Unplanned disruptions refer to unexpected events that interrupt the normal operation of the public transport system. These can include service cancellations, infrastructure closures, severe weather conditions, vehicle breakdowns, or emergencies requiring evacuation.

- **What systems or processes are used to detect an unplanned disruption in real-time?**

Transport for NSW employs a combination of real-time monitoring systems, reports from transport staff, and customer feedback to detect unplanned disruptions promptly.

- **How quickly can a disruption be identified and verified after it occurs?**

The speed at which a disruption is identified and verified depends on its nature and location. Real-time monitoring systems and staff reports facilitate rapid detection, while verification processes ensure accurate assessment before action is taken.

- **Who is responsible for confirming that a disruption is significant enough to warrant action?**

Designated operational teams within Transport for NSW are responsible for confirming disruptions and assessing their impact to determine the appropriate response.

## Response to Unplanned Disruptions:

- **What are the immediate steps taken once a disruption is confirmed?**

Upon confirmation of a disruption, Transport for NSW activates its incident management protocols, which may include deploying response teams, coordinating with emergency services, and implementing alternative transport arrangements to minimise passenger inconvenience.

- **How do different teams (e.g., operations, customer service, communications) coordinate their response?**

Operational teams, customer service, and communications departments collaborate to manage the disruption effectively. This includes disseminating information to the public and coordinating efforts to restore normal services.

- **What role does predictive analysis play in responding to disruptions?**

There is currently no predictive analysis for unplanned disruptions.

## Communication of Disruptions:

- **What are the standard procedures for communicating an unplanned disruption to customers?**

Transport for NSW communicates unplanned disruptions through multiple channels, including official websites, mobile applications, station announcements, media alerts and social media platforms, ensuring timely and accessible information for passengers.



- **What channels are used to communicate disruptions (e.g., apps, websites, station announcements, social media)?**

Information is disseminated via the Transport for NSW website, the Opal Travel app, station and onboard announcements, the Transport Management Centre to media outlets and our official social media accounts to reach a broad audience.

- **Are there specific thresholds or criteria that must be met before issuing an alert to the public?**

Alerts are issued based on criteria such as the disruption's impact on service frequency, duration, and the number of passengers affected. Significant disruptions that impede regular service operations typically trigger public alerts.

- **How do you determine when a disruption is severe enough to warrant an emergency notification versus a minor alert?**

The severity of a disruption is assessed by considering factors like safety implications, expected service delays, and the availability of alternative transport options. This assessment guides the decision on the level of alert to be issued.

- **What is the process for updating a disruption alert once more information becomes available?**

As new information becomes available, Transport for NSW updates alerts to provide passengers with the most current details, including estimated resolution times and alternative travel options.

## Challenges in Managing Unplanned Disruptions:

- **What is the biggest challenge Transport for NSW faces in responding to unplanned disruptions?**

One of the primary challenges is balancing the need for rapid communication with the necessity for accurate information. Ensuring that passengers receive timely and correct details about disruptions is crucial to maintaining trust and enabling effective journey planning.

- **How do you balance the need for speed in issuing alerts with the need for accuracy?**

In some cases, limited data availability can hinder the accurate assessment of a disruption's impact, making it challenging to provide precise information to passengers.

- **Are there limitations in the data available for determining the impact of a disruption?**

The data available for determining the impact of a disruption can be limited due to the varying approaches across different modes of transport and operators. The information may be inconsistent in terms of when and if it is provided, whether it is before, during or after the disruption. This can make it challenging to use the data to accurately predict the impact of a disruption.

- **How do you prevent misinformation or confusion when communicating about disruptions?**

To prevent misinformation, Transport for NSW relies on verified sources and cross-departmental coordination before issuing public communications about disruptions.

## Timing and Frequency of Alerts:

- **How do you determine the right time to issue an alert about a disruption?**

Alerts are issued as soon as a disruption is confirmed, and its impact assessed. The goal is to provide passengers with sufficient notice to adjust their travel plans accordingly.

- **How do you avoid over-communicating minor disruptions while ensuring important disruptions are not overlooked?**

There is a verification process that takes 20 minutes or longer. Alerts are broadcast to the whole network regardless of their specificity to a particular route or location.

- **Are there any policies on how frequently updates should be provided for ongoing disruptions?**

The alert evolves as the situation changes and can be ranked as low, medium or high.

- **What happens when a disruption ends? Is there a standard process for closing or archiving alerts?**

Once a disruption is resolved, a final communication is issued to inform passengers that normal services have resumed. Alternatively, the alert may be removed completely, depending on the nature of the disruption.

## Service Alert Triggers:

- **What factors influence whether an alert is pushed to customers versus remaining as internal operational information?**

All alerts are customer alerts.

- **What events typically trigger an automatic alert, and which ones require human verification?**

Automated messages can be used to ask passengers to be mindful of the potential for disruption. Operations team will manually intervene to trigger and verify a service alert before its broadcast. Alerts are normally broadcast. However can be narrowcast manually to select audiences if they subscribed to receive push notifications about certain routes or stops.

- **How does Transport for NSW prioritise alerts when multiple disruptions occur simultaneously?**

The Transport Management Centre makes the priority call to display either one large message banner or all the individual events. The aim is to avoid over-broadcasting.

- **Are alerts ranked by severity or potential impact on customers?**

Alerts are ranked as low, medium or high, depending on the event. There is an opportunity to use this severity ranking to better inform customers.

## Common Mistakes in Service Alerts:

- **How do you prevent false alarms or unnecessary alerts from being sent?**

The data must be confidently verified before any alerts are sent. Unconfirmed "maybes" are not sent as alerts.

- **Have there been instances where an alert was sent too late or contained incorrect information? If so, how was that addressed?**

Actual alerts will only be posted if the information is factually verified by the Transport Management Centre. Incorrect information is not published.



**© Transport for NSW**

Users are welcome to copy, reproduce and distribute the information contained in this report for non-commercial purposes only, provided acknowledgement is given to Transport for NSW as the source.