Lowering the Minimum Age Requirement for Train Drivers from 20 to 18

Introduction

Thank you for responding to our consultation on lowering the minimum age requirements for train drivers in Great Britain.

Closing date is 13 June 2024.

Accessibility statement

Read our accessibility statement for SmartSurvey forms [opens in a new window].

Confidentiality and data protection

The Department for Transport (DfT) is carrying out this consultation to gather views on lowering the minimum age requirements for train drivers from 20 to 18 years in Great Britain.

View our DfT online form and survey privacy notice [opens in a new window] for more information on how your personal data is processed in relation to this survey.

In addition to the information outlined in the privacy notices, we are asking for:

- individuals if they are employed in rail industry and, if so, the type of rail employment they have to ascertain their relationship to the topic

- organisations for their name and the best description of the activities of your organisation, for identification plus number of employees for potential response weighting

Personal details

1. What is your name?

Ellis Shelton

2. What is your email?

eshelton@logistics.org.uk

3. Are you responding on behalf of an organisation? *

- [x] Yes (Go to ‘Organisation details’)
- [ ] No

Individual details

4. Are you employed by the rail industry?

- [ ] Yes
- [x] No (Go to ‘Proposals’)

Rail employment

For our purposes Office of Rail and Road (ORR) [opens in a new window] recognised means a person recognised by the ORR to undertake:

- medical and psychological examinations
- general professional competence examination examinations and training

which in turn is defined in The Train Driving Licences and Certificates Regulations 2010 [opens in new window].

5. You are:

- [ ] an ORR-recognised occupational health doctor
- [ ] an ORR-recognised occupational health psychologist
- [ ] an ORR-recognised trainer
- [ ] an ORR-recognised examiner
- [ ] another type of rail worker:

[Go to ‘Proposals’]

Organisation details

6. Your organisation's name is?

Logistics UK

7. What is the employee size of your organisation?

- [ ] 1 to 25 employees
- [ ] 26 to 50 employees
- [ ] 51 to 100 employees
- [ ] 101 to 250 employees
- [x] 251 to 1,000 employees
- [ ] Above 1,000 employees:

A training centre is a venue that provides training courses for train drivers and train candidate drivers on training tasks specified in 'Regulation 29 of the Train Driving Licences and Certificates Regulations 2010' [opens in a new window].

8. Your organisation is best described as:

- [ ] an infrastructure manager organisation
- [ ] a train operating company
- [ ] a freight operating company
- [ ] a rolling stock leasing company
- [ ] an Office of Rail and Road (ORR) recognised training centre
- [ ] a railway industry body
- [ ] a regulating body
- [ ] a trade union
- [ ] another type of organisation:

a trade association

Proposals

The Department for Transport (DfT) is proposing to lower the minimum age requirements for train drivers in Great Britain from 20 to 18 by amending the 'Train Driving Licences and Certificates Regulations 2010' [opens in a new window]. The DfT is looking to make this change by summer 2024.

Greater information is available in our consultation material [opens in a new window].

9. Do you agree or disagree with lowering the minimum age requirement for train drivers from 20 to 18?

- [x] Agree (Go to ‘Implementation’)
- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Don't know (Go to ‘Continue with survey’)

Against proposed change

10. What are your reasons for opposing the proposal to lower the minimum age for train drivers from 20 to 18?

Continue with survey

As you have indicated you:

- disagree with this policy
- don’t know your views to this policy

and the rest of the survey is about how this policy would be implemented you may now either:

- go to the final comments

or

- continue answering the questions

11. You want to: *

- [ ] go to the final comments section (Go to ‘Final comments’)
- [ ] continue answering the questions

Implementation

12. If implemented do you agree or disagree that there should be a period of enhanced supervision for drivers aged between 18 and 20?

- [ ] Agree
- [x] Disagree (Go to ‘Disagreement with period of supervision’)
- [ ] Don't know (Go to ‘Processes’)

Period of supervision

13. How long do you think this enhanced supervision of younger drivers should be for?

- [ ] Up to 3 months
- [ ] Up to 6 months
- [ ] Up to 9 months
- [ ] Up to 12 months
- [ ] Above 12 months:

14. What activities do you think should be supervised during this period?

[Now go to ‘Processes’]

Disagreement with period of supervision

15. Why not?

If proposals are introduced, it is important that train drivers will continue to be held to the same strict training requirements as before, ensuring safe use of our railways. This includes passing mandatory medical, psychological, fitness and general professional competence examinations to become a licensed train driver. Additionally, their employer must train them on the infrastructure and rolling stock they will be deployed on.

If all of the above is maintained, then we do not believe that a period of supervision is necessary.

Processes

Timings for implementation

The DfT is looking to make this change by summer 2024.

We are now asking your views towards whether this is the correct period for implementation or if you would prefer another timeframe.

17. With regards to making, if implemented, the driver age change by summer 2024 do you:

- [ ] want it completed before this time
- [ ] want it completed after this time
- [ ] think that this time is correct (Go to ‘Final comments’)

- [ ] not want it implemented at all (Go to ‘Final comments’)
- [x] don't have a view on the time of implementation (Go to ‘Final comments’)

Timing reasoning

18. Why and what alternative timeframe would you prefer?

Final comments

19. Any other comments?

Regarding the timeline for implementation, Logistics UK is supportive, providing there is no reduction in standards. The training process for becoming a train driver ought to stay just as rigourous as it currently is at this point. Any relaxation of these standards could jeopardise safety and efficiency, as well-trained drivers are crucial for maintaining operational integrity and preventing accidents.

Though any modifications will be left to the discretion of individual operators, there may be changes made to the selection, training, and monitoring procedures for train drivers in comparison to the current practices. We do not believe that any laws are necessary to cover hiring practices that go above and beyond the already-established minimal requirements for education, physical fitness, etc.