

Transport for London

**London
Overground
anniversary
attitudes**

08071

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MAYOR OF LONDON

Transport for London



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Research conducted by Synovate.

1. Research Background

1.1 Introduction

With the upcoming anniversary of TfL's takeover of the Silverlink franchise and subsequent re-branding of this to London Overground, TfL were seeking to gain a snapshot of customers' attitudes towards the service. The findings from this research are primarily to serve as potential inputs to a press release marking the first year of London Overground.

1.2 Approach

110 face to face interviews with London Overground customers at five London Overground stations: Gospel Oak, Hackney Central, Leyton Midland, Wembley Central, Willesden Junction. All respondents were required to use London Overground services at least once a month, and to have used the services for more than one year (i.e. to have experience of the services under the Silverlink franchise. Fieldwork took place on Thursday 23rd and Friday 24th October.

2. Summary of key findings

More than half of London Overground customers have seen improvements to the network and its services in the last year. *(see Q5)*

- More than two thirds (68%) of frequent customers – those using London Underground 5+ days a week – have seen improvements.
- Customers at Leyton Midland station were significantly more likely to notice improvements at this station than at any others (all but one customer did).
- Most noted improvements (unprompted) were:
 - Cleaner, refurbished stations (26% of customers mentioned this)
 - Oyster PAYG available at all stations (25%)
 - Increased number of staff at stations (17%)
 - Best improvement was Staff visibility.

More than half of customers said that staff visibility, staff being friendly and helpful and station cleanliness had ‘got better’ in the last year (56%, 52% and 53% agreed that these elements had ‘got a little better’ or ‘got a lot better’). *(see Q6d,c,e)*

More than half of customers (56%) agreed that staff visibility had ‘got better’ in the last year. *(see Q6d)*

- Almost one third (30%) of customers using London Overground at least once a week said this had got ‘a lot better’ – significantly more than less frequent Overground users.
- Customers at Leyton Midland station were most likely to have seen improvement in this area (85% said this had ‘got better’).
- Only 5% of customers felt that this had ‘got worse’.

More than half of customers (52%) agreed that staff being friendly and helpful had 'got better' in the last year. (see Q6c)

- One quarter (25%) of customers using London Overground at least once a week said this had got 'a lot better' – significantly more than less frequent Overground users.
- Customers at Leyton Midland station were most likely to have seen improvement in this area (81% said this had got better).
- Only 6% of customers felt that this had 'got worse'.

More than half of customers (53%) agreed that station cleanliness had 'got better' in the last year. (see Q6e)

- Customers at Leyton Midland station were most likely to have seen improvement in this area (78% said this had got better).
- 11% of customers felt that this had 'got worse'.

Almost half of customers (45%) agreed that service information had 'got better' in the last year. (see Q6f)

- Customers at Leyton Midland station were most likely to have seen improvement in this area (74% said this had got better).
- 10% of customers felt that this had 'got worse'.

Two fifths of customers agreed that the frequency of trains and the reliability of trains had 'got better' in the last year (41% and 40% agreed that these elements had 'got a little better' or 'got a lot better'). (see Q6b,a)

- 13% and 11% of customers respectively felt that frequent and reliability had 'got worse'. The most frequent Overground customers – those travelling 5+ days a week – were most likely to say that these had 'got worse'.

Two fifths of customers (39%) agreed that their feelings of personal safety within the London Overground stations had 'got better' in the last year. (see Q6g)

- Slightly – but not significantly – more women than men agree that this had ‘got better’. Similarly, slightly – but not significantly – more younger than older people felt this had ‘got better’
- 10% of customers felt that this had ‘got worse’. Slightly – but not significantly – fewer women than men agree that this had ‘got worse’.

Two thirds of customers say that ‘fear of crime’ and ‘concern for personal safety’ don’t put them off using London Overground at all (65% and 66% respectively say that these ‘don’t put me off). (see Q7b,c)

- Men are only slightly – but not significantly more likely than women to say that these do not put them off using London Overground.
- Customers at Hackney Central were most likely to agree that these do not put them off using London Overground at all.

Almost three quarters (73%) of London Overground customers said that overcrowding on trains ‘puts them off’ using London Overground. (see Q7a)

- Less frequent customers – those using London Overground at least once a month but not as often as once a week – were least likely to be put off by overcrowding (26% say that this ‘doesn’t put them off at all’).

One in ten customers mentioned the new fleet of trains coming to London Overground unprompted. In total, half of customers (48%) were aware that the new trains were being introduced to London Overground in 2009. (see Q5, Q8)

- The most frequent Overground users were slightly – but not significantly – more likely to be aware of the new trains being introduced.

Almost all aware of the new trains (94%) – almost half of London Overground customers (46%) – thought they would bring improvements to the London Overground system. (see Q9)

- Key improvements expected (unprompted) were:

- Larger trains / more space / less crowding (mentioned by 77% of those aware of the new trains / 37% of London Overground customers);
- More frequent service (51% / 25%);
- More reliable service (32% / 15%);
- Air conditioning (26% / 13%)
- Quieter trains (15% / 7%).

One fifth (21%) of London Overground customers admit to having fancied - or even asking out – a fellow London Overground passenger. (see Q15)

- One third (32%) of men admitted to this, but only 9% of women!
- More frequent London Overground users were slightly – but not significantly – more likely to admit to this.
- Only 5% preferred not to answer the question at all!