

Customer Complaints Handling Procedure

Policy document for our customers
on our east coast.

September 2016



Contents:

Welcome	3
Complaint or feedback	4
Publicity	8
Monitoring and reporting	10
Training and development	12
Reviewing this policy	13

Welcome

Welcome to Virgin Trains. This Customer Complaints Handling Procedure explains how we differentiate between feedback and a complaint, our monitoring and reporting arrangements, how we use feedback and complaints to improve our services and how we develop our teams managing such contacts.

For details about how to submit a complaint and an explanation of that process, please refer to our policy document 'How we will deal with your complaint' which is available from all staffed stations our trains call at or from our website virgintraineastcoast.com

Complaint or feedback

A complaint is defined as; "any expression of dissatisfaction by a customer or potential customer about service delivery by the company or its agents, and/or about company or industry policy". We classify any comments that meet this definition as a complaint.

Our Customer Solutions team receive training on how to correctly log a complaint on our system and that includes how to separately classify a complaint and feedback. Both our Customer Solutions and Social Media teams are trained to probe further when they receive negative feedback to help determine whether these are actually complaints.

All complaints and feedback are gratefully received and used to help improve our services. This policy document explains specifically how we process complaints.

Publicity

Customer information notices are displayed in each Virgin train. The notices contain a Virgin Trains route network map and contact details of our Customer Solutions team and of Transport Focus and London TravelWatch.

Our Route Timetable booklets contain advice on how to make comments and complaints, and also include details of Transport Focus and London TravelWatch. These are available from every staffed station where our trains call.

Our website, virgintraineastcoast.com, also has full details of the complaints handling process as well as all the relevant contact details you may require.

Monitoring and reporting

Monitoring

Calls and correspondence dealt with by our Customer Solutions team are regularly monitored by dedicated Quality Managers within our Customer Solutions Centre on an ongoing basis. Each Customer Solutions Representative within the team will have an average of 2 cases monitored every week. This is to ensure that all complaints are handled in a friendly and personal manner, that all points raised are suitably addressed and that appropriate compensation is awarded in a consistent way.

In 2016/17, Virgin Trains is also introducing Customer Effort surveys that will help us further improve all channels where we interact with our customers, including the processing of complaints and feedback.

Until August 2016 the Customer Solutions function is performed by a third party supplier. Service Level Agreements (SLAs) are in place to ensure a good service is provided to our customers and we monitor these at our contract review meetings every four weeks. The SLA response times range between 3 and 10 working days as they vary depending on the volume of correspondence received against the forecast specified within the contract.

From August 2016 the Customer Solutions team is to be brought in-house. The existing SLAs will be mirrored by the internal team.

Reporting

We always welcome complaints and feedback from customers. Our Customer Experience Management team, within which our Customer Solutions team sit, share the information with relevant managers and directors to help inform decisions made to make changes and improvements to our service. Managers can then also cascade key messages to their teams, specifically in relation to local issues so that our people are empowered to make the changes that will really benefit customers from local communities.

Our frontline managers receive daily reports on complaints relating to onboard catering (including the catering teams), guards, cleanliness and station people. This allows us to investigate and resolve issues promptly and facilitates a culture of continuous improvement.

Every four weeks we provide comprehensive reports which contain all complaints, praise and suggestions made by customers within the previous period. This helps locally with strategy planning and decision making to improve our customer experience.

A summary of comments and complaints is also provided to our CX Board to help inform strategic decisions made across the business. This board is chaired by our CX Director and has senior leadership representation from across the company.

The information also forms part of the CX board report, which is submitted to our board of directors every four weeks to ensure the information reaches all levels of the organisation.

Finally, every four weeks we submit a reports or provide information to the Department for Transport, the Office of Rail and Road, Transport Focus and London Travelwatch that details such things as the quantum of complaints, complaint categories and our performance in dealing with them, as measured by such things as response times.

Where there is a sudden or unexpectedly large increase in the volume of complaints meaning that the 10 working day target to process complaints is at risk, we will inform the Office of Rail and Road, Transport Focus and London Travelwatch. Within this notification we will include the reason for the increased correspondence, any mitigation plans, the procedures to ensure the quality of responses is maintained as well as any steps taken to advise our customers.

While our aim is to respond to all correspondence within 10 working days, in line with the guidance issued by the ORR, we are committed to responding to at least 95% within 20 working days.

When we receive a complaint that cannot be resolved face to face or straight away by our Social Media team, we record the complaint and contact details on our dedicated Customer Relations Management (CRM) system. Electronic records will be retained for 6 years and hard copies, such as written letters we receive, will be retained for 6 months.

Training and development

We are committed to ensuring our people have the knowledge, skills and are empowered to deal with a complaint about our services. Customer service training is provided in a regular and structured way and we only recruit individuals that have the right skills and behaviours.

In addition to the ongoing training for all our customer facing people, where policies or process change or where we have identified a training need, additional action will be taken. This may include additional training or briefing either for a specific team or just an individual.

Our Customer Solutions team, who handle all of our complaints, receive specific training on our regulated commitments such as those detailed in this procedure, the Passenger's Charter or our DPPP. This is in addition to more tailored training such as letter writing, complaints investigation and resolution skills.

Reviewing this policy

This policy will be reviewed regularly and changes made when appropriate. Any proposed changes will only be made when approved by the regulator, the Office of Rail and Road, following consultation with Transport Focus and London Travelwatch. Contact details for these three organisations are as follows:

Website: transportfocus.org.uk
Telephone: 0300 123 2350
Email: advice@transportfocus.org.uk
Twitter: @TransportFocus
Post: Transport Focus
Freepost RTEH-XAGE-BYKZ
PO Box 5594
Southend on Sea
SS1 9PZ



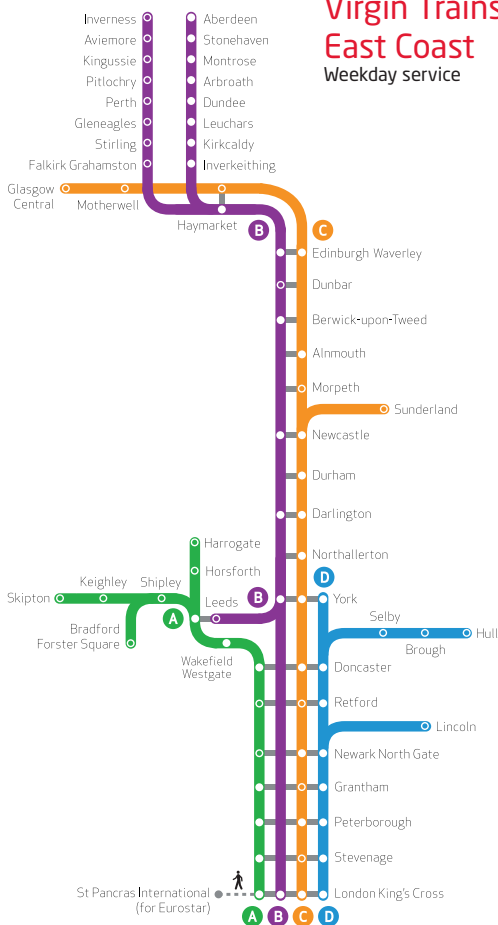
Website: londontravelwatch.org.uk
Telephone: 020 3176 5991
Email: enquiries@londontravelwatch.org.uk
Post: London TravelWatch
169 Union Street
London
SE1 0LL



Website: orr.gov.uk
Telephone: 020 7282 2018
Email: contact.cct@orr.gsi.gov.uk
Post: One Kemble Street
London
WC2B 4AN



Virgin Trains East Coast Weekday service



- A** Leeds services and West Yorkshire services
 - B** Edinburgh express services (calling at selected stations only) and North of Scotland services
 - C** Edinburgh services (calling at most major stations) and Glasgow Central services
 - D** Newark / York services (calling at all major stations) and Lincoln / Hull services
- Four or more services per day on this route
 Fewer than four services per day on this route

Weekend services operate over similar routes as shown above. Please check timetables before travel.