



CALEDONIAN
SLEEPER



Guest Complaints Handling Procedure

March 2023

[sleeper.scot](https://www.sleeper.scot)

Dear Guest

I would like to extend you the warmest of Scottish welcomes on behalf of Caledonian Sleeper.

Listening to you is an essential part of who we are. Your feedback helps us to improve our services for the future and provides solutions for any problems you may have experienced when booking or travelling with us. If you're unhappy in any way, we will take your comments or complaints seriously and do everything we can to make things right.

This booklet explains our customer complaints procedure, how we deal with complaints and comments, and the service you can expect from us. This includes:

- How to make a complaint and whom to contact;
- How to get in touch with us;
- How we will respond to your complaint;
- How we will deal with your complaint fairly;
- The types of compensation we offer; and
- How we review and monitor the complaints we receive.

We aim to resolve all complaints, quickly and effectively, without the need to involve any other organisation. However, we've included information on independent organisations you can contact if you are unhappy with our response.

I personally review our guest feedback on a monthly basis and through this feedback take action to improve our offering.



Kathryn Darabandi

Managing Director, Caledonian Sleeper

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1 Our guest complaints procedure

At Caledonian Sleeper, we use the Office of Rail and Roads (ORR) Definition of a complaint as:

“Any expression of dissatisfaction by a customer or potential customer about service delivery or company or industry policy where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected”

We aim to give our customers the best possible service. However, we understand that occasionally things can go wrong, and when this happens it is important to us that we do everything we can to put things right. Our first priority is to resolve your complaint at the point the issue occurs. If you are not happy with any part of our service, please let us know. We will fully investigate your complaint and work with you to resolve any issues. Whomever the complaint concerns, we will do our best to understand and explain what went wrong and why and provide you with a viable solution.

2 What this procedure covers

This complaints procedure describes how to let us know if you think that you have received unsatisfactory service from us or how to let us know if you are dissatisfied with any part of this policy.

Before we introduced this complaints procedure, we took the views of Transport Focus and London TravelWatch into account and gained approval for the procedure from the Office of Rail and Road. We recognise that time doesn't stand still and that over time you may come to expect more from us and our procedures. Each year we will take into account and monitor the views you have expressed over the previous months and review our procedures as further detailed in sections 7 and 8 below.

3 What this procedure aims to do

Our customer complaints procedure is designed to make sure we deal with your complaint efficiently, fairly and effectively. We have made every effort to make sure our procedure is easy to find, understand and simple to use. We will also ensure that our complaints handling process is:

Efficient – We aim to respond to all complaints within 10 days. In the unlikely event we are not able to respond within this time frame we will keep you updated.

Fair – We will investigate your complaint fully and provide a fair response;

Respectful – of your point of view and your confidentiality;

Effective – dealing with all of the points you raise so that both you and we are satisfied;

Monitored – regularly audited for effectiveness and satisfaction, and part of the process we use to make sure we continue to improve our services; and

Consistent – with regulatory requirements, best practice and our Guest Experience Charter

4 How to contact us

Handling your complaint in an effective and timely manner is extremely important to us, and we ask that when submitting your complaint, you provide us with as much information as possible to help us investigate it fully.

If you booked with us directly, please provide your CSW/CST confirmation reference as this will help us to identify factors that may have contributed to the complaint you are making.

Our staff are trained in complaint handling techniques, with periodic refresher training. This training covers customer service, as well as complaint investigation and resolution skills.

4.1 On Board

We train our on board staff to handle complaints fairly and efficiently, and to solve any problems there and then. If our on board staff fail to handle your complaint to your satisfaction they will refer the matter to our Guest Ambassadors who will contact you for more information if necessary.

4.2 By Telephone

Our Guest Ambassadors are trained to handle your complaint over the telephone, but we may need to investigate your complaint to provide you with a quality response. If so, our Guest Ambassadors will discuss with you the next steps and agree a timeline for a response.

Phone: **0330 060 0500***

Text Relay Assistant: 1 800 103 300 600 500

International Number +441415550888**

* Calls are charged at the standard local rate.

** Calls from abroad will be charged at the network provider rates.

Phone lines are open:

Monday to Friday: between 09:00 to 17:30

Saturday: between 08:30 to 15:30

Sunday: between 12:00 to 20:30

These hours vary slightly over the Christmas and New Year period – please check our website www.sleeper.scot for opening times. Our Guest Service Centre is not open on Christmas Day, Boxing Day, or New Year's Day annually.

4.3 Online

You can contact us using our online complaint form on our website at **www.sleeper.scot**. Our Guest Ambassadors may respond by calling you so please provide a contact telephone number as well as the best time to call.

4.4 Email

You can email us at **enquiry@sleeper.scot**

4.5 Post

You can write to us at:

**Caledonian Sleeper
1 Union Street,
Inverness
IV1 1PP**

4.6 Social Media and Live Chat

Our Guest Ambassadors are available to answer your enquiries through our social media channels from Sunday at Midday to 16:00 on a Saturday, including during the night.

If you would like to make an official complaint, this can't be done through social media, however our Guest Ambassadors will provide a link to our complaint form.

Contact the Social Media Team via:

Twitter - @Calsleeper

Instagram - @caledoniansleeper

Facebook - Caledonian Sleeper

Live Chat www.sleeper.scot

5 Our Complaints Procedure

5.1 Guests with specific needs

We understand that some people have specific access requirements. All documents that can be downloaded from our website are in Word format and our Accessible Travel Policy and Guest Experience Charter are available in alternative formats such as Braille and audio.

If you require assistance to contact us, we are happy to deal with your carer, support worker or guardian on your behalf, as long as they have your express permission to do so.

5.2 Complaints about another train operator

If you complain to us about another train operator we will do the following:

- Acknowledge your complaint within 24 hours and forward it to the relevant operator's Guest Relations Department within five working days. In our acknowledgement we will give you the full address and contact details of the other operator.
- If your complaint involves Caledonian Sleeper and another Train Operator, we will respond to the Caledonian Sleeper complaint and then transfer over the remaining issues to the other party.

5.3 Response times

When you complain to a member of our staff, on the phone or in person, we will try to rectify the issue immediately.

If this is not possible, we aim to respond fully to all complaints within ten working days. If you haven't received a full response within this time, we will update you on the progress of your case and will aim to continue to update you every five days until we can respond fully.

At times we might need further information to help us investigate the complaint. To allow us to investigate in a timely manner we ask that you respond within 10 working days. If there is no response we will contact you again and advise that the case may be closed and how to get in touch if you would like the complaint reopened.

We have a commitment to resolve 95% of complaints within 20 working days.

Response times during busy periods

As far as reasonable, we will try to make sure we meet our response times even when there is an unexpected increase in the number of complaints. However, if there are exceptional circumstances, such as a period of major disruption, we may have to increase these response times. If this happens we will tell you by updating our website, when we reply to your email, as well as informing the Office of Rail and Road.

6 A full and fair investigation

We promise we will investigate all complaints made to us fully and fairly. We will follow this customer complaints procedure and make every effort to deal with all the issues raised in your complaint. If your complaint is not upheld, we will explain our actions or policies which have led to the complaint and explain how you can contact independent organisations if you are unhappy with our response.

When we investigate a complaint, we will always check the facts, take steps to make sure we are impartial, and get reports from all appropriate staff and suppliers who may have been involved.

When we respond to your complaint, we will confirm the outcome of our internal investigation and any action we have taken to prevent the complaint happening again. If the complaint is upheld, we will offer you compensation. This is further detailed in paragraph 6.1.

If the investigations involve our staff, while under the Data Protection Act we are unable to tell you about action taken against an individual staff member, we assure you that we will take all reasonable steps necessary to ensure that your complaint is thoroughly investigated and followed through to a fair outcome.

6.1 Compensation

Where we recognise that our service has not met the high quality we set for ourselves, we will apologise and offer you compensation if it is appropriate. The amount we offer you will be in line with the National Rail Conditions of Carriage and our Guest Experience Charter.

Our Guest Experience Charter explains our compensation policy, including the levels of compensation you can expect if services are disrupted. You can view our Guest Experience Charter on our website at **www.sleeper.scot**.

Compensation will usually be offered as:

- A partial refund, using the payment card used to make the reservation.

Please note that the method of compensation we offer is at our complete discretion.

This procedure does not affect the rights you would have under the Consumer Rights Act 2015, unless the law allows this. Further information about your rights, including under the Consumer Rights Act 2015 can be found at www.gov.uk/consumerprotection-rights.

6.2 Items not covered by this document

Our complaints procedure does not cover the following areas:

- Delays and cancellations to train services.
- Please visit www.sleeper.scot/delay-repay-form/ for how to claim compensation if your train is delayed.
- Personal injury claims, which are dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

6.3 Vexatious or abusive complaints

If you believe we have not met our customer service standards, we understand that you may feel upset. While we respect the rights of our customers to express their views, we will not tolerate aggressive, threatening or abusive behavior of any kind whether in person, on the phone or correspondence by any channel.

We have the right to end any correspondence or communication that we believe to be 'frivolous, vexatious or abusive' in line with the guidelines issued by the Office of Rail and Road.

6.4 Confidentiality

We may give some or all of your details to a third party without asking you if we need to do so to meet our legal obligations. The third parties we may give details to include other train companies, Transport Focus, Transport Scotland, insurers, the Office of Rail and Road (ORR), the police or any similar organisations.

7 Monitoring and reporting

7.1 Monitoring

We actively monitor our customer complaints procedure to make sure it is effective:

- We monitor phone calls, letters and emails to make sure we handle all complaints in a friendly, appropriate and professional manner.
- We sample and review responses we have made to complaints by phone and in writing to make sure we deal with complaints promptly and effectively.
- We enter details of complaints onto our customer relations management system, allowing us to analyse the number and type of complaints received and our response times. We keep this information for a period of three years to help us manage our relationship with you.

7.2 Management reports

We invite feedback on complaints through our regular guest survey and participate in the Office of Rail and Road's complaint satisfaction survey.

Our monitoring process helps us assess whether we are handling complaints efficiently and make sure you are satisfied with our responses.

For continual improvement we analyse all feedback and carry out trend and insight analysis to identify areas of guest dissatisfaction and creating solutions. This information is shared throughout the business and third parties every four weeks.

In addition, we submit statistics of our complaint handling to the Office of Rail and Road on a periodic basis for research and monitoring purposes.

7.3 Claims for losses, property damage or personal injury

If you want to make a claim against us for losses, property damage or personal injury, please write to our Guest Services Centre by letter or email (see contact information on section 4). They

will either deal with your claim or pass it to our insurance and claims handlers.

The rail industry has an arrangement called the Claims Allocation and Handling Agreement (CAHA). We, like all train-operating companies, must keep to the CAHA and we will deal with your claims in line with this agreement.

Under the CAHA, each train-operating company must have arrangements in place for compensating their own customers.

If another organisation is held to be fully or partly responsible, the insurance companies balance the payments without involving you. We have internal processes for handling claims by third parties.

We regularly review these arrangements with our insurers and claims handlers.

8 Reviewing our procedure

We formally review this procedure every year, and any changes are made in consultation with the Office of Rail and Road, (our last review was March 2023).

In addition, we review our training procedures to ensure that we are using best practice and are continually improving the quality and content of the training.

9 Taking your complaint further

9.1 If you feel dissatisfied with the way we have handled your complaint, you have the right to appeal to the Rail Ombudsman. The Rail Ombudsman is there to help resolve ongoing complaints between us and our guests. It's free to use their services and they are independent of the rail industry. They don't take sides, but just look at the evidence available. They will help us both to try to reach an agreement, but if this doesn't happen, they will make a decision based on the evidence they've received. If you agree with their decision, then we have to act on what they say.

You can appeal to the Rail Ombudsman if:

- You're unhappy with our final response to your complaint which will be contained in a letter or email (sometimes called a 'deadlock letter'); or
- We haven't resolved your complaint within 40 working days of receiving it; and
- No more than 12 months have passed since we sent you our final response.

There are some complaints that the Rail Ombudsman won't be able to look into, for example if it's about the way one of our services has been designed or industry policy, If that's the case, then they'll contact you to let you know. If possible, they will transfer your complaint to another organisation that may be able to help you further, such as Transport Focus or London TravelWatch the independent consumer watchdogs for the rail industry.

They will independently review your complaint and where appropriate, follow things up on your behalf.

The **Rail Ombudsman** contact details and hours of operation of their contact centre:

Website: (including online chat):

www.railombudsman.org

Telephone: **0330 094 0362**

Textphone: **0330 094 0363**

Email: **info@railombudsman.org**

Twitter: **@RailOmbudsman**

Post: **FREEPOST – RAIL OMBUDSMAN**

The Contact Centre team are available:

Monday to Friday: **08:00 – 20:00**

Saturday and Bank Holidays: **08:00 – 13:00**

(excluding Christmas Day)

10 Contact information

We have tried to make it as easy as possible for you to contact us if you wish to provide feedback or make a complaint.

Please contact our Guest Service Centre:

1 Union Street

Inverness

IV1 1PP

Website: **www.sleeper.scot**

Email: **enquiry@sleeper.scot**

Phone: **0330 060 0500** (our phone line opening times are listed in section 4 above).

Live Chat: **www.sleeper.scot**

Contact the Social Media Team via:

Twitter: **@Calsleeper**

Instagram: **@caledoniansleeper**

Facebook: **@caledoniansleeper**

Live Chat: **www.sleeper.scot**

Our Guest Ambassadors are available to answer your enquiries through our social media channels from Sunday at Midday to 16:00 on Saturdays, including during the night.

If you would like to make an official complaint, this can't be done through social media and our Guest Ambassadors will provide a link to our complaint form

Copies of our Guest Complaints Handling Procedure

You can find copies of our Guest Complaints Handling Procedure on our website **www.sleeper.scot**.





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overnight rail service bringing a touch of
magic to travel between Scotland and London.

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