Guest Complaints Handling Procedure

October 2019
Dear Guest

I would like to extend you the warmest of Scottish welcomes on behalf of Caledonian Sleeper. We are a Scottish-based train-operating company run by Serco on behalf of Transport Scotland.

Every evening, except for Saturday, we run two trains in each direction between Scotland and England, serving Inverness, Aberdeen, Fort William, Glasgow, Edinburgh, London Euston, and 42 intermediate stations including Dundee and Perth as well as Carlisle, Preston, Crewe and Watford Junction in England, providing a crucial link between the highlands and lowlands of Scotland and London.

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 not happy in any way, we’ll 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 customer complaints procedure every year and as part of the review process we consult Transport Focus, Transport Scotland, London TravelWatch and the Office of Rail and Road before making any changes to the procedure.

Ryan Flaherty
Managing Director, Caledonian Sleeper
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1 Our guest complaints procedure

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** – Backed up by the resources that mean we can respond to you as soon as possible. We aim to respond to all complaints within 10 days;

**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

4.1 In Person
If you can, the first thing you should do is speak to one of our staff on board, for issues during your journey or call our Guest Service Centre, for issues relating to pre or post journey. They have the authority and have undertaken training to assist in resolving your complaint immediately. If our on board staff cannot deal with your complaint to your satisfaction they will refer the matter to our guest ambassadors who will contact you for more information if necessary. Our Guest Services Centre contact details are below.

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 08:30 to 20:30
• **Saturday:** between 08:30 to 15:30
• **Sunday:** between 14:00 to 20:30

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

Email: enquiry@sleeper.scot
Post: 1 Union Street, Inverness, IV1 1PP
We also monitor our Twitter and Facebook pages. You can find us on @Calsleeper on Twitter or Caledonian Sleeper on Facebook. However, if you wish to register a complaint formally, we will ask you to contact us either by telephone or by using the contact & complaint form found in the “contact us” section of our website sleeper.scot

4.2 Meet the Manager
We also run ‘Meet the Manager’ sessions, at stations and on board our trains, every three months. For more information, please see our website sleeper.scot.

4.3 On Board
We provide a complaint and comment form on board our trains. Please complete this and hand to your on board host.

4.4 By Email
We would prefer you to send us your complaint by email (please include your phone number) This way we can investigate your complaint and get back to you as quickly as possible. We will confirm that we have received your email and, if necessary, ring you to obtain further details. Please tell us if there is a particular time you would like us to call you.

4.5 Telephone or Post
Alternatively, you can contact our Guest Services Centre by phone or by post. When you make a complaint, our guest ambassadors will enter your contact details and the details of the complaint onto our customer relations management system. This lets them see all the information on your case and pass it to the appropriate members of staff to investigate quickly. This streamlines the process and allows our guest ambassador to track how the investigation is progressing.
If you have given us a phone number, we may try to deal with your complaint over the phone. If you agree at the end of the call that we have dealt with the issue, we will not contact you again and will deem the complaint as closed.

When submitting your complaint, please try to provide as much information as possible to help us investigate it fully. If you are able to provide your booking reference with us this will help us to identify factors that may have contributed to the complaint you are making.
5 Our Complaints Procedure

5.1 Guests with specific needs
We understand that some people who have specific access requirements. All documents that can be downloaded from our website are in Word format and our Disabled People’s Protection 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.

- Keep a record of the correspondence. The other train operator will respond to your complaint in line with its own complaints procedure.

5.3 Complaints involving more than one operator
If you make a complaint to us involving more than one operator, depending on how complicated the complaint is we will either:

- Deal with our part of the complaint and tell you the parts the other operator will deal with; or

- Organise a single response on behalf of all the operators involved.
We will co-operate with transport providers outside the railway industry if a complaint involves us and another transport operator.

5.4 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.

In addition to this, 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 when we reply to your email, as well as informing the Office of Rail and Road, We will also put details on our website and put recorded messages on our Guest Services Centre phone lines. We will do our very best to reply to you as soon as we can.
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. Our staff are trained in complaints handling techniques, with periodic refresher training. This training covers customer service, as well as complaint investigation and resolution skills.
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 get our Guest Experience Charter from our Guest Services Centre, staffed stations and from our website, sleeper.scot.

Compensation will usually be offered as:

- A refund, using the same payment method as used for your initial reservation;
- A complimentary ticket (or tickets) for a future journey; or
- National Rail vouchers if requested

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

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.
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 behaviour of any kind.

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.

We will consult the Office of Rail and Road, Transport Focus and London TravelWatch before we end any correspondence and tell you in writing the reasons behind our decision.

6.3 Confidentiality
We will not pass your personal details, or details about your complaint, to anyone else unless we have your permission in writing, or it is necessary to help the police, Members of Parliament, the Department for Transport, other train operators, Transport Focus or London TravelWatch when they are investigating cases or crimes.

All Caledonian Sleeper staff will adhere to the Data Protection Act at all times. A copy of our personal data protection policy is available from our Guest Services Centre.
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.
- We invite feedback on complaints through our regular guest survey and participate in the Office of Rail and Road’s complaint satisfaction survey.
7.2 Management reports
Our monitoring processes help us assess whether we are handling complaints efficiently and make sure you are satisfied with our responses. Your feedback helps us identify where we can make things better.

To make sure our managers encourage improvement, we:

- Provide a summary of comments and complaints to the Caledonian Sleeper board every four weeks; and
- Monitor response times to make sure we have the correct resources in place to deal with complaints. This will also contribute to our Guest Excellence programme (our feedback programme on customer satisfaction that helps drive improvement).
- 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, Transport Focus and London TravelWatch.

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 Contact information

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

Please contact our Guest Service Centre:
1 Union Street
Inverness
IV1 1PP

Website: sleeper.scot
Email: enquiry@sleeper.scot
Phone: 0330 060 0500
Textphone: 01463231951
Phone lines opening times are listed in section 4 above.

Copies of our Guest Complaints Handling Procedure
You can find copies of our Guest Complaints Handling Procedure, at staffed stations we serve and from our website sleeper.scot. It is also available from our Guest Service Centre in alternative formats (Braille and audio).
Please give us the opportunity to try to resolve your complaint. If you’re unhappy with the response you receive, 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, industry policy, or if your complaint relates to an event which took place before the Rail Ombudsman service was established. 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)

Transport Focus
www.transportfocus.org.uk

Email: advice@transportfocus.org.uk
Tel: 0300 123 2350
Twitter: @TransportFocus

Freepost RTEH-XAGE-BYKZ
PO Box 5594
Southend on Sea
SS1 9PZ

London TravelWatch
Europoint 5
11 Lavington St
London
SE1 0NZ

Website: www.londontravelwatch.org.uk
Email: enquiries@londontravelwatch.org.uk
Phone: 020 3176 2999
Caledonian Sleeper are fully committed to complying with the passenger bodies’ appeals protocol. Any appeals received by Caledonian Sleeper are fully investigated and we provide a response to the passenger body in question to close the appeal raised.
Wake up to a world of possibilities with our overnight rail service bringing a touch of magic to travel between Scotland and London.

DREAM BIG.

THE NEW
Journey of a night time

sleeper.scot