

30th November 2018

Paul Jackson
Head of Business Development

To:

Marcus Clements
Head of Consumer Policy

Dear Marcus

Re: Compliance with Condition 6 of your Station Licence and GB Statement of National Regulatory Provisions: Passenger

Thank you for your recent letter dated 22nd November 2018 regarding compliance with our complaints handling obligations.

As you are aware, we have not succeeded in achieving our Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) for some months now. To put this into context, since December 2017 we have faced a series of unprecedented mechanical issues with our fleet of class 180 units and a lack of available spare rolling stock. These issues were further compounded by the severe Winter weather in early March which created engine defects on the trains and then the exceptionally hot weather which then caused a number of our onboard air conditioning systems to fail. Unfortunately, despite the best efforts of our fleet team, our trains have continued to suffer from technical issues with further key incidents taking at least two of our units out of service for extended periods of time in October. These incidents resulted in us providing a reduced timetable and were not helped by the difficulties we have faced in obtaining full industry support to convey customers during the reduced timetable. Understandably, the problems have generated a considerable amount of additional correspondence, which has markedly exceeded our expectations.

Attached to this letter, as you have requested, I have provided an outline plan which details our recent efforts, since October, to recover our CHP compliance standards, as well as future plans to do so. The spreadsheet also shows recent contacts and resolution of these, along with a trend line to show action through to the end of the calendar year.

As many complaints have been driven by service disruptions we believe that by continuing to focus on compensation claims, using agency support onsite in Hull and a third-party supplier, that this will help our Customer Service team to focus on complaints and thus reducing the CHP backlog. Our parent company, FirstGroup, are currently working to source the third-party supplier and are also looking to see what telephony they can take from our Customer Service team. I believe that these actions will give us the ability to reduce our CHP backlog considerably, although this is closely linked to service perturbations so I am mindful of committing to a precise date for total recovery at present. I would welcome any best practice solutions that you may have had experience with when dealing with similar situations elsewhere within the industry.

In your letter you have also raised the issue of accuracy of both periodic and weekly data submissions. Firstly, I would like to thank your team, particularly Chris Casanovas, for their support in assisting us in identifying and correcting any issues and clarifying the information you require.

Since the adoption of our new CRM system shortly after you requested the first weekly reports in June, we have been working with our supplier to ensure that reporting arrangements are indeed correct and in line with your expectations. There were some early issues with this, which we worked with your team to clarify and correct. As the weekly figures can change, we then align these with the final periodic figures to ensure that these reconcile with each other and give an accurate account of complaints handling. Quality assurance testing has been carried out along with our suppliers to verify that the information produced by the CRM is accurate. This is then reviewed by our Commercial team before submission.

I hope this outlines our approach, however should you require any more information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Paul Jackson
Head of Business Development
Hull Trains