



12/04/2016

Stephanie Tobyn
Deputy Director, Consumers
Office of Rail and Road

Dear Stephanie,

RE: Complaints Data

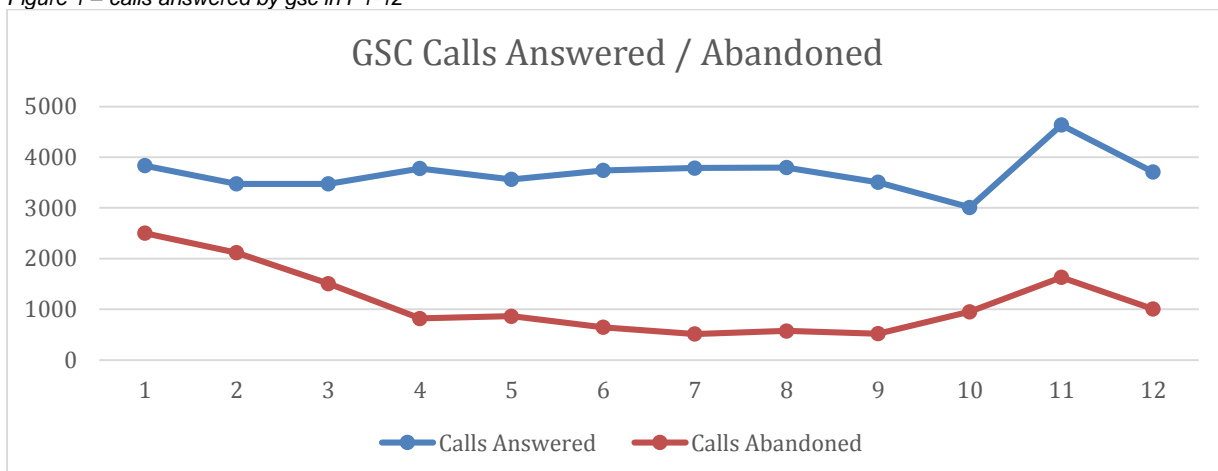
I am sure you will be aware that Serco Caledonian Sleepers Limited has not yet provided any complaints data to fulfil the data collection requirement your office set out in your letter dated 01/09/2015 (Core data update and forward workplan). I have been in discussion with Dr. Scott Hamilton on this matter, and would like to place on record my gratitude for his support and guidance in dealing with this matter.

Our discussion concluded that Serco Caledonian Sleepers Limited should provide any and all data that is available so that some basic benchmarking can at least take place. I have therefore set out below what information we do have, as well as a look forward to our planned actions on the requirements stipulated.

The background to our position on data collection in this area is worthy of explanation – as you'll be aware, our franchise has been in operation since 30/03/2015, and we set up our Guest Services Centre (GSC) in Inverness prior to that date. Being a new operation, it took some time for the scope of our GSC to be fully realised, both in organisational terms as well as the supporting systems in use.

From the outset, our GSC has operated far beyond the capacity it was designed to deliver, principally because of a high level of incoming calls being dealt with by a very small team – at any one time we had 5 guest ambassadors on shift, with one of those responsible for managing our lounge during what has emerged as our peak call periods. Figure 1 below shows the calls answered by our GSC in 2015/16 over rail periods 1-12. The number of staff in the GSC was increased in Period 11 on a permanent basis.

Figure 1 – calls answered by gsc in P1-12



The systems in use have presented a far greater challenge, and our chosen system, TOCrM, has had operational and training difficulties for a number of reasons. In essence, the system has only been fully operational from February 2016, and significantly still does not contain the reporting categories as defined by your office, a situation that we are in the process of rectifying with our supplier of the system, TSG. We anticipate that this will be resolved for the start of Period 1 of 2016/17, so that we are then able to provide data, but also so that we are able to make use of the data collected for our own information.

The data we have collected during 2015/16 is very basic, and is displayed below in figure 2. Whilst we have kept a manual count of the complaints and praise data received, this has not been categorised in detail, and hence has required a subjective opinion to be provided of our top areas for complaint by those handling the responses. This has allowed us to understand the basic drivers of complaints over the course of 2015/16, but fails to deliver the detailed analysis that is an important component of informed strategic decision making. The total number of complaints received in periods 1-12 is 989, with 244 notes of praise received. The complaints figure represents a rate of complaint at 0.32% per passenger journey.

Figure 2 – complaints tracker graph with data labels to show totals, P1-12

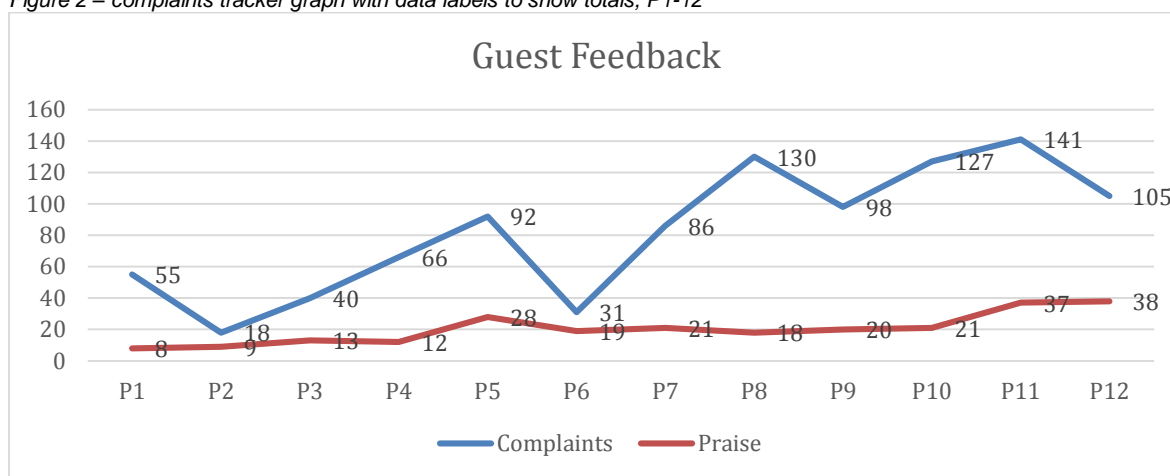


Figure 3 - Complaints categorisation – top 5 areas for complaint

1	Operational amendments – specifically around the Edinburgh service during significant disruptions such as Lamington. Whilst this is regrettable, Lamington was an unprecedented period of disruption, and the operational plan we developed and operated was the best possible option given the circumstances, and served the needs of the greatest number of guests best.
2	Onboard, mostly surrounding lounge cars not being available (one event led to 10 complaints) and non-standard train formation during operational difficulties. We have been carrying out a reliability improvement programme to our lounge coaches, to reduce the failures we have experienced over the past year and provide a better service to our guests. This has been a significant undertaking, but was a necessary action following a significant amount of defects occurring on those vehicles.
3	Delays in processing refunds. We have increased the number of staff in our GSC to cope better with the volumes of contact we have received. In addition we have transferred the administration of refunds and compensation to our finance team internally, allowing our guest facing staff to provide better coverage.
4	On board defects and presentation. We have carried out the reliability improvement programme as detailed above to resolve this issue, and work has been ongoing with train presentation teams to increase the standard the guest experiences on board across all locations.
5	Website issues, mainly around services being available for booking, and the ticket booking process itself. We launched a revised website in February 2016 to improve the booking

	process, and are monitoring feedback accordingly to assess the improvements. We have experienced issues with coding of services within the NRS system, and have worked closely with Network Rail to resolve these. The coding issues have been caused by a number of factors and process improvement is taking place at present, but the core underlying reason has been the extensive disruption to services seen in early 2016.
--	---

To enable clarity, I have set out below Serco Caledonian Sleepers' comment to each category requirement by indicator.

Category Requirement	SCS Comment
Total Number of Complaints	Enclosed in this letter
Percentage of complaint cases responded to within "target", including sub-categories	Data not currently available, pending ongoing implementation of TOCrM system with complaint categorisation overlaid.
Total number of complaints received by complaint category	As per above.
Complaints about the complaint handling process	As per above
Customer satisfaction with the complaint handling process	This has now been added to our survey mechanism, and we will contact the research agency with sample data as soon as it is available, which we expect to be at the end of Period 1.
Satisfaction with the complaint outcome	Please see above.
Frivolous and vexatious complaint volumes	As per the second point above.
Measuring continuous improvement in complaint handling	As per the above point on customer satisfaction with the complaint handling process.
Disabled person's railcard volumes	Lennon data shows 3659 journeys allocated to SCS over Period 1-12. SCS has reservations over this number as we use both accessible as well as standard berths to accommodate our disabled guests, depending on their needs, and have very limited capacity on board.
Staff who have received relevant disability awareness training or disability equality training	All 14 of our staff at our GSC received this training in March 2015. Our on-board customer facing staff have previously received this training with the prior operator. A training plan is presently in its final stage of development for all on-board staff to receive a refreshed training package during 2016.
Volume of assisted journeys including sub-categorisation	This data is not kept specifically, but is being addressed through the TOCrM categorisation overlay.
Number of complaints where there was a service problem relating to a passenger's disability	As per above.
Passenger assist satisfaction data	We do currently not gather this data, but this will be included in the survey mechanism for 2016/17
Alternative accessible transport supplied and the reasons for it	Our replacement transport is arranged through Abellio Rail Replacement services, however to date no specific alternative accessible transport has been arranged, excepting occasions where other replacement road transport has been used (whole train failures involving transit of guests). We are considering how best to capture this data at present.

I would like to take this opportunity to assure you that Serco Caledonian Sleepers Limited takes its obligations under its licence seriously, but also that our commitment to our passengers remains at the forefront of our business. We fully believe in transparency, and the importance of this to our passengers, and have been frustrated at the time taken to improve the scope of data collected over the first year of operation of our franchise.

I hope that this letter serves to explain our position in this matter, and adequately sets out our plan for resolution.

If you would like to discuss this in person, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Lawton

Franchise & Quality Manager
Caledonian Sleeper

Tel: 07719 195782

E-mail: Chris.lawton@sleeper.scot