

Annette Egginton

Head of Competition and Consumer Policy
Directorate of Railway Markets & Economics

Email: annette.egginton@orr.gsi.gov.uk

27 March 2017

Nicolas Petrovic
Chief Executive Officer
Eurostar

Dear Nicolas

Review of Eurostar International Limited Complaints Handling Procedure (Condition 6 of your GB Statement of National Regulatory Conditions: Passenger)

Thank you for submitting your draft Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) for approval. A copy of your revised CHP is attached to this letter, and will be published on our website along with a copy of this letter.

I confirm that we have reviewed your CHP against the 2015 “*Guidance on complaints handling procedures for licence holders*” (the guidance), and against your obligations under Regulation (EC) No 1371/2007 on rail passengers’ rights and obligations (PRO) and can confirm that your revised CHP meets the requirements in respect of these.

Under Condition 6 Eurostar is expected to comply with article 27 of the PRO Regulation. Under this regulation Eurostar is obliged to:


- Provide a response to complaints submitted within one month, or in justified cases, provide the complainant with a date by which they will receive a reply within a period of three months; and
- Publish an annual report of the number and categories of received complaints, processed complaints, response time and possible improvement actions undertaken.

Due to these obligations, we would expect Eurostar to respond to complaints received within the timeframe specified in the PRO Regulation, as set out in your CHP.

We, however, welcome your aim, set out in your CHP, to respond to letters within 7 working days and emails or call backs within 2 working days. We believe this is likely to be positive for passengers.

In the case of Eurostar the relevant passenger body is London TravelWatch. In line with the requirements of the guidance, licence holders must establish an appeals handling protocol where the passenger bodies require this. Once these protocols have been agreed, we expect licence holders to abide by them in their handling of appeals.

Yours sincerely,



Annette Egginton

Complaints Handling Procedure

Hello

Here at Eurostar we want to get things right for you, each and every time. We do however recognise that things might sometimes go wrong. We have produced this Complaints Handling Procedure to help explain what you can expect from us should you need to make a complaint.

Our Complaints Handling Procedure will:

- Be easily accessible, well publicised and easy to use
- Ensure efficient handling of a complaint and provide a response with-in publicised targets
- Ensure full and fair investigation
- Compliment our Customer Charter
- Respect confidentiality in line with the Data Protection Act
- Ensure areas of improvement are highlighted to our senior management team so that they can in turn consider what plans are needed to solve the problem and improve your experience.

Talk to us

If you wish to complain about any aspect of your Eurostar experience, from the point of booking through to the journey itself, we would always ask that you make this known to the first frontline staff member available. This could be the advisor you are speaking with, a member of our social media team, a station team member or the on board crew. This will ensure we have the best opportunity to act immediately to resolve any issue for you.

If your complaint can not be resolved by our frontline staff then you can contact our traveller care team on your return. They can be contacted directly or if you wish via a referral from the staff member you have been speaking to.

If you are delayed by 60 minutes or more then you are entitled to compensation in line with our policy. For more information and to make a claim click here <https://help.eurostar.com/faq/uk-en/category/compensation>.

Our Traveller Care Team

We have a specially trained team of Traveller Care consultants who are dedicated to resolving your complaint.

The best way to make contact with our Traveller Care team is via our online form here: <https://help.eurostar.com/email/#/>

You can also write to us at:

Eurostar Traveller Care
2nd Floor, Kent House,
81 Station Road
Ashford
Kent
TN23 1AP

If you prefer to make contact by either phone (03432 186 186) or social media (facebook/twitter) then we can arrange for your details to be taken and passed onto the Traveller Care team. They will then make contact with you via your preferred method (e-mail, phone or letter).

Response times

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

If this is not possible and/or your complaint has been passed to our Traveller Care team they will respond to letters within seven working days, and e-mails or call backs within 2 working days. Where your complaint is more complex or we need to obtain additional information in any country in order to provide you with a substantive response we will respond to you as soon as possible in most cases this within one month but in any event no longer than three months.

Every effort will be made to adhere to these targets however if there are exceptional circumstances such as a period of major disruption we may increase the response times accordingly. If this happens we will notify you on our website and in the response to e-mails received by the team.

A fair Complaints Procedure

We will give a full and fair investigation to any comments and complaints we receive. We define a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction by a customer or potential customer about service delivery or company or industry policy.

When you send us your complaint you will receive an acknowledgement and a case reference number. We will then contact you via the most appropriate channel given the nature of your complaint. We will always look to resolve your complaint fully with-in one month of receipt.

To help ensure we resolve your complaint as quickly as possible we do ask that you include as much information as you can in your initial contact. For example, your booking reference and receipts of any expenses incurred as this will help with our investigation. If you are not happy with the resolution offered then a manager will conduct a further review of your case. They will contact you in relation to your complaint and seek to resolve this for you.

If a manager is unable to resolve your dispute they can provide details of a further internal escalation point or if needed provide you with the details of London Travel Watch and/or Médiateur SNCF Mobilités to review your complaint. Any referral we receive from London Travel Watch/Médiateur SNCF Mobilités will be reviewed by our Traveller Care Management team and a full response provided as soon as reasonably possible. Please note that once an independent body are investigating your case our Traveller Care management team may respond to these organisations rather than to you.

Complaints involving other companies

If your complaint or claim is about another train operator or agency we will provide you with contact details for them. If your complaint or claim is about a combined Eurostar and UK train company journey and your complaint is about another UK train company, we will send your complaint to them and provide you with their details. If part of a complaint involves an aspect of our service we will directly address this before advising that the complaint is passed on.

Unreasonable, aggressive or abusive customers

Whilst we respect the rights of our customers to express their views, we will not tolerate aggressive, threatening or abusive behaviour of any kind. We reserve the right to stop any correspondence or communication that could be construed as abusive, offensive or bullying in content. We will advise in writing should we need to do this.

Quality of response

When you contact our Traveller Care team our aim is to resolve your complaint with our first response. We also aim to use one member of the team from receipt to response and to address each substantive point you raise.

Complaints about staff conduct

All complaints involving staff conduct and safety related matters will be fully and fairly investigated. For reasons of confidentiality we will not divulge the outcome of any internal disciplinary procedure. Feedback will be provided to the relevant management and staff as part of this process.

Compensation

Compensation is offered in line with our policy and as explained in our Conditions of Carriage (available in full on www.eurostar.com).

Any other complaint will be assessed on a case by case basis. If merited we may offer compensation as a goodwill gesture. This will normally be offered in the form of e-vouchers.

Obtaining a copy of our Customer Charter

You can obtain a copy of our customer charter via our website <http://www.eurostar.com/uk-en/customer-charter>.

Diversity and Equality

We will respond to complaints received in Flemish, French or English in those languages. We will make provision for Customers whose first language is not Flemish, French or English and provide a reply in the most appropriate format in which we are able to respond. We can also make provision for this document to be provided in another format such as large print. To arrange this please contact our Traveller care team.

We are also committed to meet the needs of people with disabilities. We aim to ensure that carers, support workers and guardians are able to act on behalf of a customer with the customer's permission.

Confidentiality

We may divulge some or all of your details to a third parties without obtaining consent where it is necessary for us to either fully respond to your complaint or to fulfil our own statutory obligations. This includes our sub-contractors, insurers, other train operators and London Travel Watch.

Monitoring and reporting

Every year we survey circa 120,000 of our travellers across all our routes, asking them to rate their satisfaction with a variety of aspects of their journey.

Each month we survey approximately 10,000 customers, and weight the results according to the volume of travellers in each class of service.

This data is used to give us a good picture of what all our customers think about key aspects of their Eurostar experience, such as booking, check-in, terminal, lounges, on board and catering. The survey also includes key questions about things like how likely they are to recommend and use Eurostar again, and value for money.

The surveys are conducted via an online questionnaire, emailed to customers the next working day after they have travelled.

The results are published monthly & presented to our senior management team. In any areas where satisfaction is low this team creates and implements plans to address them. The results are then revisited to ensure any actions have had the desired effect.

Here at Eurostar we want to get things right for you, each and every time. We want to make every journey special and exceed your expectations, and to help us do so we're putting in place what we call a Service Quality Management System. This means that we look carefully at your feedback, complaints sent to our Traveller Care Team and the results of the Customer Satisfaction Survey to identify where we need to make improvements. We then highlight these areas to our senior management team and they in turn consider what plans are needed to solve the problem and improve your experience.

We also have both internal and external audits in place to track how well we deliver our commitments.

Claims for Losses, Property Damage and Personal Injury

If you wish to make a claim against Eurostar for losses, property damage or personal injury this should be made in writing to Traveller Care. It will then be dealt with in accordance with our Conditions of Carriage and if required referred to our insurers. If there are safety implications then the details will be passed onto the appropriate department and our safety team.

Training and Development

We are committed to ensuring that our team have the knowledge and skill in order to deal with a complaint about our service. We provide a mix of training sessions featuring group and individual exercises and discussions, as well as an ongoing programme of on the job training and support for the members of our complaints handling team.

In our training we cover topics including customer service, complaints investigation and resolution skills.

Where policies or processes change, or we identify a training need, we provide additional briefing or training to our team or just to an individual.

Reviewing our procedure

We will review our Customer Complaints Handling Procedure every year.

Contact details

Traveller care team

e-mail us via our website here: <https://help.eurostar.com/email/#/>

Postal address: Eurostar Traveller Care
2nd Floor, Kent House,
81 Station Road
Ashford
Kent
TN23 1AP

Eurostar contact centre: 01777 777 879

Opening Hours: 8am to 7pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 5pm Saturday and Sunday.

Independent review and mediation

Médiateur SNCF Mobilités

The Médiateur SNCF Mobilités provide a free, independent alternative dispute resolution service (ADR) for Eurostar passengers. You can contact the Médiateur SNCF Mobilités in English or French either online or by post. The applicable rules and procedure when submitting a request to the Médiateur SNCF Mobilité are governed by a Mediation agreement ('Protocole de médiation') entered into by and between the French National Associations of Consumers, SNCF, Eurostar and Thalys. The Protocole de Médiation is accessible online on www.sncf.com/mediateur-mobilites and in the Médiateur SNCF Mobilités' annual report.

Médiateur SNCF Mobilité details

Website: www.sncf.com/mediateur-mobilites

Post: Médiateur SNCF Mobilités,
TSA 49980 – 75839
Paris Cedex 17 – France.

London TravelWatch

London Travel Watch is an independent consumer watchdog set up by the UK Parliament to protect and champion passenger's interests. One of their responsibilities is to look at cases where passengers are not happy with our response when something has gone wrong.

We will make every effort to address your concerns in a fair and reasonable way in accordance with our Conditions of Carriage, our complaints handling procedure and our customer charter. However if

you are not happy with our response you can contact London TravelWatch. They will consider your case and where they feel it is appropriate will follow up on your behalf.

London Travel Watch details

Website: www.londontravelwatch.org.uk

Telephone: 020 3176 2999

Fax: 020 3176 5991

Email: enquiries@londontravelwatch.org.uk

Post: London TravelWatch

169 Union Street

London

SE1 0LL

In addition, a European online dispute resolution (ODR) platform exists to facilitate access to Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) for complaints. The platform can be accessed at <http://ec.europa.eu/odr> and claims submitted to the platform will be addressed in accordance with Regulation EU 524/2013.