

**Marcus Clements**  
Head of Consumer Policy  
Directorate of Railway Markets & Economics



14 September 2018

John Smith  
Customer Operations Manager  
Arriva Rail North Ltd

Dear John

### **Arriva Rail North Limited (Trading as Northern)**

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

I am writing to you regarding the performance of Northern Rail in a number of key areas affecting consumers.

#### **Complaint handling**

As you will be aware, the 2015 'Guidance on Complaints Handling Procedures for Licence Holders' (the Guidance) sets out that licence holders must respond to 95% of complaints within 20 working days. Our compliance monitoring data indicates that Northern have now failed to meet this obligation since rail period 11 2017-18. In response to our previous request, you provided information to show how you intended to return to compliance and agreed to provide weekly reports on your progress in doing so.

Your most recent report of performance for rail period 5 shows that 49% of complaints were responded to within 20 working days, and weekly reports indicate that there has been no improvement in performance. This demonstrates that the measures taken to date have not been successful in achieving the necessary compliance with the requirements.

**Therefore, we ask that you provide a detailed, clear and achievable plan for improvement to both meet and remain within the required timescale for responding to complaints.**

#### **Disabled People's Protection Policy (DPPP)**

We have discussed with you on a number of occasions issues related to your Disabled People's Protection Policy. We are interested in understanding your progress more



**Head Office:** One Kemble Street, London WC2B 4AN T: 020 7282 2000 F: 020 7282 2040 [www.orr.gov.uk](http://www.orr.gov.uk)

generally on a range of DPPP matters including your scooter trials and plans for providing greater clarity on both your policy and its communication.

### **Delay compensation**

You informed us that earlier this year Northern deployed a new Delay Repay (DR) application to provide greater efficiency in the handling of claims. It would be helpful to understand the arrangements you currently have in place to ensure that claims are handled appropriately and in a timely manner, and the measures you are taking to provide for the smooth introduction of DR15.

### **ORR complaint handling survey**

We wrote to you on 9 August 2018, to request a copy of the template complaint closure email that you are currently using. This was to help us assess if the way in which the survey information and survey link are displayed is having a potential detrimental impact upon response rates. A review of our records have shown that you have not sent this to us. We therefore ask that you provide us with a copy of your complaint closure email.

### **Next steps**

I shall be grateful if you will provide me with your plan to achieve compliance with the complaints handling requirements and a copy of your complaint closure email by **Friday 28 September 2018**.

We would also like to invite you to a meeting at our London office to discuss all of the issues outlined in this letter. My team will contact you to agree a suitable date and to finalise the agenda.

Please note that this letter and your reply will be published on our website.

Yours sincerely



**Marcus Clements**

CC. David Brown

