

Board Meeting TOC Paper

Jul 10 BM 12.1

Contains restricted or confidential information?

Yes

No



If confidential, protective marking ¹	
Date of Meeting	14 July 2010
Agenda Item	12.1
Report Title	First Great Western
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1. Passenger Focus objectives

1. Ensure that the passenger interest is at the forefront of all decisions when disruption is scheduled for the following major projects: Reading re-development, Electrification, Crossrail, ERTMS (signalling), Paddington Station re-modelling, IEP (Intercity Express)
2. Improve the quality of service being provided to passengers by FGW at times of planned disruption where bus replacement services are provided. To include communication issues, service delivery and review/learning process
3. Improve performance in respect of provision of information to passengers at times of unplanned disruption which leads to major disruption being caused. The aim will be to encourage FGW to adopt a more customer-focused approach to delivery & review of incidents

2. Reasons for objectives

1. This objective was set prior to the change of government as and such the identified projects are now under review. Any one of them has in-built passenger disruption and my role is to ensure early involvement in the pre-planning process with the aim of ensuring that the best mitigation measures are implemented where disruption to service is inevitable.
2. NPS results have been very low in respect of how the train company has dealt with delays at times of planned disruption and a large volume of complaints have been generated particularly where bus replacement services have been provided. This work links into the PIDD project and I am continuing to work closely with FGW on Pre and Post incident processes. The aim being to improve performance and drive up NPS scores for the future.
3. FGW has also tended to attract low scores in respect of provision of information at times of unplanned disruption and in the past, the emphasis has been on internal service recovery without fully understanding the impact and needs of passengers. Raising the profile of issues arising from incidents and ensuring that the process robustly

¹ ie RESTRICTED plus COMMERCIAL / POLICY / STAFF / PERSONAL PROTECT

implements recommendations from the de-brief process is key to ensuring that customer satisfaction scores improve for the future.

3. Progress report

1. Firm links have been established with the major stakeholders involved in the Reading re-development and Crossrail project teams which are the first two to seriously impact on the route between Reading and London with a complete blockade occurring in the Reading area over the December/New Year period. Full details of the blockade was given to the board recently and we are satisfied that the closure is necessary and that wherever possible passengers are being given the opportunity to stay on trains rather than change to buses but there will be a time penalty involved in extended journey times. We were not satisfied that a clear communication strategy existed between Network Rail and FGW so earlier this year a joint meeting was called at the end of which a clear lead individual had been agreed and NR /FGW agreed to fund additional passenger research in the Reading area and across the region to better understand passengers needs and aspirations during the course of the blockade. A clear communication strategy is now being followed. We will continue to liaise with the project teams leading up to the start of the works and will test the plan in action during the course of the blockade. Identified best practice will be identified and carried forward to the other projects. The expertise of Mark LEVING is also being incorporated into this workstream.

2. FGW and Network Rail were particularly successful in planning and implementing the mitigation measures for the North Cotswold line re-doubling works and Newport area re-signalling operations at the end of last year and myself and Simon Pickering were involved in the pre-planning stages to ensure that English and Welsh needs were properly catered for. Both blockades were successful with very few complaints arising and this was no doubt as a result of the clear communication strategy phased over a nine month period which ensured that passengers affected were given clear and timely information in the months and weeks leading up to the events. The principles are being carried forward to future planned engineering works across the region and Simon and I are viewed as an integral part of the pre-planning process and pre-implementation review of plans. We are confident that customer satisfaction will improve as a result of our close cooperation with the planning regimes.

3. The principles of the Passenger Information During Disruption (PIDD) project are being applied to this objective by assisting FGW to better understand the passenger experience at times of disruption by forwarding the weekly updates provided by our own on-line panel members. FGW are then feeding this into their own weekly performance executive meetings to identify shortfalls in service delivery particularly at station level. Station managers are then tasked to provide action plans to address issues impacting on their individual operations. Work is ongoing in respect of FGW compliance with the Good Practice guides on passenger information and we regularly liaise with the FGW lead who manages the TOC PIDD working group. The recent NPS results suggest that passengers are noticing a difference with the recent Spring result showing an improvement of 9% to 48% of passengers satisfied with how well the TOC dealt with delays as opposed to a peer group score of 32%.

4. Other issues

1. Installation of the new Customer Information System (CIS) across the region - This is a franchise commitment and is well under way. This will mean that FGW will operate one CIS system (rather than the current three which are not capable of interacting with one another). The roll-out programme will be completed by August 2011. The systems installed will depend on station size but even small branch line stations will have a minimum of a help point capable of providing contact with a human operator.
2. The cancellation of the 44 new car build for the Cardiff/Portsmouth route was a major setback for the franchise as it provided the platform to relieve so many other capacity issues across the franchise area.
3. FGW 30 deal recently signed with the DfT which guarantees an additional 30 units into the franchise consisting of Class 150 units being cascaded out from London Midland and London Overground. The additional 30 units will not add to the franchise fleet but will replace the current mix of units currently on sub lease from ATW, Northern, South West Trains and the loco hauled sets currently being provided by the DfT.
4. Issues with provision of catering on units operating out of Cardiff where Rail Gourmet are failing to provide the contracted service which is causing issues on the Cardiff/Portsmouth route and some High Speed services.
5. Short-forming of units in the greater Bristol area and along the Cardiff-Portsmouth route has started to raise its head again with unreliability of the Class 150, 158 and 143 units being problematic during the last two months and being robustly challenged.
6. Additional issues from the recent NPS results which have been highlighted as requiring attention include, Train cleaning internal and external, Ticket buying facilities and visibility of on-train staff. The West region continues to be the Achilles heel of the franchise on overall customer satisfaction scores particularly when compared with other regional operators.

5. Confidential issues (optional)