

Anthony Smith
Chief Executive
Transport Focus
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19 December 2019

Dear Anthony

Thank you for your letter regarding the regrettable issues some of our customers have been experiencing with the online retail of Railcards. We are acutely aware that some customers have been receiving a service well below the level that they rightly expect and which we aim to deliver.

The problems stem from planned maintenance to the Railcard website which aimed to improve the experience for people buying and renewing their card online. Since the upgrade, we have sold 87,000 Railcards and while approximately 99 per cent of customers are not experiencing problems, some technical issues mean that people making certain types of transaction are encountering problems.

We are extremely sorry for the inconvenience people have experienced and we are working hard to fix the issues. As well as restoring a high level of service, our overriding concerns since problems with the website began have been to reassure our customers and ensure that nobody is left out of pocket. The actions we have taken to do this include:

- Bolstering our team to double its normal size with people working around the clock to: answer customers' queries; get people their Railcards, and; reimburse people where this has been necessary. The volume of queries across all our customer channels is higher than usual. Nevertheless, we will respond to all customers as soon as possible.
- Installing a customer call back facility for people who cannot wait on the telephone.
- Providing briefings to frontline staff to advise them to accept proof of purchase in lieu of a Railcard, so that where customers have experienced problems downloading their card after purchase they can continue to get the discounted travel to which they are entitled.
- Fixing various technical issues with the Railcard website. There are three remaining problems of significance and we are confident of having resolved these by the end of December.
- Asking all train operators to display a message on their website giving advice to customers who have experienced problems purchasing their Railcard online. Your letter was a useful prompt for us to do this.

While our focus is currently on resolving the remaining technical issues and looking after our customers, in due course we will be carrying out an investigation into what has gone wrong and we will gladly share with you the conclusions, along with our plans to ensure there is no recurrence of the problems.

We know how important railcards are to our customers, especially at this time of year and our focus will remain on ensuring customers' issues are resolved throughout the festive period. If Transport Focus feels there is anything further we can do to help customers who have experienced problems, please do not hesitate to let us know.

Yours sincerely,



Paul Plummer
Chief Executive