

To: Doug Paulley

Freedom of Information
Northern House
9 Rougier Street
York
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FOI@northernrailway.co.uk

11th May 2022

Dear Doug Paulley

Freedom of Information Request ref FOI241

We write in connection with your request for information which was received by Northern Trains on 22nd April 2022:

"Please can you supply information regarding the phone meeting of Rail Delivery Group's Customer Information Group telephone meeting on 17th February?"

To identify the group, I'm informed that RDG's organisation comprises an internal governance structure, headed by its Customer Board. The Customer Board sits above the Customer Information Strategy Group ("CISG"), which itself heads two sub-groups: the Customer Information Group ("CIG"), which deals with issues related to customer information, and the Accessibility & Inclusion Group ("A&IG"), which deals with issues regarding compliance with licence-linked accessibility requirements. Apparently the CIG and the A&IG have delegated authority from the CISG in relation to a number of matters (including, in the case of the CIG, the power to adopt a "Do Not Travel" recommendation). Representatives from all TOCs sit in the CIG. I'm assuming that a Network Rail representative also sits in the CIG.

I'm informed that on Thursday 17 February 2022, shortly after the Met Office issued a Red Weather Warning for Storm Eunice, a meeting of the CIG took place, by way of a telephone call. During this call, the CIG apparently agreed a course of action which included the nationwide issue of "Do Not Travel" notices for train operators.

It is this meeting that I am specifically interested in.

Please could you supply me with the notes and communications your representative made during and as a direct result of this meeting? I'm wanting anything that indicates what topics

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were discussed and what decisions were made. Contemporaneous notes, internal or external emails received or sent that reveal what was discussed at this meeting, and what decisions were made and actions agreed, would be great.

Please can you also advise me about the power and responsibility of your representative on the group? I am not wanting any personal data, I am wanting to know what their role involves and what powers they have to bind your company / to agree to proposals agreed by the group.

In specific, I am instructed that the issue of pre-booked assistance bookings was raised during the call. Apparently the CIG discussed the actions to be taken in that regard, considering the risk that TOCs would not be able to deliver the pre-booked assistance during Storm Eunice. It was apparently agreed during the call that customers with pre-booked assistance bookings should be contacted by TOCs to cancel their assistance booking; and that no further pre-booked assistance bookings should be arranged for 18 and 19 February 2022.

I'm not sure I find it credible that this group, which is not the accessibility and inclusion group, has the authority to agree to cancel and refuse assistance bookings. What I'm wanting to know is whether the group did actually discuss such and reach that decision. If so, whether your rep on that group agreed to such cancellations and refusals, whether they had authority to do so and if so, how they communicated this decision within your company."

Under Section 1 (1)(a) of the FOI act we can confirm that we do not hold the information you have requested. We are able to advise that we did have a representative (a Control based Manager) on the call. Our representative was not there to authorise any decisions on Northern's behalf, rather they listened to the information provided and subsequently communicated it to the relevant teams within Northern.

Our representative did not record any information at the meeting. You have specified that you are specifically interested in the issue of pre-booked assistance and again I can confirm that we do not hold any information in relation to this issue.

Yours faithfully

Freedom of Information, Northern Trains

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Appeal Rights

If you are unhappy with the way your request has been handled and wish to request a review of our decision, please contact us at FOI@northernrail.co.uk

You should specify why you do not agree with our response and what factors you would like to be taken into account as part of the review. This should include any public interest arguments for disclosure. Your request must be submitted within 40 working days of receipt of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF

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