

Alistair Pedlow

18th October 2023

Dear Alistair Pedlow,

Your Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) Request

I am writing in response to your request which was received by London North Eastern Railway (“LNER”) on 26/09/2023 seeking details concerning LNER's approach to handling race-related grievances and Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (ED&I) training within the organisation.

Duty to Confirm or Deny

LNER has carefully reviewed your request and can confirm that we do hold information that falls within the scope of your queries. However, it is important to note that while the information we possess is of a similar nature to what you have requested, it may not directly answer your specific questions. We trust that the information we provide will nonetheless offer valuable insights into the areas you are interested in.

Communication

To summarise your request, you are interested in understanding how LNER addresses issues related to race and ED&I within the organisation. Specifically, you have asked for the number of managers trained to handle race-related grievances in line with ACAS guidelines. Additionally, you are seeking details on the number of senior and line managers who have undergone ED&I training, the reasons this training was deemed necessary, when the training initiative began, and any documentation to confirm that this training has taken place over the last two years.

Part 1 - Race-Related Grievances Management

- **Number of Qualified Managers:** Information on the number of managers specifically trained and designated to handle race-related grievances, in accordance with ACAS guidance.

In response to your query about the number of managers specifically trained to handle race-related grievances in accordance with ACAS guidance, I must clarify that our systems for recording such training have evolved over the years. As a result, training details are now captured in individual personnel files. Due to the extensive nature of these records, it would be disproportionate to review each one to determine the specific

training each manager has received. We may be able to report on this more effectively in the future, and if we do so I will ensure I follow up on your request.

However, I can assure you that our training in 'Investigatory Interview Skills' has been both comprehensive and wide-reaching, covering a broad spectrum of roles across multiple management units within LNER. For example, roles as varied as 'Driver Team Manager' in Operations & Safety and 'Employee Experience Business Partner' in People Management have been included. This training is indicative of our commitment to ensuring that a diverse range of job functions are adequately prepared to handle sensitive matters, including race-related grievances.

To elaborate, this training has been inclusive of roles from front-line customer-facing positions to those in operations, safety, people management, commercial relationships, business services, and engineering. This multi-disciplinary approach ensures that our commitment to effective grievance handling is not confined to a single department but is a company-wide ethos.

Part 2 - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (ED&I) Training

Senior and Line Managers: Details on how many senior and line managers have undergone ED&I training.

As of early 2023, approximately 85.38% of our front-line managers have completed at least an in-depth in-person training session focused on Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion. It is important to note that while metrics are useful, they do not capture the full scope of our commitment to ED&I. Some of our training and engagement activities are more holistic in nature, aimed at improving awareness, fostering open discussions, and enriching experiences. These initiatives may not always be quantifiable, but they are equally vital in embedding a culture of inclusion throughout our organisation.

Rationale for Training: Explanation as to why this training was identified as a need within the organisation.

The importance of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion training in today's diverse and globalised world is self-evident. It is akin to asking why safety measures are important in a manufacturing plant or why customer service is crucial in retail. ED&I is not just a 'nice-to-have'; it is an essential component of responsible and ethical business practice.

While specific training initiatives may come and go, our commitment to ED&I has been a constant. As an example, I have included links to the 2021 and 2022 ethnicity pay reports in Annex 1. These reports are part of our proactive efforts to attract applicants from ethnic minority backgrounds and to ensure transparency in our operations.

- Our internal 'Key EDI Moments' calendar has been in operation for at least three years, marking significant dates and events that are crucial for fostering an inclusive work environment. This year, we transitioned our calendar to a live feature on our ED&I Intranet page. This was executed in collaboration with our Inclusion Network and Internal Communications Team, with the aim to actively promote and amplify awareness of significant ED&I moments. By doing so, we aspire to foster a more inclusive culture and stimulate dialogue around these pivotal topics within our organisation. Recent initiatives include sharing personal stories from our colleagues during key commemorative periods such as South Asian Heritage Month, National Inclusion Week, and Black History Month. These stories serve as a platform for expressing diverse perspectives and experiences, contributing to a richer understanding and appreciation of the varied backgrounds and cultures represented in our workforce. Through these activities, we continue to embed the principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion into the fabric of our organisational culture, ensuring that we cultivate a supportive and enriching environment for all our team members.
- In 2021, we conducted confidential focus groups through Business in the Community to better understand the barriers in attraction, progression, and retention of colleagues from ethnic minority backgrounds. The insights gained from these sessions have been instrumental in shaping our current and future ED&I strategies.
- Also in 2021, we implemented Equality Impact Assessments across both customer and colleague-facing activities. Training on how to complete these assessments has been delivered to over 100 colleagues. A steering group was established to review and provide feedback on all assessments bi-weekly. This process ensures that all future projects at LNER consider equality, diversity, and inclusion right from the planning stage.
- In 2022, we revamped our careers website to prominently feature our ED&I themes, outlining our commitments to potential candidates. Our job adverts are carefully crafted to use inclusive language and highlight key elements of our ED&I strategy, such as inclusion, diversity, and health and wellbeing.
- Recognising the role of social media in job searches, we have created content that focuses on diversity. For instance, our campaign for National Apprenticeship Week featured two of our newest colleagues who are part of our apprenticeship scheme. We are also exploring targeted advertising to reach underrepresented groups.
- We actively support our colleagues' involvement in Muslims in Rail, an independent organisation aimed at fostering diversity in the rail industry. In 2022, we participated in several recruitment events organised by Muslims in Rail.

- In collaboration with Business in the Community, we facilitated a listening forum in February 2022, resulting in a report that has informed our talent acquisition strategies. These include inclusive recruitment training for hiring managers and data monitoring to understand trends in applicant drop-out rates.
- We launched a Ramadan guide in 2022 to promote tolerance and respect for religious practices among safety-critical roles. Listening to our colleagues is crucial for our ED&I approach. In 2022, we sought to understand their views on what could be done to improve inclusion at LNER. Our Employee Experience team collaborated with Network Rail teams at Kings Cross Station for a deep dive into the local culture through an ED&I lens. Our Speak from the Heart employee engagement survey showed a 70% score for inclusion from ethnic minority employees.

By integrating these various initiatives, we aim to create a holistic and effective ED&I strategy that not only complies with but exceeds standard practices, thereby making LNER an inclusive and diverse place to work.

Commencement Date: Information on when this ED&I training initiative was launched.

The ED&I training initiative at LNER is not a new endeavour but rather an evolving, long-standing commitment. Our approach to ED&I has been continually refined over the years to adapt to changing technologies, societal expectations, and organisational requirements.

Supporting Documentation: Request for evidence or documents to confirm that this training has taken place over the last two years.

Regarding supporting documentation of ED&I training, it is important to note that this is a self-run initiative within LNER. As such, the primary form of documentation we have are a list of names along with confirmation of attendance (depending on the training delivered). Given the nature of the data, it is unlikely I can provide literal evidence without compromising the privacy of the attendees. What I can offer, however, are anonymised statistics that give an overview of attendance and completion rates for the training.

Championing ED&I – Face-to-Face Training for Front Line Managers

- Our organisation prioritised Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (ED&I) training for front line managers, launching this initiative in early Quarter 2 of 2023. The training sessions were conducted between April 25th and July 6th, 2023.

Attendance Statistics

- York: A total of 49 managers attended the training sessions held in York.
- London: In London, 24 managers participated in the training.
- Overall Attendance Rate: Across both locations, the percentage of managers who attended the ED&I training is approximately 85.38%.

These statistics serve as our record for the training initiative, affirming our commitment to fostering an inclusive work environment.

ED&I Training for New Starters and Ongoing Initiatives

- As part of our commitment to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (ED&I), all new starters at LNER undergo an initial 90-minute ED&I training session during their induction. This training not only equips them with essential knowledge but also aligns them with our business strategy on ED&I. It delves into the Equality Act 2020, addressing protected characteristics, bullying and harassment as well as other forms of discrimination.

Collaboration with Goss Consultancy

- In the fiscal year 2022/2023, LNER partnered with Goss Consultancy to enhance our initial induction training. The aim was to provide a more in-depth understanding of ED&I in its entirety.

Ongoing Rollout

- This revamped programme is not a one-off; it continues to be rolled out across the business, reinforcing our commitment to creating an inclusive and diverse work environment.

Collaboration with Pearn Kandola for Inclusive Leadership Training

- LNER is currently in discussions with Pearn Kandola, a leading firm in business and DEI consultancy services, to deliver Inclusive Leadership training to our executive team. Pearn Kandola has over 40 years of experience in transforming organisations through their psychology-backed approaches. The roll-out of this training will commence following feedback from our executive team.

Completion of Mandatory E-Learning on ED&I

- We have a mandatory E-Learning programme in place, titled "Inclusive LNER," which focuses on Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (ED&I). This programme is part of our ongoing commitment to foster an inclusive work environment.
- Over the last two years, a total of 686 colleagues have successfully completed this E-Learning course. This number includes managers across various departments, further emphasising our organisation-wide commitment to ED&I.

If you are not content with this response, you have the right to ask for an internal review within a reasonable period (which LNER believes is no more than 40 days from the date of this letter). In the first instance you should contact me again to request this. When making your request, you should specify which aspects of the response you are challenging. LNER will deal with your request as soon as possible and aim to respond within 20 working days following receipt.

If you choose to exercise that right, and are not satisfied with the outcome of the review, you have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner by contacting:

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

Yours sincerely,



Abigail Coates
London North Eastern Railway Limited

Annex 1

<https://www.lner.co.uk/about-us/responsible-business/people-with-heart/>

<https://www.lner.co.uk/globalassets/230324-lner-ethnicity-pay-gap-final.pdf>

<https://www.lner.co.uk/globalassets/page-structure/homepage/homepage-section-blocks/variant-b/hero-banners/lner1533-ethnicity-report-2022-v3.5.pdf>

<https://www.lner.co.uk/about-us/responsible-business/places-with-heart/>

<https://www.lner.co.uk/our-destinations/travel-inspiration/pride-all-year-round/>

<https://www.lner.co.uk/globalassets/page-structure/homepage/homepage-section-blocks/variant-b/hero-banners/lner1532-gender-pay-gap-report-2022-v4.pdf?msclkid=fd6c4feeb19b11ecaf11c4ad1fc97476>

<https://www.lner.co.uk/globalassets/230324-lner-gender-pay-gap-report-final.pdf>

<https://yorkmix.com/video-lner-introduce-a-train-to-celebrate-a-summer-of-pride/>

<https://www.railstaff.co.uk/2023/07/12/lgbtq-champions/>

<https://www.yorkpress.co.uk/news/19878789.top-employers-institute-names-lner-among-2022-top-employers/>