Introduction

Welcome to our Disruption Response Plan.

This document has been produced in order to explain the processes and procedures that Great Western Railway will apply during times of disruption to our usual service provision.

It is not an exhaustive document, but acts as a guide and provides reassurance that when things go wrong, we have plans in place to help you reach your destination as soon and as comfortably as possible.

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Passenger Information During Disruption (PIDD) Programme

Great Western Railway is an active partner in the PIDD Programme, a national initiative which ensures Network Rail and Train Operating Companies apply a consistent approach to the provision of information during service disruption.

PIDD is nationally agreed through the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) and a National Task Force comprised of representatives from train operators.

The format for the delivery of information to customers and colleagues of each Train Operating Company (TOC) should comply with the principles laid down in the Agreed Code of Practice. The code of practice can be found at [www.atoc.org](http://www.atoc.org), and Great Western Railway’s plan exceeds the agreed service level commitment.

Whilst the acronym PIDD refers to providing information during disruption, the principles are applied at any time when providing information, ensuring a consistent approach to the delivery of information across the UK Rail Network. There is scope within this process to provide bespoke information to suit individual locations.
Disruption thresholds

To ensure that we provide appropriate support to our customers and colleagues, we have a number of thresholds for disruption based on how the service is operating.

**Green** the service is operating normally or with a minimal number of minor delays

**Yellow** there is moderate disruption but customers are able to continue their journeys, albeit with some delay

**Red** the service has (or is expected to) deteriorated to a level where customers are experiencing significant delay to their journeys and we are providing alternative transport, tickets can be accepted on other Train Operators services or we are diverting trains via alternative routes

**Black** we advise customers to avoid travelling as we cannot guarantee they will be able to reach their destination (an example of this could be a major flooding incident)

When disruption thresholds are triggered, we advise our colleagues via our internal messaging system.

**Customer Action Teams (CATs)**

Our Customer Action Team (CATs) have been trained to assist customers and colleagues during disruption and will be deployed to stations or trains during a red or black event.
On-Call Managers

We have an On-Call process, where managers are allocated to a geographical area of the business to provide a suitable response to any incident.

These managers are trained to deal with any incident and to provide support to our customers and colleagues, whether that be through the provision of alternatives (such as road transport), information provision or simply to provide a management presence.

Disruption threshold responses

When we trigger yellow, red or black disruption, we will implement a number of responses (appropriate to the incident and where possible), including:

- On-call Managers deployed to Stations and trains
- CATs deployed to Stations and Train
- Frequency of information is increased, with updates on the incident sent at least every 20 minutes
- Information is provided in the format of Problem, Impact and Advice
- Alternative road transport will be provided
- Arrangements will be put in place for other TOCs and transport providers to accept our tickets
- We will liaise with our Social Media Team, National Rail Enquiries, Inrix (who provide traffic updates to various media agencies) and our Customer Service Team
- Special messages will be displayed on information systems at our stations advising customers of the problem, the impact on journeys and our advice
Information Systems

We provide information to customers through a number of different channels, depending upon where they are during their journey.

Our website (GWR.com) provides regular updates to our customers regarding the train service. On our home page we have a service indicator which provides an indication of the current service level:

From here you can click to our Journeycheck page. This has details of any service alterations, such as cancellations, or services that are terminating short of their normal final destination. It also shows if peak-time trains have less carriages than planned, and any reductions in our on-board food and drink offer.
When there are disruptions affecting a number of services (for example; signalling problems), we will display a “line update” on our website which will include information about the problem.

This includes:

- cause of the delay
- impact on train services
- expected length of delays
- advice to customers
- options and alternatives

Information about forthcoming rail improvement works is also provided online. Use the ‘drop down’ section to select the routes on which you intend travel. The information provided on this page comes directly from our Control Centre in Swindon.

You can also register to receive SMS or e-mail updates about our service. These services are free of charge, and can be found by clicking the ‘Journeycheck Alerts’ link on our homepage.

During “black” disruption events, we will remove marketing information from our website in favour of a comprehensive breakdown of information regarding the disruption.
Information at Stations

At many of our stations we provide Customer Information Systems (CIS). These screens show a summary of departures along with platform information. ‘Next train indicators’ are located on platforms and show the next three trains. Stations also have automated announcements, and local announcements can be made at most staffed stations.

At smaller stations we provide Help-Points which have a direct line to the National Rail Enquiries call centres. WebCIS Help-Points also include a screen showing a summary of departures from that station.

We regularly review the information systems at our stations with a view to providing upgrades and enhancements where appropriate.

National Rail Enquiries

National Rail Enquiries also provide information relating to service disruption. Full details of the systems and products they provide can be found on their website at www.nationalrail.co.uk.

The National Rail team also manage the National Rail Enquiries call centre, who can deal with train service and ticketing enquiries for all UK rail journeys. They can be contacted on 03457 484950 (24 hours - calls may be recorded).
Customer Services

Our Customer Services Team provides responses to customer correspondence, through phone calls, e-mail or by letter. Regular dialogue is maintained with our control centre, ensuring they have the most up-to-date information. They also regularly feed back to the business regarding suggested areas for improvement.

Tel. 03457 000 125 (open 0700-2200 daily)  
E. feedback@gwr.com

Social media

We have a popular Facebook account, which is predominantly used for providing details about offers and general information about travelling with us.

Our Twitter accounts (@GWRUK and @GWRHelp), are managed around the clock, and are the most popular way of getting in touch with us. During disruption we will tweet details and will interact with as many customers as possible (although during larger-scale disruptions, this may not always be possible).

We are normally able to resolve issues quickly and easily through Twitter, but where that is not possible we will provide alternative contact details so we can progress them further.
Great Western Railway and Network Rail share a Control Centre in Swindon, from where we jointly manage the response to any incident or service disruption. The provision of information is a key part of everyone’s role in the Control Centre. It is manned at all times, with specialist staff responsible for all aspects of train service delivery.

Key roles in the Control Centre include:

**Customer Response Managers (Great Western Railway)**
Oversee the provision of information to customers and colleagues, ensuring that it is issued in a cohesive and accurate manner. Provide a response to every incident and ensure our customers are given alternatives to allow them to continue their journeys.

**Route Information Specialist (Great Western Railway)**
Provide the information for our Journeycheck website. Ensure that information is provided about service alterations and route specific updates in the event of major disruption. Maintain a log of every incident, keep in regular contact with our Guards and Station Staff and arrange road transport during disruption.

**Customer Information Systems Controller (Great Western Railway)**
Update the information screens and automated announcements at our stations. Manage the on-board information systems on our trains.

**Incident Controllers (Network Rail)**
Responsible for resolving any incident that occurs on the railway network. This could be from arranging a specialist to deal with a signalling problem or ensuring a freight operator is dealing with a broken down freight train. They are also responsible for providing details of their plans to Train Operating Companies.
Working with Network Rail and other Train Operating Companies

Great Western Railway and Network Rail have a duty to work closely together and co-operate over all aspects of passenger information - something not limited to during periods of disruption to the normal service.

Information from the site of an incident forms the key initial stage in the information chain. Network Rail takes the lead role at all operational incidents and has procedures in place which set out their response to these, including how they relate to passenger information.

All Train Operating Companies work together during disruption to minimise the impact on customers’ journeys. This can include providing alternative routes, ticket acceptance on another operator’s services or customer care for other TOCs’ customers at their stations.

When a number of train operators are affected on a single route, we will work collaboratively to ensure that the service we all provide will serve the needs of the majority of customers.
Alternative Road Transport

Great Western Railway will, at our discretion, provide road transport to assist customers in completing their journey. This will not normally be considered unless a customer’s journey is likely to be delayed by more than an hour. The decision will be taken locally at staffed stations to provide taxis, or by the Control Centre for unstaffed stations. The provision of road transport will only be considered if:

1. It is the only way of conveying the customer to their end destination

2. A customers’ journey has been significantly disrupted and road transport is identified as the best option

On some of our rural routes it is not practical to provide road transport due to the length of journey time. In these instances we will do our best to ensure delays experienced by customers are kept to a minimum and are as comfortable as possible.

Great Western Railway has contracts with major taxi suppliers to provide transport at our stations. When there are a large number of customers being delayed it may be more appropriate to provide coaches. In these instances they will be procured by our Control Centre team.
Reviewing Our Performance

Following any major disruption (red or black), we will review the outputs and how we managed the event. These reviews are chaired by a senior manager and lessons learnt are allocated to owners from respective areas of the business.

For disruptions that have a longer term impact on customers (such as the flooding at Dawlish in early 2014), a review will be carried out by one of our General Managers.

We also review our provision of information on a daily basis, checking that sent messages were timely and accurate and that all service alterations have been communicated efficiently.
Continuous improvement

Throughout 2014/15 we invested heavily in improving PIDD, both financially and through changes to procedures.

Some of the actions that we have taken over the last financial year include:

- a new, industry first, internal messaging forum, to improve the flow of information between our Control Centre and First Line Colleagues

- changes to the on-call structure to provide improved geographical coverage of Managers and a more robust command and control structure to any disruption event

- introduction of Customer Action Teams (CATs)

- a full review of our approach to managing disruption, now focusing not just on the flow of information, but also on the overall Customer Experience

- enhancements to our Customer Information Systems, including “disruption mode”

- improvements to the information section of our website
Continuous improvement (cont)

In 2015/2016, customers will also benefit from the following:

- significant investment in station information and security systems, providing equipment at stations where it previously didn’t exist and increasing the number of screens and speakers at some other stations

- provision of additional equipment at stations to give our staff fingertip access to more information

- roll out of new mobile devices to our On-train, Management and Stations teams

- changes to the Information Team, based in the Control centre

- improved communications between the Control and our Drivers on board our Driver Only Operated Services in the London and Thames Valley area

- introduction of Passenger Information Systems on some of our services in the West Country

- a new and improved alert service, providing customers with push alerts about their journeys on ours and other operators services

- roll out of alternative route guides at stations, including details of your options when there is severe disruption to train services

- further improvements to the our website to give our staff fingertip access to the information they need
Further information

Great Western Railway Customer Support team
GWR.com
For tickets, general enquiries, information, real-time updates and offers contact us on 03457 000 125 (0700-2200 daily)

National Rail Enquiries
www.nationalrail.co.uk
For train times and fares 03457 48 49 50 (24 hour service - calls may be recorded)

Transport Focus
www.transportfocus.org.uk
For help and advice on issues that affect your journey 0300 123 23 50