

Passenger Information During Disruption



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List of Abbreviations and Definitions

ATOC	Association of Train Operating Companies
GWR	Great Western Railway
HAL	Heathrow Airport Limited
HAL Rail	Heathrow Airport Limited Rail
PIDD	Passenger Information During Disruption
TFL Rail	Transport for London Rail

List of Documents Referenced

Level	Relevant Document
Process & Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Network Rail Contingency Plans HAL Rail Contingency Plans
Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heathrow Customer Information during Disruption PIDD ATOC Approved Code of Practice – Provision of Customer Information Heathrow Express Accessible Travel Policy 2021

Section 1: Purpose of PIDD

Heathrow Express recognises that the provision of accurate and timely information to our customers is important to ensure a smooth journey experience. The Passenger Information During Disruption (PIDD) policy is designed to ensure that any information during disruption, is provided to our customers.

The PIDD Programme is agreed nationally between the Rail Delivery Group and a national task force of Train Operating Company representatives. Built around this, an ATOC Approved Code of Practice lays down the method in which information should be delivered. Heathrow Express and other train operating companies are required to comply with the requirements.

An underlying principle of PIDD is that a customer should receive a consistent message from staff and via rail industry feeds. This generally involves the use of a generic bank of phrases, identified by Rail Delivery Group. The use of these phrases ensures the problem is conveyed in a clear and concise fashion, without the use of unclear industry jargon.

Heathrow Express has agreed processes and procedures to ensure the delivery of industry standards and to continually seek to improve the methods in which customer information is delivered during disruption.

This delivery plan outlines the key methods in which Heathrow Express seeks to provide customer information during disruption and is based on the agreed 'Heathrow Customer Information During Disruption – Local Plan', which considers all Train Operating Companies that operate from Heathrow stations. This creates a fully integrated procedure which will ensure all customers are provided with one version of the truth.

In conjunction with our partners, Heathrow Express recognises that to deliver a world class customer service, the PIDD is reviewed regularly and cross referenced across the industry.

Section 2: Scope of PIDD

Heathrow Express is an express service that operates four trains per hour, non-stop between London Paddington, Heathrow Central and Terminal 5. Our aim is to get customers to their destination both safely and on time. When this is not possible, Heathrow Express will work closely with our partners to understand any issues and disseminate this information to our customers.

As infrastructure owners, HAL Rail and Network Rail are responsible for initial information provision from the site of an incident and in co-operation with the affected train operating companies, a concise and timely message will be formulated and distributed to customers along the affected route(s).

The infrastructure owners will look to provide:

- Information and estimates of delay duration from the site of an incident or disruptive event.
- The cause of the delay, avoiding jargon that may be unclear to customers.
- The production of a prioritised plan to restore the planned train service.

By doing this, Heathrow Express can ensure customers have the information they need to plan their journeys, both in advance, and on the day, even during disruption. Our performance is measured by using national quantitative research that is publicly available. We will monitor the quality of information provided for Customer Service Level Two incidents according to the Information Development criteria. Heathrow Express is committed in participating in cross country reviews of local plans, ensuring that this is maintained, kept up to date and facilitated to share best practice.

Section 3: Our Staff

Heathrow Express have staff based at our stations and Heathrow terminals as well as on-board our trains. Our station partners HAL Rail are based at all Heathrow stations with GWR staff at Paddington, both providing operational support on behalf of Heathrow Express. GWR will ensure all station teams including GWR train crew, are provided with up-to-date information to provide travel advice to customers face-to-face, via information screens and via public announcements.

At Heathrow Express, all our staff have set responsibilities for providing information to customers during disruption and are briefed and trained in their responsibilities to deliver each element of our policy and to ensure an accurate delivery of information to customers. This includes:

- Training on the Heathrow Express PIDD, including annual refresher training and updates to the PIDD.
- An awareness of the ATOC Approved Code of Practice.
- On-board staff receiving regular briefings on how to obtain information and communicate with customers during disruption.
- Pre-determined Rail Contingency Arrangements regularly trained and briefed to our colleagues who deal with disruption to the train service including updates to contingency arrangements.

During severe disruption, Heathrow Express will look to provide a management presence at key stations where possible. In the event of a major incident, our partners will deploy Rail Care Teams, who will offer support and advice to Heathrow Express customers.

Section 4: Messaging

When an incident occurs on Network Rail or HAL Rail infrastructure that results in a disruptive event, the Network Rail Thames Valley Signalling Centre will communicate the incident to GWR and decide whether any pre-agreed contingency plans are in place to minimise disruption to all services.

A Holding message is followed by Core messages and is sent by GWR Control via email including a follow up call to the Heathrow Express Duty Manager. The 'back office' system is used to update the Heathrow Express website and App to provide further information to customers with our customer relations team updating social media. GWR will issue holding and core messages to all Heathrow Express, GWR and HAL Rail staff. These messages would also go out to the wider airport community and to rail industry feeds who will in turn, use their systems to advise customers.

A Holding message will be issued within 10 minutes of receiving advice of an incident and will summarise the event and that disruption is likely to occur. These are normally templated messages and are based using Rail Delivery Group approved terminology. This ensures that all parties are aware to remain alert for more detailed updates.

Core messages will then follow every 20 minutes, even when there is no change to the event, focussing on the information that is important to customers. These will be published to include:

- Problem: What is the problem, and if relevant, where has it occurred.
- Impact: What does this mean for customers in terms of disruption.
- Advice: What options exist for customers to reach their destinations.

When an incident is over and service recovery is complete, GWR Control will issue an alert email message to advise all relevant parties that a 'normal service' has resumed. The website and app will be updated via the 'back office', advising customers that services are now running on time. All Heathrow Express, GWR and HAL Rail staff, including the wider airport community and rail industry feeds will also be advised of a return to normal service.

Section 5: Disruption Thresholds

To ensure that appropriate support is provided to customers and staff, certain thresholds have been established to identify at which point disruptive events require a certain level of response.

Where services are running normally, a **Normal Status** will be issued. However, where disruption occurs, Heathrow Express will issue the following delay status on the website and APP based on the severity of the event:

Minor Delays

The service is either operating normally, with isolated delays and/or cancellations due to disruption. Delays are between 5 and 9 minutes. Customers will be able to continue their journeys with some disruption.

Delays

The service is either operating with isolated delays and/or cancellations due to disruption. Delays are over 10 minutes. Customers will be able to continue their journeys with some disruption.

Reduced Service

A disruptive incident has been identified with customers likely to be affected. A reduced train service is likely to be in operation with the potential for diversions and delays.

Part Suspended

A disruptive incident has been identified with customers likely to be affected. A part suspended service is likely to be in operation with the potential for diversions and delays.

Suspended

A significant disruptive incident has been identified and it is not possible to guarantee that customers will be able to reach their destination. The train service is suspended and potentially limited alternative transport options available.

As an incident develops it may be upgraded or downgraded in terms of severity and the level of response adapted. Staff will be updated via a GWR Control email alert so that customers are kept informed at stations and on trains, providing the most up to date advice in terms of what it means for their journeys. The Heathrow Express Duty Manager will work closely with the relevant HAL Rail, GWR and Network Rail control teams for the area concerned, from the time an incident is declared, through to resolution.

Section 6: Alternative Travel Arrangements

When Heathrow Express services are Reduced, Part Suspended or Suspended, an enhanced response referred to as Customer Service Level Two (CSL2), will be mobilised to ensure customers and staff are advised of alternative means of travel to reach their destination. The Heathrow Express Duty Manager will take into consideration customer flow, train formations and delays to journeys when mobilising CSL2. When this occurs, GWR Control are responsible for issuing an email alert to advise all Heathrow Express, GWR and HAL Rail staff including the wider airport and rail industry feeds.

When a CSL2 is triggered, TFL Rail will accept Heathrow Express customers with prepaid paperless or electronic tickets/bar coded tickets (including tickets purchased from the Heathrow Express App or Website) for point to point or return journeys purchased within a reasonable time before the start of the disruption (20 minutes). Where applicable, Heathrow Express will cease selling tickets for the duration of ticket acceptance, Heathrow Express will subsequently advertise the use of TFL Rail to customers with prepaid tickets via the website, app and at stations. (Heathrow Express customers with Oyster and Contactless Payment Cards can use TFL Rail services and will be charged a TFL Rail fare as normal.) The Heathrow Express Duty Manager will notify frontline staff at Heathrow and Paddington that this agreement has been enacted through various lines of communication. Once the service has recovered, the Heathrow Express Duty Manager will notify staff at Heathrow and Paddington regarding the resumption, and the specially implemented ticket acceptance stops after a reasonable time (30 minutes) has been allowed for displaced customers to complete their journeys.

If TFL Rail services are unavailable, alternative modes of travel for customers are advised such as London Underground, taxis, bus, or coach services to and from the airport. Customers will be charged for the cost of their journey dependant on their chosen mode of transport. The Heathrow Express Duty Manager will advise our frontline staff at Heathrow and Paddington about alternative travel options. This will then be passed on to our passengers and our customer relations teams via social media, our website and app. Our staff will advise customers on the most suitable alternative travel based on their travel requirements.

Following a major incident, ticket restrictions may be relaxed for a longer period. This will again be communicated via station staff, websites and social media and would normally be a decision led by the Heathrow Express Senior Leadership Team.

Dependant on the incident, this could result in planned or unplanned and potentially last-minute amendments and cancellations to the schedule. Relevant managers will support this process, with advice and specific local knowledge, to minimise the impact to our customers. Every effort will be made to advertise any last-minute service amendments to the public as soon as viably possible.

Where possible Heathrow Express may provide alternative road transport for customers to complete their journey, however a full replacement bus service between Heathrow Airport and Paddington is impracticable.

Section 7: Information at Stations

Heathrow Express do not manage any stations with HAL Rail, Network Rail and GWR facilitating this on our behalf. All our partners use their specific systems, communication methods and station facilities to provide information to customers via their control rooms. Both HAL Rail and GWR have their own PIDD strategies with further information.

HAL Rail

Maintain and provide the following station facilities at both Heathrow Central and Terminal 5 to assist customers in any disruption.

- Mobile Information Screens – These are updated via the Heathrow Rail Control Room to inform customers of any travel disruption and alternative travel advice.
- Help Points – located at all Heathrow stations. These link directly to Heathrow Rail Control Room who will provide information to customers. Signs are provided by the Help Points to explain how to use them, there are specific buttons for information and emergency calls, however each button goes through to the Heathrow Rail Control Room who respond according to the caller's requirements.
- Customer Information Screens updated by GWR at all Heathrow stations.
- Public announcements by station staff using roving microphones on the platforms.
- Radio communications from the Heathrow Rail Control Room to station staff.

All systems are checked by all station staff to ensure accuracy. Any incorrect information will be communicated back to Heathrow Rail Control Room for amendment.

Heathrow Express

Heathrow Express have customer experience teams at London Paddington and Heathrow Airport lead by the Customer Experience Supervisor with the support of the Customer Experience Manager. Both would work closely with the Heathrow Express Duty Manager with any service updates.

Network Rail

Network Rail Base Control maintain and provide the following services at Paddington to inform customers of any disruption.

- Platform and station information screens informing customers of train times and delays.
- Public announcements at Paddington Station to advise customers of any disruption and travel advice via the Paddington control room.

GWR

GWR staff are located at Paddington station at both the gate lines and on platforms. They will provide advice to customers based on the information provided by GWR Control including alternative forms of transport during disruption and ticket acceptance. GWR staff would work with Network Rail Base to advise of any amendments to platform and station information screens and to put out public announcements when required.

Section 8: On Trains

GWR drivers operate our trains, and they receive training in providing information to customers, both face-to-face and using announcements. This is supported by refresher training and as part of planned briefing sessions.

Our on-board uniformed staff will walk through the train providing support and advice to our customers. Staff are provided with mobile devices, enabling them to receive real time information via GWR Control email alerts on service running and any service disruptions. Both our drivers and on-board staff are in regular contact with our operational teams to obtain additional support and information, should they require it.

Further to this, all our trains are equipped with disruption kits which contain useful information, forms and equipment which may be required during disruption. These are checked on a weekly basis and replenished where required.

Should the train stop between stations, the driver will make an initial announcement followed by regular announcements thereafter. When it is safe to do the driver will also walk through the train when they are unable to make announcements through the train public address system. Our station staff would then be on hand to assist customers on arrival with further information and eligibility for compensation.

Drivers are also in direct radio contact with their control teams, thus directly obtaining information that could disrupt train services. Any disruption will in turn be passed onto our operational teams and customers.

Trains are equipped with passenger information screens, where important information including future timetable amendments and onward travel advice will be advertised to our customers dependant on the direction of travel as set by our drivers.

Section 9: Compensation

Heathrow Express will refund part or all of the cost of a journey if service disruption has caused the journey to be delayed by more than 15 minutes. Full details of our refund policy and how to claim a refund can be found on the website <https://www.heathrowexpress.com/> the Heathrow Express App under the section 'Conditions of Carriage' or via request from Twitter. Insurance letters are also available on request to customers whose journey has been delayed by 15 minutes or more, where important information regarding refunds, rebooking of flights or claiming additional expenses can be found. Just ask any of our station staff for a copy or request this via our Customer Relations department. Details can be found in Section 15.

Section 10: Our Website, App and Social Media

Heathrow Express recognises the value of the internet in providing an immediate means to communicate with customers and this also makes it especially important that all information flows are kept up to date. Information made available via the website and social media reflects the holding and core messages from the Operations team.

Our Twitter account (@HeathrowExpress) is monitored seven days a week, between 0700 and 2300 each day, giving passengers a channel for immediate interaction with the Social Media team.

Whilst the team try and interact with as many customers as possible, direct responses are not always possible during large-scale disruption. Regardless of the level of disruption, the team will distribute generic travel information and updates for all followers, including ticket acceptance and alternative transport arrangements. If the Social Media team cannot resolve an issue, they are equipped to provide suitable contacts so that customers get the information they need.

Further to this, our website <https://www.heathrowexpress.com/> and app provide up to date travel information on our 'Live Services' page including an update to the coloured disruption indicator on the website homepage. Updates are shown on the ticker message section on the homepage of both the website and the App.

The Heathrow Express Facebook page ([facebook.com/heathrowexpress](https://www.facebook.com/heathrowexpress)) can also be used to provide service updates, and answer customer queries. This provides another means for customers to contact us.

Section 11: Lost Property

Customers are advised to contact our Customer Relations team (see section 15) when enquiring into lost property. Any lost property is kept at either London Paddington or Heathrow Central, dependent on direction of travel.

For enquiries at London Heathrow please contact <https://www.heathrow.com/at-the-airport/airport-services> or alternatively in person by following the 'Lost property' signs at Heathrow Central rail station.

For enquiries at London Paddington, please contact Network Rail <https://www.networkrail.co.uk/communities/passengers/our-stations/london-paddington/> or alternatively in person at the Left Luggage office on Platform 12.

Section 12: Timetable Amendments

Some events such as extreme weather or planned/unplanned engineering works, may result in a revised timetable being implemented either in advance or at short notice. This is known in the industry as a 'Day A' or 'Day B' timetable. The decision for implementing this will be made by rail infrastructure teams at HAL Rail and Network

Rail in conjunction with the TFL Rail and Heathrow Express. The timetable change is communicated to customers as soon as possible through various channels both at stations and communication platforms. The timetable change is not likely to appear in National Rail Enquiries until the morning of the change. Heathrow Express will advise customers at the earliest opportunity of any advanced disruption via the app, website, or social media as well as briefing staff in advance.

Section 13: Contingency Planning

HAL Rail and Network Rail have their own pre-determined contingency plans that act as an initial point of reference when an incident occurs. These are reviewed on an annual basis. We work with all of our strategic partners to ensure we have aligned contingency processes and plans, allowing a consistent approach to disruption across the network.

Section 14: Incident Review and Continuous Improvement

It is recognised that reviewing past events is the best way to learn for the future and continuously improve. Reviews of significant service disruption look at the incident itself, the impact on the train service and customers and then how this was communicated to both staff and customers.

These reviews are conducted by a relevant rail management and partners with input from the Heathrow Express in the days immediately after a significantly disruptive event. This is to ensure that the relevant information was delivered in a timely fashion and captured for future learnings.

Actions are identified and tracked by the relevant manager to ensure that Heathrow Express can continuously improve the way we manage a disrupted train service and deliver information to our customers. Our contingency and resilience plans are constantly reviewed following any significant disruption. If any actions are identified to be outside of the immediate control of Heathrow Express, they will be raised with the relevant party – whether this is HAL Rail, Network Rail, or another Train operating company.

Our Passenger Information During Disruption document will be reviewed and published annually on our website.

Section 15: Useful Contacts

You can contact us via:

The quickest way to contact us is our [Customer Query and Feedback Form](#). We endeavour to respond to your query within 20 working days.

Complaint Form

Please let us know your complaint using our [Customer Query and Feedback Form](#) and choosing "complaint" in the query drop down. For full details on the complaints procedure please review the complaints handling procedure document: [Complaints Handling Procedure \(Sep 19\)](#)

By Phone

You can contact our Customer Relations Department on: +44 (0) 345 600 1515. (09:00-17:30hrs GMT Monday-Sunday). Calls from the UK to this number are charged at the local rate. Costs from international networks may vary.

By Post

Heathrow Express Customer Relations Department
PO Box 887
3 Manor Court
Exeter EX1 9YT
United Kingdom

Please include an email address and contact phone number in your letter to enable us to contact you about your query.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic there are significant delays to customer enquiries or refund requests sent by post. To receive a response sooner, please complete our [Contact Form](#)

Via Social Media

You can contact us on Twitter [@HeathrowExpress](#) or [Facebook](#).

Other useful contacts

For Special Assistance at Heathrow Airport

For assistance at Heathrow Airport, please book by contacting the Airport's assistance provider on +44 (0) 208 757 2700 (24 hour service). Please have your flight number ready.

For Special Assistance at Paddington Station

For assistance at Paddington Station, please book by calling Passenger Assistance on 0800 197 1329 (07.00 – 22.00 hrs). Alternatively, you can speak to a member of the station staff or call by using one of the yellow phones.

For Lost Property

Lost Property is managed on behalf of Heathrow Express by Heathrow Airport Lost Property. They can be contacted on 0844 824 3115 or by visiting the [lost property website](#).

Additional Contacts:

National Rail Enquiries

This is the definitive source of information for all passenger rail services on the National Rail network in Great Britain. The National Rail Enquiries website maintains a list of all train operating companies and details of how to contact them.

W: www.nationalrail.co.uk

T: 03457 48 49 50.

Office of Rail and Road

The Office of Rail and Road is the independent safety and economic regulator for Britain's railways.

W: www.orr.gov.uk

T: 020 7282 2018

Network Rail

www.networkrail.co.uk

0345 711 4141 (24 hours)

Rail Delivery Group

www.raildeliverygroup.com or info@raildeliverygroup.com

020 7841 8000

Escalating complaints

If you are unhappy with our response, please contact London Travel Watch, which is an independent body set up by Parliament to protect the interests of rail customers.

W: www.londontravelwatch.org.uk

T: 020 3176 2999

E: enquiries@londontravelwatch.org.uk

By letter: London TravelWatch, 169 Union Street, London SE1 0LL