

Date issued: 10 November 2021

## Freedom of Information Request

Please accept our sincere apology for the time taken to answer your customer enquiry dated 23 August 2021, your patience is much appreciated. Your enquiry has been dealt with under the auspices of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and in accordance with our information access policy.

### You asked for the following information:

Complaint Choice	My train journey
Date of Travel	2021-08-23
Departure Station	Manchester Piccadilly
Arrival Station	Cardiff Central
Scheduled Departure Time	12:31:00
If your journey was delayed, let us know by how much	1-15 mins

*"I was on the above train today: From MCR it was standing room only and at Crewe with a Liverpool festival kicking out, considerably more people squeezed onto the train making it very cramped and uncomfortable. On top of the this, the air con in the carriage wasn't working. Although TfW staff provided a bottle of water during the journey, I am concerned as to whether the train should have been running at all. In very cramped conditions, and most people not even wearing masks (and no reminders to do so), this makes covid caution and your signs on the training asking people to observe 2m social distancing a farce!!! There was a level of Greenman security at Abergavenny, but they still allowed considerable overcrowding on the train. This train should not have been run due to faulty aircon and your staff should have been more aware of the cramped conditions, and not allowed the train to become so overcrowded. I wouldn't mind seeing your risk assessment of this situation so that i can discuss it with my MP/MS.*

*Why did you continue to run a faulty train, with faulty AirCon? Why did you allow the train to become so overcrowded that it didn't adhere to your own 2m Social Distancing signage on the train. Why did your staff not remind passengers of the need to wear facemasks when the train entered Wales? Please forward me a copy of your Risk Assessment for this kind of situation."*

### Your Questions Answered:

#### 1. Why did you continue to run a faulty train, with faulty AirCon?

The train in question is a class 175 and is maintained by Alstom at the Chester depot. It is suspected that air-conditioning module was unable to cope with the higher ambient temperatures onboard a full and standing train, and tripped out to protect the system. The fault was reported as soon as it became apparent (23 August - the date of your enquiry) and the train was returned to the Chester depot for repair at the earliest opportunity that same evening. The air-conditioning system was tested but found to be working at that time. However, the air-conditioning module was replaced as a precaution to prevent further reported failures of the system. To date, there has been no further reports of faulty air-condition on the unit in question.

**2. Why did you allow the train to become so overcrowded that it didn't adhere to your own 2m Social Distancing signage on the train?**

Social-distancing laws in Wales changed on 7 August and as such, there were no social-distancing requirements on the date of your journey. It is likely that social-distancing signage was awaiting removal at that time.

**3. Why did your staff not remind passengers of the need to wear facemasks when the train entered Wales?**

Safety is, and always has been, one of our very top priorities, and throughout the pandemic, we have implemented many measures to protect both our colleagues and customers. Though changes to the law in Wales on 7 August brought an end to social-distancing requirements, face covering requirements on public transport remained in place for those not exempt. To help our customers observe this requirement, we have relentlessly communicated with our customers via our website, social media and other mediums such as radio adverts and news broadcasts. Our Travel Safer campaign, which we launched during the early stages of the pandemic in 2020, continues to keep our customers informed; whilst our capacity checker allows customers to make informed decisions about when to travel based on how busy each service is likely to be.

As face coverings are required by law in Wales on public transport, we do have a programme of conductor announcements, which we have recently enhanced as passenger numbers rise. Unfortunately, we have seen a reduction in the number of passengers wearing face coverings, and our security teams are working closely with partners from British Transport Police to challenge these individuals. The role of our conductors is to remind passengers of the requirements only. A large portion of those challenged claim exemption and as we are not legally allowed to ask for evidence, we do have to accept these claims. It is also worth noting that people do not have to wear a face covering whilst eating or drinking on public services.

To assure you, we continue working hard to enforce this requirement. We prevent 100 people per week from travelling on our services for non-compliance, and we continue using the Travel Safer campaign to educate our passengers, especially during peak travel times and major events. We also recognise the confusion for some people around when and where a face covering is required, and during a during recent Six Nations rugby event in Cardiff, we gave out 3000 face coverings to support safe travel.

**4. Please forward me a copy of your Risk Assessment for this kind of situation.**

Please find a copy of our strategic risk assessment attached to this email.

We hope this information is of use to you.

Yours sincerely,

**Transport for Wales**

### **Appeal Rights**

If you are unhappy with the way your request has been handled and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision, please write to the Head of Freedom of Information at either Transport for Wales, 3 Llys Cdwyn, Pontypridd, CF37 4TH or freedomofinformation@tfw.wales. 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 (ICO) can be contacted at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or you can contact the ICO through the 'Make a Complaint' section of their website on this link: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>

The relevant section to select will be "Official or Public Information".