

BUSWAYS PASSENGER RELATIONS PLAN

1. Customer Relations Strategy

1.1. Customer Commitment

Busways is committed to providing our customers with a service that is safe, reliable and comfortable, and which offers value for money.

1.2. Strategy

The Busways Passenger Relations Plan sets out our commitment to deliver, monitor and continuously improve, our high standards of service quality.

Busways provides staff with adequate training, systems and information to deliver the customer service standards outlined in this plan.

1.3. Objectives

Busways will deliver customer service in line with standards set by the Transport for NSW *Customer Service Commitment* and our Passenger Relations Plan.

All our staff should:

- be polite and helpful to our customers and members of the public.
- answer enquiries accurately, pleasantly and efficiently.
- consider the safety and comfort of passengers when driving.

2. Customer Service

2.1. Customer Commitment

The Busways Customer Commitment (refer 1.1 in this document) is available at www.busways.com.au/about-us/customer-commitment and in hard copy by request. It is also displayed as a poster inside our buses.

2.2. Reliability

Busways aims to operate all advertised services on time. No bus service should leave ahead of schedule and we monitor running times to avoid late services.

When delays are due to factors within our control, we take action to restore our scheduled services. When service times are affected by external circumstances, such as traffic congestion, we work with councils to resolve these problems.

2.3. Accessibility

Compliance with the *Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002* is both a legislative and contractual requirement for Busways. Our Accessible Transport Action Plan (available at www.busways.com.au/about-us/our-mission) outlines actions that ensure that we meet our obligations under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth), the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* (NSW) and the *Disability Services Act 1993* (NSW).

Key initiatives include upgrading our fleet with low floor easy access buses, in line with disability legislation. As of December 31 2012, at least 55% of Busways' timetabled services are operated by a low floor easy access bus. This will increase to 90% by 31st December 2017 and 100% by 31st December 2022.

The Busways website aims to satisfy W3C's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 (WCAG), and will be compliant to a minimum WCAG 2.0 Level A in 2013. An Accessibility page offers related information at www.busways.com.au/travelling-with-us/accessibility.

Busways promotes the 131500 Infoline TTY number for hearing impaired people on our website, timetables and other collateral.

2.4. Care of Children

The Busways Driver Handbook (F08-1.18 Driver Handbook) outlines the duty of care employees have to children who travel on our services in Section 3 Working with Children.

3. Passenger Rights and Responsibilities

3.1. Passenger Rights and Responsibilities Code

A copy of the *Passenger Rights and Responsibilities* is displayed in every Busways bus and on the Busways website.

This statement lists the behaviour that is and isn't acceptable when traveling on a Busways bus.

3.2. Student Code of Conduct

A copy of the *Student Code of Conduct* is displayed in every Busways bus and on the Busways website.

This code lists the behaviour that is and isn't acceptable for students traveling on a Busways bus.

4. Information

4.1. Printed Timetables

Busways produces printed timetable books which group local routes together by local area. Timetables are available from bus drivers, bus depots and via external sources such as community facilities and local councils. They are available by request on the Busways website or by contacting 131500 or infoline@busways.com.au.

Busways has a policy to deliver all new and significantly updated timetables to the letterbox of every household in affected areas.

4.2. 131500 Infoline

This joint transport information initiative enables customers in Greater Sydney to access timetable information and provide feedback via the phone line 131500 and the internet site www.131500.com.au.

Busways supports this initiative by providing 131 500 with information regarding major service disruptions when available and timetable change information at least two weeks prior to implementation.

The 131500 Infoline is promoted on the Busways website and timetables.

4.3. Busways Infoline

A unique local phone service operates at each bus depot for customer enquiries. The line is manned between 7am-7pm every day, either by the depot or routed after hours to another line. Customers can also submit queries and feedback to infoline@busways.com.au 24 hours a day. All feedback is handled according to our passenger feedback response process (refer to 5.2 in this document).

4.4. Busways Website

Customers can access information regarding service changes, route descriptions, destinations within their local area and fare information at www.busways.com.au.

There is a feedback form on the website for information requests.

4.5. Bus Stop Infrastructure

Bus stop infrastructure ranges from metal strips and flag signs that identify bus stops to plinths with information displays. Busways installs bus stop signage where suitable including route destination information, timetable posters and network maps, all of which help aid customer information.

4.6. Social Media (Twitter)

Busways uses the social media platform Twitter to communicate with public transport users in our service areas, using both local accounts for depot areas (providing local information) and a Busways Group account (providing company wide information and promotions).

Interaction through the platform is governed by our Social Media Marketing procedure (MR04-05) in accordance with our Infoline procedure (MR04-1.3 Infoline) and Complaints Handling procedure (OP05-4.1 Complaints Handling).

Busways utilises this unique information sharing platform to:

- deliver information that improves passenger experience, such as real time updates or advance notice of service developments.
- communicate on a platform that customers use when on the move - Twitter is prolifically used on smart phones, tablets and laptops.
- promote various marketing campaigns for tickets, services and programs.
- build a community presence - emphasise our local knowledge, experience and commitment to the communities we serve.
- Refer customer complaints and concerns that are made on public forums to appropriate feedback channels – 131500 or Busways Infoline.
- share positive feedback.
- engage with customers, solicit feedback and run competitions.
- manage our online reputation - monitor discussions and trends and diffuse negativity where possible.
- positively influence public perception about public transport in Sydney and New South Wales.

4.7. Information Stalls

Busways operates an information stall program run by experienced staff at community locations such as shopping centres, community festivals and other events. Information stalls are held at least once every two months in each operating region, providing at least six appearances in the community every year. At the stall, people can:

- replace or pick up new/current timetables;
- make enquiries or provide feedback about Busways services;
- ask about current employment opportunities and driver qualifications;
- get information on school bus passes, term passes, tickets and concessions;
- find out about other Busways services such as charters, night buses and long distance route services;
- get information material regarding accessibility and safe travel;
- get giveaways such as model buses for kids.

4.8. Media Advertising and Coverage

Busways periodically utilises media platforms to ensure that customers are aware of services, ticketing products, network consultations and changes and other initiatives.

Avenues for promotion include print, digital and radio media.

Busways runs paid advertising campaigns in addition to pro-actively communicating information to media news rooms and responding promptly to media enquiries.

4.9. On Bus Advertising

Busways uses the internal and external space on our bus fleet to communicate with our passengers. This involves posters installed inside our buses, information materials made available by request or handed out by the driver and advertisements installed on the bus exterior.

4.10. School Communication

Busways communicates with schools, parents and students through letters distributed on our buses, website content, direct correspondence and meetings with school staff and placement of news in school newsletters where possible. Notice of proposed and upcoming service changes are communicated in advance of changes or consultation deadlines.

4.11. School Orientation Program

Busways invites schools to book our staff to attend their annual orientation events. Busways staff provide school bus advice to parents and students via a short talk or a stall set up where parents can approach staff for information and assistance with:

- assessing student eligibility for free bus travel;
- completing free school travel application forms;
- school bus routes and timetables;
- term passes for those not eligible for a free school bus pass;
- bus safety education;
- other student related matters relating to bus travel.

4.12. Information Brochures

Busways produces information brochures about matters that may be of interest to passenger groups. Currently the following are in print and circulation:

4.12.1. Access Matters

This brochure is a practical guide about accessibility on Busways services.

4.12.2. Safety for Seniors

This brochure is an information guide about bus travel and safety for senior bus passengers.

4.12.3. School Bus Safety Program

This brochure is an information guide introducing the school bus safety training program.

4.12.4. Customer Commitment

This brochure sets out Busways' Customer Commitment.

5. Feedback

5.1. Feedback Channels

5.1.1. Customer feedback

Feedback can be submitted through:

- Staff at a Busways depot or a Busways Information Stall.
- Email to Infoline@busways.com.au.
- The online form at www.busways.com.au.
- The 131500 phone line or email.

5.1.2. Community Consultation (refer to 6.5 in this document).

5.2. Passenger Response Process

As part of our customer commitment we endeavour to respond to all customer contact in a professional manner within a reasonable timeframe. This is set out in our Infoline procedure (MR04-1.3 Infoline).

In summary, requests for timetables, information and employment and charter queries are responded to within 3 working days. Ministerial representations are responded to within 2 working days.

Complaints, feedback and requests are responded to within 2 working days with an aim to have more than 80% of all matters resolved within 5 working days. If the investigation is ongoing the customer is informed of progress within these timeframes.

5.3. Complaints Handling

Customer complaints can be lodged through any of the feedback channels listed at 5.1.1 and will be processed in accordance with our Passenger Response Process (refer to 5.2 in this document) and Complaints Handling procedure (OP05-4.1 Complaints Handling).

Where possible the most senior member of staff on duty will deal with the complaint. However, all Busways staff will be appropriately trained and expected to deal with telephone and personal contact queries from customers whenever they are on duty.

Busways is committed to investigating every complaint and taking necessary action in accordance with the findings of an investigation. Customers will be advised of the results of the investigation where appropriate.

Busways disciplinary procedures will be implemented if an investigation determines that that a Busways employee was at fault.

A register of customer complaints is maintained and reports regarding these complaints are available to the Director General of Transport for NSW upon request.

Busways will endeavour to respond to complaints within 2 working days with an aim to have the matter resolved within 5 working days.

6. Research and Monitoring

6.1. Infoline Monitoring

The Reliability Department will conduct random customer sampling to ensure the complaint resolution process meets customer expectations. This will assist Busways in identifying areas of concern, trends in relation to changes in customer expectations and areas of deficiency in current processes or procedures.

6.2. Infoline Customer Resolution Surveys

Using the Occurrence Report database, authorised staff will conduct telephone surveys to record details of the customer's perception of their experience in relation to Busways complaints handling procedures. Data received in this manner will be analysed and used to assist in the planning of targeted staff training initiatives, alterations to existing procedures and potentially improvements to company policy.

6.3. Service Monitoring

Busways relies on effective monitoring of services through passenger load checks and on-time performance at interchanges, depots, terminals and other specific locations. School checks and ride checks are a major part of the monitoring activity.

- Major terminals and major railway stations are checked every three months – arrival/departure, time, load and ranking.
- Arrival/departure checks are carried out at each depot every three months.

- Arrival/departure/load checks are carried out at selected schools as required.
- Point checks or ride checks are carried out when required.

6.4. Community Consultation

We follow a consultation process that takes into account the input of the community and other stakeholders.

Feedback processes include:

- feedback submitted through customer service channels (email, depot, drivers);
- feedback from our bus drivers and depot staff;
- regional planning forums;
- school visits and meetings;
- on board surveys;
- structured consultation campaigns using proposal documents and survey forms.

All feedback is reviewed by relevant departments and processed in accordance with stringent customer service standards.

6.5. Website Analytics

Busways periodically reviews data pertaining to the use of our website in order to understand user behaviour, content demands and access statistics. We use this data to improve the user experience on our website, ensuring access to information is easy and efficient for our web visitors.

7. Incident Management

7.1. Lost Property

Busways keeps and records all property found on Busways buses in accordance with our Lost Property procedure (OP05-3.4 Lost Property). Lost property is kept at the depot where the bus the item was found on returns to. Every effort will be made by depot staff to identify and contact the owner of a lost item. Lost property that isn't identified is stored for three months before disposal.

7.2. Lost Children

The Busways Driver Handbook (F08-1.18 Driver Handbook) outlines the duty of care employees have to children who travel on our services in Section 3 Working with Children and Section 5 School Student Transport.

It is Busways' policy that if children board the wrong school bus, the driver will contact the depot or arrange to transfer the child to the correct bus.

7.3. Safety Management System

Busways views safety as a top priority. The health and wellbeing of staff and members of the public are paramount. The Safety Management System (SMS) contains policies and procedures for implementing and monitoring safe practices including incident response, management and reporting.

8. Community Programs

8.1. Travel Training

The mission of the Busways Passenger Travel Training Program is to help vulnerable groups in the community feel safe, comfortable and confident travelling by bus.

Our driver training equips drivers to assist specific passenger groups such as the elderly, disabled, culturally and linguistically diverse and school children, when they use our services.

In addition, we offer customised travel training sessions to community groups (such as primary school students, seniors and the mobility impaired) which address their specific needs and build confidence and knowledge about bus travel in the local area.

Information about the school bus safety program is available at www.busways.com.au/school-bus-safety-program.

Information about the community bus safety program is available at www.busways.com.au/community-bus-safety-program.

8.2. Community Support

Busways supports local community initiatives and develops partnerships with larger events and causes. This involves school, organisation and event sponsorships, free and discounted charter supply, in-bus poster display, employee engagement, charity and crisis appeal donations and an employee fundraising matching scheme.

Employees follow a procedure (MR04-02 Depot Sponsorships/Donations) to nominate local groups for community support, and a form on our website at www.busways.com.au/about-us/community-support invites groups to contact us directly.