

# Passenger Relations Plan

This Passenger Relations Plan outlines the objectives, initiatives and performance measures of Premier Motor Service Pty Ltd pertaining to information, feedback, research, marketing and passenger training. Our commitments and initiatives in relation to customers and customer service are identified in our company charter.

## **Charter & Route Service**

Premier Motor Service Pty Ltd will provide our customers with professional and friendly service in accordance with the standards set by Transport for NSW

Our customer service charter outlines our commitment to passengers and reflects that of Transport for NSW “customer service commitment”.

Premier Motor Service customer service charter is available on request and is also displayed in our buses.

## **Objectives**

- To provide our customers with a pleasant and safe travel experience
- To ensure our customers receive professional, friendly and efficient service
- To respond to customer inquiries in an efficient and timely manner

## **Key Stakeholders**

- Public Transport users and the Wollongong / Illawarra community
- Transport for NSW
- Bus NSW

## **Timetable Information**

Service timetable information is available from our office (in person or via the telephone 9.00am to 5.00pm), website, 131500, from drivers and other selected facilities such as council offices etc.

## **131500 infoline**

Premier Motor Service Pty Ltd have designated administration staff available to continually update 131500 of any timetable alterations or service disruptions to ensure that passengers would call 131500 (or website –www.131500.com.au) are able to access up to date service information.

The same administration staff are available to liaise with 131500 in regards to any customer service issues.

## **Premier Motor Service – avenue for inquiries, feedback and complaints**

Premier Motor Service Pty Ltd provides the following avenues for customers to gain information and / or provide feedback and complaints:-

- Premier Motor Service infoline 9.00am to 5.00pm
- Premier Motor Service website
- Email or written correspondence
- In person at our office

Additionally customers are able to complete customer surveys on line or complete survey forms provided by office staff or certain drivers.

## **Complaints handling process**

Customers are able to lodge a complaint via 131500, our website, our infoline (telephone complaints), email or written correspondence or in person.

- In most circumstances the complaint will be dealt with by a senior member of staff. If this is not possible the complaint will be dealt with by an appropriately trained member of staff
- All complaints will be dealt with in accordance with our set policies and procedures
- Customers will be advised of the outcome of complaint investigations
- If necessary disciplinary procedures will be instigated
- A register of all complaints will be maintained
- Premier Motor Service will attempt to resolve all complaints within 3 business days.

## **Research and Consultation**

Customers, stakeholders and communities will be involved and consulted in regards to the planning and development of service networks.

Consultation will involve, but not be limited to; information brochures, advertising and public meetings where the public will be invited to make any comments or submissions.

# Passenger Relations Plan

## Marketing

Periodic promotion will be undertaken via the following avenues (avenues to be determined by management) to ensure customers and the community are aware of the services and products offered by Premier Motor Service Pty Ltd:-

- Newspaper advertising
- Television advertising
- Radio advertising
- Website and internet advertising
- Brochure and public signage

## Passenger Training

Premier Motor Service Pty Ltd will provide resources to ensure assistance is provided for passenger training to facilitate bus travel is accessible to all members of the community. Where possible this may involve make staff available to provide training and assistance.

## INFORMATION AND FEEDBACK

### Objective

Customer service is an integral part of our business. To treat our passengers in a polite, friendly and respectful manner and to respond to customer enquiries in a timely manner.

- **Participation in 131 500**
- **Customer Enquiries/feedback - 131 500; Premier Illawarra Infoline; Premier Illawarra Website.**

**Complaints Handling** - Complaints can be received via 131 500, Infoline, on our website, or at information stalls. Our commitment will be to resolve complaints, or provide information sought within 3 business days.

The Premier Illawarra Infoline will operate from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. Where possible, the most senior member of staff on duty will deal with the complaint. However, all Premier Illawarra staff will be appropriately trained and expected to deal with telephone and personal contact queries from customers whenever they are on duty.

Premier Illawarra has developed Work Procedures, which will be available for training and for staff referral when dealing with Customer Complaints and Feedback. These procedures clearly indicate a time frame, consistent with Premier Illawarra commitment of providing information or resolution of complaints within 3 business days.

Premier Illawarra is committed to investigating every valid complaint and, to take whatever action is necessary in accordance with the findings of an investigation. This commitment is clearly spelt out in its procedures developed for handling Customer Complaints and Feedback (see below). Customers will be advised of the results of the investigation.

Any disciplinary action, determined as a result of an investigation finding the complaint was due to a Premier Illawarra employee, will be taken in accordance with Premier Illawarra's 'Code of Conduct' and disciplinary procedures.

Premier Illawarra will maintain a Register of all valid Customer complaints whether received through correspondence or telephone contact. Analysis of this register and customer complaint data will be undertaken at quarterly review meetings.

### Procedure for Processing Oral Complaints –

In accordance with AS 4269, the steps to process an oral complaint are to:

1. Identify yourself, listen, record details and determine what the complaint wants.
2. Confirm the details received.
3. Empathise with the complainant in a courteous manner.
4. Explain the courses of action available.
5. Do not attempt to lay blame or defense.
6. Resolve the complaint if possible or commit to doing something immediately, irrespective of who will ultimately handle the complaint.
7. Ensure that the customer is informed the complaint is receiving attention, without creating false expectations.
8. Check whether the customer is satisfied with the proposed action and, if not, advise alternative courses of action.
9. Provide acknowledgement; e.g. a thank-you letter, a telephone call.
10. Follow up as appropriate and monitor to ensure the customer remains satisfied as well as received feedback.

### Processing Written Complaints

In accordance with AS 4269, in principle, this is the same as processing oral complaints. However in this situation a response should be given promptly, in writing.

# Passenger Relations Plan

## Minimizing Disputes

In accordance with AS 4269, handling a difficult customer and the customer's complaint efficiently needs patience and skill to avoid an initial 'negative' situation becoming even more negative and degenerating into a dispute.

The two main elements in a complaint situation that need to be effectively handled to minimize the likelihood of dispute are:

(a) Dealing with the complainant's feelings:

- i. Listen – this is the first step in reducing the tension.
- ii. Acknowledge the complainant's feelings – denying that the complainant is, or has the right to be upset may antagonize the complainant.
- iii. Empathize – relieves the tension and so opens channels of communication.
- iv. Do not offer excuses or argue with the complainant.

(b) Dealing with the specifics of the complaint:

- i. Listen – this is the first step in reducing the tension.
- ii. Agree on a solution – without appearing to dictate terms in order to avoid the likelihood of re-raising tension.
- iii. Set a timetable.
- iv. Take action on the agreed solution.

## Processing Feedback Forms

- Following receipt of a complaint/feedback, transfer details to Feedback Form as soon as practicable.
- Take action required.
- Make sure the form is filled out completely.
- Manager signs the report as indicated.
- Place a copy in the master file.
- If the report is driver-related, place a copy in the driver's file.
- Enter the details of the complaint/feedback into a computer system.

Analysis of this register and customer complaint data will be undertaken at quarterly review meetings.

## INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

### Objective

Handle any incidents effectively and with care. Have processes in place that minimise impact of incidents on customers.

### Lost Children

In the event of a lost child (i.e. a child remaining on the vehicle when all other students have alighted from the bus) the driver immediately contacts depot management by 2-way radio or mobile phone.

Depot management will assist the driver in identifying the child and attempt to contact the parents/care givers to arrange for the safe return of the child to its home.

Should depot management be unable to contact the parents/care givers the local police are to be contacted?

### Lost Property

Drivers are to return any lost items to the depot the service operates from. If the owner of a lost item can be identified, Premier Illawarra will contact the person and arrange for the return of the item.

In all other cases lost property is kept at the depot for 3 months. If the owner has not redeemed the item within this timeframe, the lost property is disposed off.

Premier Illawarra will not levy a charge for the return of lost property and will ensure that adequate identification is made at the time of lost property being collected.

We propose that all proceeds from any disposal of unclaimed lost property will be donated to a charitable institution.

Customers should contact the depot their service operated from to locate a missing item. Alternatively, a passenger can contact 131 500 to locate lost property. 131 500 staff should direct the inquiry to the relevant depot.

### Other Emergencies

Emergencies will be dealt with in accordance with the company's Emergency Procedure Policy.

## CUSTOMER RESEARCH AND CONSULTATION

### Objective

We involve communities and stakeholders in planning and development of all aspects of our services to be able to provide effective services (based on identified need as well as operational considerations) to the communities we service.

### Service Evaluation

- A bi-annual independent customer satisfaction survey will be conducted by TFNSW (or its contractor) to rate Premier Illawarra's performance in a number of areas;

# Passenger Relations Plan

- Staff helpfulness and courtesy
- Vehicle cleanliness
- Provision of information
- Personal security
- Service provision
- Ticket machine availability and performance
- Overcrowding
- Feedback forms stocked with drivers to give to customers who have complaints / compliments. (Example Customer Feedback Form attached).
- Record and maintain database of all formal complaints. Review these on a quarterly basis.
- Promote where community feedback has resulted in positive changes.
- Ticket information and patronage count to use in comparison with pre-implementation figures.
- Monitor media coverage (particularly letters to the editor).
- Monitor website hits, and in particular, timetable searches.
- Note the demand for new timetables

## Service review and development

### Community Feedback:

- Surveys
    - Passengers
    - Potential bus users
  - Invitation for comment
    - Newspaper advertisements
    - Media coverage
    - Feedback forms (stocked with drivers, at depots, and on the website)
    - Material on buses and at community facilities
    - Letters to Council(s), MP(s), community groups
  - Ongoing Community Reference Group (appointed key stakeholders as members, ongoing communication as well as consultation in development of service changes)
  - Service Planning Forum (annual meeting of customers and stakeholders)
- Analysis of records of complaints/compliments/suggestions

### Stakeholder feedback

- Drivers and depot staff
  - Surveys
  - Form working group to consult throughout the development of services
  - Analysis of feedback received through suggestion box (where available)
- Service Planning Forum (annual meeting of customers and stakeholders)
- Meet with key stakeholders
  - Councilors, Council staff and MP(s)
  - Trip attractors (shopping centres, retirement villages, TAFE, tourist attractions)
  - Community groups (e.g. Community Transport, transport advocacy groups, youth forums etc.)

## MARKETING

### Objective

Ensure customers and potential customers are aware of our services, ticketing products and special initiatives and know the benefits of using our services. To create and re-enforce a positive image of Premier Illawarra and of bus use.

### Promotion of bus services

- Advertising in local print media
- External advertising on buses
- Participation in cooperative events promoting bus use
- Marketing to new residents (distribution of timetables and free tickets)
- Targeted marketing initiatives (raffle, free/discount fares etc)
- Joint marketing with trip generators (discounts for bus users etc)

# Passenger Relations Plan

## **Distribution of information**

- Distribution of timetables at a variety of outlets including drivers, depots, community facilities, Councils, real estate agents etc.
- Bus stop information (have timetable info at all major bus stops)
- Regional maps printed and on website
- Website
- Premier Illawarra Infoline phone and email service of timetable distribution

## **Media**

- Develop positive relationships with journalists
- Respond to published articles
- Respond to media requests
- Respond to media releases

## **PASSENGER TRAINING**

### **Objective**

We will also ensure that assistance is provided for passenger training to facilitate the uptake of bus travel by the elderly, disabled or culturally and linguistically diverse members of the community.

### **Individualised Assistance**

#### **Travel Training:**

Staff available for individual travel training when requested by individuals or groups, including nursing homes, schools, community groups, health facilities.

#### **TravelSmart:**

Recognising the success of TravelSmart programs in WA and QLD, we will participate in a State Government TravelSmart initiative if the opportunity arises.

## **NSW TRANSPORT CUSTOMER COMMITMENT**

### **Objective**

Deliver customer service in line with standards set by the NSW Transport Customer Commitment and reflect these standards in a customer charter.

### **Customer Charter**

Premier Illawarra will maintain a customer charter that outlines our commitments relating to customers, including commitments and initiatives detailed in the Passenger Relations Strategy.

The Customer Charter will be issued to customers and displayed in vehicles, and feature in company marketing. The Customer Charter will adhere to the standards set in the NSW Transport Customer Commitment.