**Friday 12 February**

**Virgin Trains wins at UK Rail Industry Awards 2016**

Virgin Trains has been recognised for its Automatic Delay Repay system at Rail Technology Magazine’s UK Rail Industry Awards 2016.

The judges awarded Virgin Trains ‘Service Innovation’ in the new ‘Product and Service Innovation’ category.

Automatic Delay Repay, a first for the industry, impressed the judges with its objective of improving efficiency and benefitting customers. Virgin Trains were commended for delivering an end-to-end unique solution in just eight months. Analysis suggests Automatic Delay Repay will lead to increased passenger growth, repeat journeys and a channel shift from customers booking on virgintrains.com, as well as an additional £2.8 million being paid to passengers in compensation within the first year, on top of the existing level of compensation. This is because many people simply do not claim at the moment, and is based on current website use and levels of previous delays.

John Sullivan, Chief Information Officer and Innovation at Virgin Trains, said: “We are delighted to be the first train company to automatically refund cash to our customers when they book through our website, and we are really proud to have won the Service Innovation Award. Since being introduced last year, our Automatic Delay Repay scheme has received a fantastic response from both customers and the rail industry and we’re already looking at ways we can build on this. At Virgin Trains the customer is at the heart of everything we do, so we strive to offer them the best possible experience and innovation is key to this.”

In October 2015, Virgin Trains became the first train company to introduce ADR, which calculates the money due to a customer in the event of a delay and automatically pays the compensation directly onto the card they used for purchase.

ADR is available to Virgin Trains customers travelling on the West Coast Mainline, who purchased their Advance tickets through [www.virgintrains.com](http://www.virgintrains.com) or the mobile app.

Virgin Trains was also a finalist in the Corporate Social Responsibility, Design Innovation Digital Pioneer, Infrastructure Planning, Mobile Technology and Outstanding Project categories.

ENDS

**Editor’s Notes**

**Restrictions**

ADR is initially only available:

* For journeys with Virgin Trains on the West Coast Mainline (we are looking at whether to introduce on Virgin Trains East Coast services as well).
* Against transactions processed through [www.virgintrains.com](http://www.virgintrains.com) or Virgin Trains app. Not available through Virgin Trains East Coast website or app. We do not have the payment details for people who book advance tickets through other providers so are unfortunately not able to include them in the scheme.
* Against Advance Ticket types where a specific trains has been booked – which allows the system to know if it has been delayed or not. (A seat reservation is not enough – the ticket must be for a specific train).
* Where we can be confident in the level of delay encountered. If you have a journey with multiple connections across different train operators you will not be eligible for ADR.

Delays for journeys not booked through the website/app, or for non-advance tickets, can still be claimed in the normal way.

**ADR in numbers**

3.5m customer journeys able to benefit – this is the current number of journeys bought through [www.virgintrains.com](http://www.virgintrains.com) in a year.

The amount paid in delay compensation is expected to rise by £2.8m in the next year as a result of ADR. £3.8m is expected to be paid out through ADR in total, but £1m of this represents claims that would have been made anyway.

**Virgin Trains Delay Repay Scheme**

If your train is delayed or cancelled, or a delay or cancellation of a Virgin train causes a delay to your overall journey, you may be entitled to claim compensation. Our Delay Repays scheme means that if you hold a ticket for a single or return journey you can claim compensation for a delay of 30 minutes or more, irrespective of what caused the delay.

If you are delayed by;

30 – 59 minutes – We will pay you compensation to the value of 50% of the cost of your single ticket or 50% of the cost of the relevant portion\* of your return ticket.

60 – 119 minutes – We will pay you compensation to the value of 100% of the cost of your single ticket or 100% of the cost of the relevant portion\* of your return ticket.

120 minutes or longer – We will pay you compensation to the value of 100% of the cost of your single ticket or 100% of the cost of your return ticket (i.e. both portions not just one way).

\*by ‘relevant portion’ we mean either the outward or return portion of a return ticket, depending upon whether you were delayed on your outward or return journey

NB: Delay Repay does not consider delays that are affected by, compounded by or have a consequence that involves other train operating companies.

We do not normally accept claims in cases where trains are delayed if you were notified of the delay before you purchased your ticket and you still decide to travel. We will, however, consider each case on its own merits.

**About Virgin Trains**

Virgin Trains is the brand name of Virgin Rail Group (VRG), which is owned by Virgin Group (51%) and Stagecoach (49%). Virgin Trains has operated the West Coast passenger train franchise since 1997, serving key UK cities including London, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool and Glasgow. In June 2014 the Department for Transport (DfT) awarded VRG a new franchise until at least April 2017.

Virgin Trains is committed to delivering a high speed, high frequency service, offering shorter journey times, more comfortable travel and excellent customer service. We provide the most frequent long-distance rail service in Europe (London - Manchester and London – Birmingham, both every 20 minutes).

Since 1997, Virgin Trains has introduced over 70 new trains at a cost of £1.5 billion. The service carries more than 34.5 million passengers a year and Virgin Trains employs approximately 3,290 staff.

Virgin Trains customers consistently rate the company as one of the top long-distance rail franchise operators in the National Passenger Survey (NPS) commissioned by industry watchdog “Passenger Focus”.

Visit the Virgin Trains Media Room - [www.virgintrains.co.uk/mediaroom](http://www.virgintrains.co.uk/mediaroom) - for the latest news, images and videos. Subscribe [here](http://www.mynewsdesk.com/follow/47939) for regular news from Virgin Trains.

Press Office: 0845 000 3333. Company website: [www.virgintrains.co.uk](http://www.virgintrains.co.uk).

**About Virgin Trains East Coast**

Virgin Trains East Coast is the brand name of InterCity Railways Ltd (ICR), which is owned by Stagecoach Group (90%) and Virgin Group (10%). Virgin Trains East Coast began operating services on the East Coast Main Line in March 2015, serving key UK cities including London, Peterborough, Doncaster, Leeds, York, Newcastle, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Inverness. The franchise will last until at least 31 March 2023.

Visit the Virgin Trains East Coast Media Centre at: [www.virgintrainseastcoast.com/media-centre](http://www.virgintrainseastcoast.com/media-centre) for the latest news and images.