

GNLRTAC Report Ref Complaint Staff behaviour

Summary

On Friday 8th July, the customer service team received a complaint from a customer relating to an alleged incident at Trent University Tram stop where she was approached by uniformed NET Staff who requested proof of her payment for travel. She claimed that NET staff became aggressive with her, leaving her feeling threatened and vulnerable and demanded an investigation. She further stated that she has used the tram service for over ten years and never had any previous issues or been issued with a fixed penalty. On receipt of the complaint an initial investigation was carried out which found there was no evidence to support the allegations. This was communicated with the complainant who then demanded a further investigation. Following a review of the available evidence, senior managers concluded that members of the NET team had acted appropriately while conducting their duties.

Details of incident

This incident occurred on Friday 8th July at Trent University Tram Stop with the customer disembarking a northbound tram approximately 1706.

There are two Tram stop CCTV cameras at this location, situated at the south end of both platforms facing north. Shown below is the default setting view of a still image from the evening, with the tram arriving in the northbound platform.



The camera on the southbound platform does not capture any footage of this event.

As can be seen from the still image, the NET Customer Experience Team were carrying out a Revenue operation to detect and prevent fare evasion at the Trent University Stop. There were 8 members of the team including a supervisor, with a mix of male and female staff. This was a busy time of day with lots of members of public around, both on board and on tram stop.

During this operation the team divides the work with some team members checking staff on board and some team members waiting on the platform to check any travellers disembarking at the stop for proof of purchase for their journey. Those without a valid ticket for their journey are issued a penalty fare notice.

Below a further still is shown with the complainant circled in red. She walks towards the north end of the platform. It can be seen she appears to be on the phone as she highlights in her complaint.



As she gets to the north end of the platform NET staff are asking to see all tickets and passes, which may have been perceived as a shout to get peoples' attention and to be prepared to show their tickets.

The complainant then changes direction heading to the south.



As shown in green a member of the NET team attempts to gain the attention of complainant to request their ticket. He appears to be ignored at this time. He later reports she had not spoken to him at this point and he then tries to alert other members of the team to the person appearing to avoid showing their ticket.

At 17:06 :45 the complainant is no longer visible on the tram stop CCTV, 30 seconds after disembarking.

There is then an exchange between NET Staff and the complainant, and a member of the NET team did stand in front of her to gain her attention after she ignored repeated requests to show her ticket. However, the NET team member states they were 2 feet apart and he denies touching the complainant. Other members of the NET team also state he stood in front of her but did not see any physical contact. During this exchange the complainant is again asked to show her ticket. In response the complainant says she did not have to show her ticket on a platform. It is reported by staff members that the complainant threatened to have anyone who touched her arrested.

This is an open network and quite an open area for someone to just walk away and, at this point the complainant walks away to the south, with the next tram arriving at 1708 staff return to the platform to check the next tram customers.

At no point does the complainant show a valid ticket and she has since repeatedly declined to show any proof that payment had been made for her journey.

Details of the Investigation

Following the event, the complainant makes initial contact with NET using our chatbot function which is a computer response generated response that can take key details at busy times to enable the Customer Services team to get in touch afterwards.

These allegations were investigated at the time by the team and the complainant was informed of those findings.

On receipt of further complaints on the handling of the initial investigation and its conclusions , NET's Head of Operations reviewed the evidence available, including; Tram stop CCTV footage, staff statements and Freshdesk communications with the complainant.

Note:

- Body Cam footage was not used as the interaction was not deemed aggressive on behalf of NET Staff.
- On Board tram footage was not obtained as it would not have captured any interaction

Conclusions

Although the complainant refused to show a valid ticket, no penalty fare was issued.

Despite extensive investigations there is no evidence to suggest that the complainant was touched by a member of the NET team. However, a staff member has been reminded not to stand in peoples' way to avoid anyone pushing into them.

It has also been confirmed that the complainant was not singled out during this operation as it targeted all customers.

NET fully acknowledge the complainant may have been distracted by an important phone call, however, NET reserve the right to request any customer travelling on the Network for a valid ticket for their travel.

End.