

## **UNREASONABLY PERSISTENT COMPLAINANTS POLICY**

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**February 2008**

British Waterways is a public corporation with responsibility to deploy the public resources invested in it efficiently and effectively. We recognise that from time to time BW may fall short of the expectations of customers and members of the public. This could be because we have failed, or been slow, to act ; it may be because a complainant's expectation of us goes beyond that which we are able to, or can deliver.

BW is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially and to providing those who make them with a proper and considered response. We have an established complaints procedure that is published and we do not normally limit the contact complainants have with us.

Occasionally, however, a complainant hinders BW's consideration of their, or other people's, complaints through their frequency of contact with us. We refer to such complainants as unreasonably persistent complainants and, exceptionally, we will take action to limit their contact with our organisation.

Any decision to restrict access to BW will be considered by the head of customer service and approved by a director. It will follow a prior warning to the complainant. Any restrictions imposed will be appropriate and proportionate. The options BW is most likely to consider are ;

- Requesting contact in a particular form (for example, letters only)
- Requiring contact to take place with a named person only
- Restricting telephone calls to specified days and times
- Asking the complainant to enter into an agreement about their future contacts with us

In all cases where we decide to treat someone as an unreasonably persistent complainant, BW will write to tell that complainant why we believe his or her behaviour falls into that category, what action we are taking and the duration of that action. We will also tell them how they can challenge the decision if they disagree with it. If we decide to carry on treating someone as an unreasonably persistent complainant and we are still investigating their complaint six months later, we will carry out a review and decide if restrictions should continue.

Where a complainant whose case is closed persists in communicating with BW about it, we may decide to terminate contact with that complainant. Any such decision would be reached following consideration by the head of customer service and requires approval by a director. In any such cases, we will read all correspondence from that complainant, but unless there is fresh evidence which affects our decision on the complaint we will simply acknowledge it or place it on the file with no acknowledgement.

Any new complaints from people who are deemed unreasonably persistent complainants, will be treated on their merits.

Simon Salem  
Marketing & customer service director