SUBMITTING EVIDENCE TO A SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT COMMITTEE

DATA PROTECTION FORM

Name:	**Robert Samson**
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Organisation: (if required)	**Transport Focus**
Topic of submission:	**Transport (Scotland) Bill**

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RURAL ECONOMY AND CONNECTIVITY COMMITTEE

TRANSPORT (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM Transport Focus

Introduction
Transport Focus is the independent public body set up by Government to protect the interests of Britain's rail passengers, England's bus and tram passengers outside London, and coach passengers in England on scheduled domestic services. Since March 2015 we have also represented the interests of users of the strategic road network in England. We are an independent body funded by the Department for Transport (DfT). We have developed working relationships with Transport Scotland, Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) and transport operators that has allowed us to extend our reach to bus, tram and ferry passengers in Scotland.

Our mission for rail is to get the best deal for passengers. With a strong emphasis on evidence based campaigning and research, we ensure we know what is happening on the ground. We use our knowledge to influence decisions on behalf of passengers and we work with the industry, passenger groups, governments and devolved transport authorities to secure journey improvements.

Bus Services
The Bill proposes to replace Bus Quality Partnerships with Bus Service Improvement Partnerships, replace Bus Quality Contracts with Local Service Franchises and in certain circumstances allow a local authority to provide local bus services.

The Bill sets out new and improved options for local authorities to improve the framework for delivering bus services. The framework must also deliver for the passenger and here we set out what should be included in franchise conditions (specifications and targets) and as points to implement in partnerships and local authority provided services

Improving punctuality and reliability - Bus passengers rank punctuality and running on time highly as priorities for improvement. Lateness of a bus arriving at a stop to start the journey causes more anxiety than a bus arriving late at the destination. Passengers can tolerate the arrival at the bus stop of departure up to five minutes late. After that satisfaction with punctuality decreases markedly, and again after 10 minutes. The new framework should:
- Have clear punctuality targets
- Have targets for improving average bus journey speeds
- Include a statement on monitoring performance and publishing data

Ensuring frequency and stability of bus times - Alongside punctuality, passengers want to know that the timetable doesn't change too frequently. Our research found that passengers did not think it was acceptable to make changes to services more than twice a year and more than six out of ten wanted to be given at least four weeks' notice of a major change. The new framework should ensure that:

- There are minimal changes to timetables
- There is a clear process for consulting and informing passengers of changes.

Building trust: engagement and consultation - Buses need to run on time, be reliable, deal well with disruption and offer value for money. Our research shows that building a relationship with passengers helps build loyalty and repeated use of services. Passengers should feel that the company really cares about what happens to them, especially during disruption, and is not remote and aloof. Drivers have an important role in showing empathy and care. The new framework should require operators to produce a passenger engagement strategy.

Monitoring passenger satisfaction to make improvements - It is important for operators and authorities to research (quantitatively and qualitatively) how satisfied passengers are with services both on the bus and at the stop. Transport Focus's Bus Passenger Survey provides such an independent assessment which could be used providing vital feedback on vital factors such as punctuality and cleanliness. A similar measure is used in rail to assess the passenger experience during both the ScotRail and Caledonian Sleeper franchise. Each framework should establish targets for service quality, how they will be measured and results published.

Passenger information in real-time - Real-time information displays are valuable in indicating to passengers when their bus will arrive, so reducing stress and anxiety and enabling them to make alternative plans when things go wrong. The Bill should make more data available for public use, so new frameworks set out, through an action plan, how they can provide real-time customer information – especially at bus stops and through developing apps.

Improving fares and ticketing - Better value for money is passengers' highest priority for improvement. It is also linked to getting a punctual, reliable serve and a seat in return for payment. Our research has found that passengers often have poor information on fares and ticketing and types of tickets, often relying on word or mouth or the bus driver. Younger passengers have distinct needs relying heavily on bus travel. They require service flexibility but also resent paying adult fares. Smart ticketing can help with some of these issues and the new arrangements should:
- Provide a central source of pre-journey information on fares, ticket types (including smart ticket availability) and bus routes
- Identify specific policies for 16-18 year olds, such as the range of tickets and price

Boosting the role of bus drivers - They are the face of the company providing the main contact with passengers. For a good passenger experience, they should provide a pleasant and professional service whether by providing information on disruption, delays, or ticket types, or settling disputes. Their role is essential. The new framework should therefore:
- Set standards of behaviour for drivers
- Provide training courses programmes that include customer service

Customer care and satisfaction - Despite the best intentions, things will go wrong from time to time. An effective complaints system makes it easy for passengers to know who to contact and a range of ways to do so; has efficient handling systems; and uses the resulting data to make improvements. The new framework should set out:

- Clear complaint handling processes and lines of responsibility
- How contact details will be publicised
- What response times will be and how they will be reported upon
- Clear guidance on where, when and how compensation will be offered.

Improving personal security - This features in our research both on the bus and at the stop, particularly for those with disabilities. The new framework should ensure that partners work together to deal with anti-social behaviour and that security is included in design guidelines for buses and stops.

Encouraging non and infrequent users - A key aim of the Bill is to increase bus use. Our research shows why current non-users don't use the bus: poor punctuality, failure to provide services when people want to travel (such as for work or a night out), length of journey and not knowing 'the system'. We found that 28 per cent of non-users would support a bus service. Therefore, operators should produce a strategy for boosting bus use.

Smart Ticketing

Passengers are increasingly coming to expect services to be delivered to them in smarter ways as technology becomes a bigger part of everyday life. We believe that the introduction of smarter ticketing in public transport could make life easier and cheaper for passengers. For this to happen though, it is essential that any smarter ticketing schemes are well designed and properly implemented.

In order to make sure that the passenger is at the heart of the development – that products are designed for ease of use rather than what is convenient to administer – we are working on a wide-ranging smart-ticketing research programme. The research is on-going, however, there are seven key factors that influence passengers' attitudes and views, that should be embedded in all smart ticketing initiatives.

Value for money - Value for money was a key influence on ticket choice at the moment, and remain as important when considering smart ticketing. Passengers expect that smart ticketing would involve some kind of cost saving either via cheaper fares or new cost-effective tickets and products.

Convenient - Smart ticketing needs to be a convenient option that is easy to use. Passengers want a ticketing system that made life easier, rather than complicating their journey. When thinking about convenience, passengers note that they would like a system where it is easy to purchase tickets, manage their smart ticket account and use their ticket.

Simple - Simplicity is important, especially for those unfamiliar with smart technology or smart ticketing. These people are most likely to need education

regarding how smart ticketing would work, and a simple system is likely to support them in moving to smart ticketing.

Secure – Passengers are concerned about the security of smart ticketing. When thinking about smartcards, concerns include the security of personal data – especially any details that will be printed and visible on the card. When thinking about mobile ticketing and Wave and Pay, many express concerns around the safety and security of their mobile phone or credit card, and the potential risk of theft when using these.

Flexible - Alongside a convenient and easy-to-use system, passengers want smart ticketing to be flexible. They want the ability to choose and purchase new products and tickets that offer flexible travel options. They also want flexibility with managing their smart ticketing account including being able to buy and load tickets onto their smartcard at a range of stations in advance and at the last minute.

Tailored - In addition to new products enabling passengers to tailor their smart ticket products to their needs, tailoring in managing their smart-ticket account is also desired. It is clear that many seek the ability to manage online, and via an app. Passengers noted that they would like to choose how they prefer to manage their account (online, app, text message), and would look for reassurances that this will be tailored to be compatible with the technology they own, for example Apple and Android compliant).

Leading edge: Passengers are clear that the introduction of smart ticketing is a shift into a more technology-focused way of ticketing. So they are keen that the technology used is forward-thinking. This is particularly important for those who are familiar with smart technology and smart ticketing, and who saw this as an opportunity for transport operators to lead the way in ticketing technology rather than replicate existing systems.