

## Quarterly Progress Report



<b>Team:</b>	Passenger Link
<b>Quarter:</b>	3
<b>Agenda Item:</b>	6.2.4
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### 1. Highlights

The paper attached provides an update on passenger facing work during Quarter 3 2009.

This comprises:

- progress by the Passenger Link Team against our agreed objectives
- a sample of the successes achieved, captured through our passenger ‘wins’ and ‘influence’ logs over this quarter
- an update on our organisation-wide rail passenger engagement log and wins log for quarter 3.

We recorded **7** new passenger ‘wins’ this quarter and published them onto the website as case studies (running total for the year = 31)

Our rail\* passenger engagement log for Quarter 2 2009 recorded: 9140 entries (2005 entries in Q1) – Q2 Report

Our rail\* passenger engagement log for Quarter 3 2009 recorded: 3789 entries (9140 entries in Q2) – Q3 Report

\*Please note: Bus passenger engagement is currently being captured separately during the pilots and is reported in the Bus Project Team update.

### 2. Issues

#### Arriva Trains Wales (ATW)

##### **1. Disruption** - South Wales Christmas engineering blockade

Work was undertaken with ATW and First Great Western (FGW) on arrangements for the Christmas blockade, focussing on passenger information and bus replacement arrangements. Work was completed on time.

**2. Signalling strike** – On-going monitoring of strikes by Network Rail signallers in South Wales area. Two six-day strikes have occurred so far. Minimal passenger disruption has resulted to date, but as has implications for all of Britain as this is about staff’s general terms and conditions.

**3. Unstaffed stations** – Work commenced on first stage of unstaffed stations research, with surveys conducted on two lines as part of NPS. Work will be completed by financial year-end and will be used to influence station schemes, particularly National Stations Improvement Programme (NSIP+).

## **C2C**

- 1. Performance** – C2C continues to deliver the highest levels of performance across the country.
- 2. Car Parking** – Following passenger concerns, successfully moderating and improving the car park ticketing products offered.
- 3. Franchise** – Pre-tender research undertaken and report submitted to Department for Transport (DfT) regarding the forthcoming re-franchising exercise whilst there were a range of recommendations, the main focus of the report was on punctuality and reliability of services and overcrowding at peak times.

## **Chiltern Railways**

- 1. Complaint Handling Review** – A review of complaints was undertaken and a report containing recommendations was provided.
- 2. Track Access Applications** – Two TAA's were commented upon, concerning the December 2009 timetable change and the other highlighting concerns about the proposed Evergreen 3 timetable which will impact on passenger journeys for those travelling to and from intermediate stations.
- 3. Station Facilities** – Agreement was secured to measure passenger perceptions of toilets. Questions are being finalised to be asked through a postcard campaign during Quarter 4. Schedule 17 changes to ticket office opening hours were also undertaken.
- 4. Disruption** – A meeting was convened with the Advertising and Promotions Manager to discuss their reaction to the 'Information during disruption best practice guide' and to gain an understanding of how they intend to comply with this.
- 5. Consultation meetings** – Meetings with Chiltern's passenger board and Cherwell Line Rail User Group (RUG) were also conducted.

## **CrossCountry**

- 1. Complaints Handling Review** – This report was completed and sent to the Train Operating Company (TOC) for comment.
- 2. Disruption** – Discussions were held with Directors on the impact of engineering works on the network. During this meeting, it was suggested that we may use them for further research on real time arrivals and departures.
- 3. Franchise** – Discussed DfT proposals with the TOC for moving current East Coast Edinburgh to Glasgow services to the CrossCountry franchise.
- 4. Consultation meetings** – Meetings with local passenger groups in Wales to discuss the business case for additional CrossCountry stops at Chepstow station were convened.
- 5. Passenger Priorities** – Consultation on the redevelopment of Birmingham New Street was undertaken to ensure CrossCountry passenger needs are appropriately considered.

## **East Coast**

- 1. Passenger Priorities with East Coast Main Line Franchise (ECML)** – Significant work has been undertaken with the ECML franchise particularly regarding timetabling, to ensure passengers and other interested stakeholders are aware of their opportunity to comment on the Franchise proposals. Passenger Focus has a slot at the stakeholder

consultation meetings that DfT are organising to outline our research findings and key recommendations.

#### **East Midlands Trains (EMT)**

- 1. Rail Utilisation Strategy (RUS) Response** – The response to the East Midlands RUS consultation has been submitted and circulated to the Board. Research to inform the East Midlands RUS regarding car parking issues has been completed with findings presented to the Options Appraisal Sub Group.
- 2. Passenger Priorities** – Work is continuing to improve passenger satisfaction with station facilities and environment, including the serious lack of passenger seating at St. Pancras station.
- 3. Value for Money** – Work to develop a consultation process with EMT over fares changes is ongoing, as are discussions about increasing passenger satisfaction with value for money.
- 4. Disruption** – Passenger Focus secured agreement from Stagecoach buses to accept EMTs passengers in the event of Peterborough to Spalding train cancellations; EMT Control have the necessary standing instructions.

#### **Eurostar**

- 1. Disruption** – Following the significant issues surrounding the delays and customer service failings resulting from the December train failures, meetings will be convened to discuss ‘lessons learned’ and their feedback in the New Year.

#### **First Capital Connect (FCC)**

- 1. Disruption** – Despite the Trade Union, ASLEF’s recommendation to accept FCC’s revised pay offer, this did not result in a full return to ‘normal’ levels of overtime working from 4 January. Approximately 30% of the Thameslink route services continue not to run, and the situation is being monitored closely.

#### **First Great Western (FGW)**

- 1. RUS Submission** – Following this submission, further analysis is being carried out by the RUS group reviewing a number of issues including, the demand on the Bristol/Gloucester corridor, and increased provision on the Bristol Metro/Severn Beach services, cross Exeter local services and proposed extensions and further reviews on several of the initial growth forecasts. The final document is due to be published on the 1st March 2010.
- 2. Disruption** – See ATW update.
- 3. Capacity** – Issues on short-forming in the West continue and a late night depot visit was carried out with two FGWs senior management team to discuss issues and meet staff involved in maintaining the local fleet. Capacity still remains a problem and units are still being hired in from ATW Wales to bolster the existing fleet.
- 4. Disruption** – SWT withdrew their services West of Exeter on the 16<sup>th</sup> December and the replacement FGW services seem to be working well.

#### **Grand Central**

- 1. Customer Service** – Passenger complaints have significantly reduced, largely due to improved Public Performance Measure (PPM), however, further work regarding

consistency of policy application and passenger feedback needs to be undertaken.

**2. Stations** – Following NPS results on the poor satisfaction on the management of stations by other TOCs, meetings have been facilitated with them in order to build relationships to tackle this issue.

**3. National Passenger Survey (NPS)** – Grand Central have confirmed their continuing involvement in NPS and a detailed feedback session for the next set NPS results has been planned for the New Year.

### **Hull Trains**

**1. NPS** - Hull Trains have been persuaded to take part in the National Passenger Survey.

**2. Consultation meetings** – Work has been undertaken with a local Rail User Group to ensure alternative transport was in place for passengers affected by temporary re-routing of Sunday services at December timetable change.

### **London Midland**

**1. Value for Money** – Response on London Midland's fare proposals was submitted.

We have discussed with their Senior Management, the DfT's remedial plan which was imposed by the DfT as a result of the train drivers opting not to volunteer to work on 6th September.

**2. Consultation** – Meeting between London Midland and Merseyrail to discuss the process of setting up a large 'e' passenger panel is planned.

**3. Disruption** – Meeting held with TOC's Service Manager to discuss the IPSOS MORI mystery shopper reports on disruption handling at Euston, in particular how passengers believe that crowd management and information provision can be improved. Passenger feedback will be fed into a meeting of all agencies with a responsibility for managing aspects of the station (Network Rail, Virgin, London Midland and BTP) with a view to improving the passenger experience.

### **London Overground**

Nothing significant to report this quarter.

### **MerseyRail**

**1. Consultation** – Discussions with MerseyRail's MD, Bart Schmeink, to identify how to improve 'On Train Customer Service' NPS ratings and presentations to the Liverpool Board meeting. Board meeting resulted in him being invited to meet with the Research Team to discuss comparator performance data from the wider business sector, outside of the rail industry.

**2. Customer Services** – Following discussions with MerseyRail's Customer Service Manager at the Liverpool Stakeholder event a joint meeting with Sue Tibbett is to be held to debate best practise in customer service training.

### **Northern**

**1.** Please refer to the report from previous Board meeting.

**2.** Significantly, Heidi Mottram, Northern MD who attended the Board meeting in December announced her departure from Northern. Therefore in addition to our ongoing work, we are awaiting her replacement.

### **National Express East Anglia**

**1. Franchise specification** - Work is currently dominated by the decision not to grant National Express an extension to 2014. Research is being undertaken to inform our response to DfT's consultation on the franchise specification, to start 1st April 2011. Provisional recommendations have been made based on existing research, focusing on the need to improve punctuality. Letter submitted to Iain Coucher (Network Rail) regarding the engineering overrun that severely disrupted the morning peak into Liverpool Street on Monday 4th January. Work on station standards action plans have been agreed at four key stations, work to improve passenger information during disruption and ticket office opening hours adherence continues.

### **ScotRail**

- 1. New Rolling Stock** – Finalising a research proposal with Transport Scotland (match-funding) to undertake qualitative research on passengers' needs and opinions on new and existing rolling stock, currently operated by ScotRail. Planned for March, this will help inform decision-making for the operation between Glasgow Queen Street to Edinburgh following electrification.
- 2. Performance** – Reporting of train performance by line of route is currently an issue being discussed with ScotRail. It is hoped that a trial of reporting their performance figures on their website will be undertaken.

### **Southeastern Railway**

- 1. RUS** – Submission provided on Kent RUS prior to the publication of the document by Network rail.
- 2. Timetabling** – Liaising with TOC on residual passenger concerns following the introduction of the new timetable which has integrated high speed services with the existing classical services.
- 3. Disruption** – Following the winter disruption, meetings will be arranged to discuss the poor information provided during this period and the issues this caused passengers.

### **Southern**

- 1. New franchise** – This commenced 20th September. There has been significant transition during handover to the Executive team to ensure delivery mechanisms set out were achieved. Their new structure has resulted in staff changes and new relationships are being developed to ensure the operation minimises issues for passengers.
- 2. Consultation** – Meetings held with the new Acting Head of Communications and with staff involved with development of 30 station travel plans, the introduction and refurbishment of additional rolling stock and the Station Showcase scheme.
- 3. Timetabling** – Work undertaken on problems arising from the December 2008 changes, which saw Extended Gatwick Express services running to and from Brighton in the morning and evening peak and also had knock-on impacts on related routes.
- 4. Service Changes** – New proposals for the East Coastway services between Brighton and Ashford were released and responses will be assessed in January 2010.

### **South West Trains**

**1. Staffing** – SWT has appointed a new MD; Andy Pitt and efforts are underway to develop a positive relationship to help improve relationships with this TOC.

### **TransPennine Express**

**1. Franchise renewal** – Renewal due in February 2012 and discussions are underway with DfT to discuss their plans for franchise renewal and our role in researching passenger priorities.

**2. Over-crowding** – We commenced a joint video project with Northern to highlight crowding issues in North of England, which included interviewing passengers at Bolton, Manchester Piccadilly and Leeds stations and filming ‘on trains and platform’ overcrowding.

**3. Consultation** – Meeting held with Community Rail Humber to discuss aspirations for 5<sup>th</sup> hourly TPE service on the North route planned before 2014.

**4. Relationship management** – Undertook the judging of the annual Customer Service Excellence Awards and attended presentation ceremony.

### **Virgin**

**1. Fares & station facilities** – Following their plans to close Stafford station travel centre, discussions were held on the impact of this decision on passengers queuing times, seeking advice or purchasing advance tickets and as a result, Virgin have now agreed to keep the travel centre open.

**2. Customer Services Training** – Discussions were held to help develop a training package for ‘front of house station staff’ aimed at improving customer service and staff visibility.

**3. Franchise** – Passenger Focus’ Chairman, CEO, Rail Director and PLM attended a meeting with Virgin’s CEO, Tony Collins and Communications Director, Arthur Leathley to discuss Virgin’s ideas for the new West Coast Franchise.

**4. Stations Improvement Programme** - PLM accompanied Lord Adonis on part of his stations tour to show him how Preston, Wigan NW and Warrington Bank Quay stations are not meeting passenger needs.

**5. Disruption** – Discussions held with Virgin’s lead manager for improving passenger information during disruption and discuss suggestions for improvement to information and customer service.

### **Wrexham and Shropshire Railway**

Nothing significant to report.