

Minutes

Statistics Governance Group

Date: Wednesday 10 February 2010

Location: Room 3, Ground Floor
Whittles House
London N1 9HF

Time: 13.30hrs – 15.30hrs

Present

Committee Members

Colin Foxall CBE	CF	Chairman
Nigel Walmsley	NW	Board Member
Dr Derek Langslow CBE	DL	Board Member
Phil Davis	DL	Board Member

Executive

Anthony Smith	AS	Chief Executive
Ian Wright	IW	Head of Research
David Greeno	DG	Passenger Researcher
Jon Carter	JCa	Head of Corporate Services
Joel Braniff	JB	Corporate Services Officer

1. Welcome and Apologies

The chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone present.

2. Minutes

The Group **approved** the minutes of the meeting held 18 November 2009 and authorised the Chairman to sign them. CF stated that the minutes from the meeting held in July had yet to be signed and expressed concern they did not represent an accurate record of meeting. The Group agreed that a separate discussion would need to take place to rework the minutes before they can be signed off by the board.

SGG 33	10/02/2010	July 2009 SGG Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">JCa to organise review of minutes from SGG July 2009	JCa	Before Next meeting
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Minutes

3. Action Matrix

The Group noted the following action points:

No.	Meeting	Issue	Action	Responsibility	Due Date	Status
SGG 17	20/05/09	Proposed Questions for NPS Autumn Wave 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A more strategic approach to inviting and dealing with questions to be developed 	DG/MH	Autumn 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussions held with BTP, some questions added Complete. Delete
SGG 18	20/05/09	BMTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss further options with DfT and stakeholders in respect of BMTS 	IW	Feb 2011	<p>Positive discussions with Stakeholders have taken place, & liaison ongoing. Major changes intended for early 2011</p>
SGG 21	29/07/09	Stakeholder Meeting Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting dates to be circulated to group members 	JCa	Jan 2010	<p>Meetings scheduled for 23/2/10 and 27/7/10. Complete. Delete</p>
SGG 22	29/07/09	Bus Stakeholder Board Terms of Reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be reviewed and updated and sent out to the stakeholder members 	SK/JCa	Jan 2010	<p>Chairman to review terms of reference</p>
SGG 24	18/11/09	'Officials'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek proposal from DfT regarding officials 	SK	Feb 2010	<p>Internal audit have confirmed that their term 'officials' used in the report refers to the group of DfT staff. Passenger Focus Staff and TOC Staff who were provided with an early view of NPS report.</p> Complete. Delete
SGG	18/11/09	Official	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update our 	IW/JCa	Feb	Update provided by

Minutes

No.	Meeting	Issue	Action	Responsibility	Due Date	Status
25		Statistics	position on Official Statistics		2010	JCa. See item 9. Complete. Delete
SGG 26	18/11/09	NPS Rolling Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update NPS Action Plan 	Research Team	Feb 2010	See agenda item 4
SGG 28	18/11/09	NPS Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance on suggesting appropriate questions for NPS 	IW	Feb 2010	Guidance accepted in principal by group but more work required. Complete.Delete
SGG 29	18/11/09	Presentation of Route Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research to discuss with AS on the best way to discuss with or involve ATOC with regards to the presentation of route data 	Research Team	Feb 2010	Confirmed by AS as part of work plan 2010-11
SGG 30	18/11/09	Fieldwork Checking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formalise Fieldwork Checking Process 	IW	Feb 2010	Checking process formalised by research team Complete.Delete
SGG 31	18/11/09	Heathrow Connect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact ORR re: Heathrow Connect 	AS/DG	Feb 2010	AS to follow up. DG to formulate paragraph stating our position
SGG 32	18/11/09	FGW re: Heathrow Connect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact FGW re: Heathrow Connect results and tell them that we are going to speak to ORR 	DG	Feb 2010	Completed by DG Complete.Delete

NPS G17 – IW reported that a positive discussion regarding NPS questions had been held with the British Transport Police. A mutual solution had been reached; some of the survey questions have been adjusted and the BTP would also consider which issues they would like to prioritise. Extra questions may be included in the autumn wave but these would be subject to further discussions. DL noted that he was uneasy about questions being included that refer specifically to the BTP as this would open the door to other organisations asking for

questions to be included, something Passenger Focus would find very hard to resist. CF accepted the issue would have to be managed carefully but felt it is important for Passenger Focus to work with the BTP as they are a part of the wider railway family. The Group **agreed** that the NPS was a useful benchmark for the BTP and we should certainly encourage their efforts in improving passenger security, but **noted** DL's remaining objection to the inclusion of some questions.

NW questioned whether NPS surveys are carried out on Saturdays after football matches as this takes up a significant amount of BTP resources, as well as potentially affecting findings. The Group agreed that this may need to be reviewed at a later date.

The Group **approved** the principles governing appropriate questions for inclusion in the NPS, and suggested this document was corporate-styled for referral whenever necessary. The Group discussed and **noted** the arrangements in place for NPS fieldwork spotchecks.

4. NPS action Plan

The Group noted good progress on implementing the Official Statistics Action Plan. Of particular note were:

Principal I – The Group agreed that discussions at the stakeholder advisory boards should be published, starting from the next meeting in February. CF noted that we should think about how these are presented and it was **agreed** that it might be better for minutes to be reworked into a newsletter or similar. AS felt the statement relating to how statistics are used was too narrow and would need to be expanded. This was **agreed** by the Group.

Action(s)

SGG 34	10/02/2010	publishing s/b minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal required 	JCa	Next meeting
SGG 35	10/02/2010	Statement on how statistics are used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be reviewed and agreed with MT and brought back to Group 	IW	Next meeting

Principle II – the group **agreed** to a NPS review during 2010. It was agreed that this shouldn't be 'announced' formally but stakeholders (via the SH board) should be made aware that it will take place. A scoping document should be developed for further discussion at the next meeting, based on the principle of a clear **distinction** between a **technical review**, for which we would need external support, and a **user review**. CF noted that the NPS would be used increasingly to monitor franchises and therefore carrying out our own user review would demonstrate that we are committed to proactively ensuring the survey always remains fit for purpose.

Action

SGG 36	10/02/2010	NPS review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scoping document required setting out above principle 	IW	Next meeting
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Principle III – a draft declaration relating to protection from political pressure etc is to be reviewed at the next meeting.

Action

SGG 36	10/02/2010	Protection declaration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be developed and agreed with MT and brought back to Group 	JCa IW	Next meeting
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Principle IV – The group **endorsed** the NPS quality guidelines presented by DG and recommended that they are uploaded on to the website.

Principle V – it was noted that the substantial work undertaken by JCa as SIRO on information security and risk should be directly transferrable to NPS information assets. JCa and IW would collaborate before the next meeting to drive progress on this principle.

Action

SGG 37	10/02/2010	Data security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mapping exercise required re information risk and NPS information assets 	JCa IW	Next meeting
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Principle VIII - It was noted that there was some confusion in respect of compliance between legal deposit (for publications) and the depositing of underlying statistics and methodologies.

Action

SGG 38	10/02/2010	Legal deposit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requirements to be reviewed and agreed with MT and brought back to Group 	SK	Next meeting
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5. NPS Risk Register

B-01

The group noted that Personnel risk remains high. IW confirmed that a researcher would be appointed soon to provide cover for DG.

B-04

The group were satisfied that the controls in place for risk relating to data verification are effective but would need to be reviewed for the next NPS wave. The group also requested that a list of standard cuts for NPS data be published.

SGG 39	10/02/10	NPS 'Cuts'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish standard cuts for NPS data 	DG	April 2010
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B-06 – The residual impact value for Data Use has reduced to 6 and the group were satisfied with the controls in place

6. Autumn Wave Update

DG provided an update of the NPS results from the Autumn wave 2009. He noted one significant change; the proportion of passengers satisfied with value for money for the price of the ticket was down to 45% compared to 46% for the autumn wave 2008. The group agreed that the results would not provide significant concern for operators, although passenger satisfaction may not be as high for the next wave bearing in mind recent disruption caused by the weather.

7. Spring Wave 2010 update

DG confirmed that the same TOCs would be included in the Spring Wave 2010, as well as including Hull Trains on a trial basis. DG also reported that the sleeper survey had generated a lower response than expected. CF suggested that the sample size could be increased by combining results from different waves to produce a generalized indication of satisfaction. IW also reported that funds are available to boost the spring 2010 sample size slightly. This may be an one off increase as sufficient funds may not be available for subsequent waves. The Group **approved** the one-off boosting of sample sizes on the basis of the proposals presented by IW.

8. Indemnity clauses and provisions

JCa presented the group with a summary of all clauses in the Contract for the Provision of the NPS, the research Framework agreement and the pre qualification questionnaire. It was **agreed** by the group that sufficient measures are in place to protect Passenger Focus against possible litigation initiated by a TOC and that reasonable insurance provision had been arranged as evidenced by Continental's commercial policy schedule. CF noted, and the Group **agreed** that we may need to seek further protection from government if NPS performance is woven more deeply into franchise monitoring regimes.

9. NPS and other official statistics.

Minutes

The Group **endorsed** the position of Passenger Focus as a provider of Official Statistics in relation to the National Passenger Survey, and National Statistics for the Bus Mystery Traveller Survey and Bus Passenger Satisfaction Survey as set out in section 3 (a) of JCa's paper. The group restated its position that all other research undertaken in support of Passenger Focus's business objectives falls outside the scope of the National Statistics code. The Group was **satisfied** with the reponse to the internal audit of official statistics (section 3 (f)) and also accepted repositibility for monitoring of agreed management actions arising from report.

10. BMTS and BPSS Retender

IW confirmed that the Bus Mystery Traveller Survey and Bus Passenger Satisfaction Survey would be recommisioned for a further 12 months. The additional funding required (bridging the gap between what it costs and what the DfT paid for it) will be covered by our internal bus budget. In the long term IW anticipated that the two bus surveys would be combined to create one larger, more comprehensive and arguably more useful survey. The Group agreed that a major stakeholder exercise over the next few months was essential. It **approved** the 12 month extensions to the two contracts and noted that financial approval from the Board would be sought the following week.

IW reported that the quarter two report and annual report both contained mistakes arising from poor data analysis. Although the mistakes were minor, the group agreed that it was imperative that we maintain the highest possible standards in our research to avoid putting our reputation at unnecessary risk. It was further agreed however that being open and honest in this situation was the best course of action and gave credit to the staff who had brought the errors to light.

The meeting closed at 15.15hrs

Signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting:

Colin Foxall CBE
Chairman

Date