



Making a difference for all passengers

August 2010

More than 120,000 passengers told Passenger Focus what they think of their services over the past year which has been used to benchmark the industry's performance and delivery. Passenger Focus has also published various research reports which have led to significant changes within the industry.

Anthony Smith, chief executive, Passenger Focus said: "As the independent passenger watchdog, Passenger Focus's job is to make a difference. Passenger Focus bases its work on what passengers tell us about current services and their priorities for improvement. That research, including the National Passenger Survey and the Bus Passenger Survey, helps drive change for consumers."



Some of Passenger Focus's recent successes:

- Persuading the Government to limit fare rises on regulated tickets to put an end to double-digit fare rises on 'protected' fares in January 2010
- Lobbying the rail industry to reduce the number of rail-replacement buses used during engineering work by running trains instead and securing a pledge from the industry to do this
- Secured, following our research, numerous local improvements to bus services including better bus stops, timetable information, websites and driver training
- Research found that some rail passengers find ticket machines difficult to use. This research has already led to many improvements on how ticket machines display ticket validity and route information and choices, and we are now working with the industry on more radical simplification.
- Measuring rail ticket office queues which found a number of cases where queues exceeded the industry's own guidelines of five minutes queuing in the peak and three in the off-peak. This has led to a renewed industry focus on how queues are monitored and managed and we will continue to survey this key area.
- Secured in the course of campaigning on South West Trains' ticket office opening times, a Government guideline that when 12 or more tickets an hour are sold then a particular office will not be considered for closure at that time
- Seeking the views of more than 54,000 rail passengers about their train journeys through the National Passenger Survey. Problem areas are identified with train companies and Network Rail, and are addressed through action plans. A priority this year has been dealing with delays but we have also secured significant wins with increased levels of personal security, information during disruption, station facilities and staff training.
- Seeking the views of more than 30,000 bus passengers about their bus journeys. This research has helped Passenger Focus prepare for its new remit of representing bus, coach and tram passengers. The results have been fed back to bus companies and local authorities leading to many changes.

- Asking passengers about the new generation of inter-city and Scottish trains and feeding this into the design process to help ensure interior layouts are closely moulded around passenger needs
- Testing the rail industry's Assisted Passenger Reservation Service (APRS) used by passengers needing assistance. The findings from this research have driven improvements to the system and we will do further mystery shopping this year.
- Asking rail passengers about improvements needed on East Coast, East Anglia and c2c services. These results will be fed into the franchise re-letting process and we will try to persuade Government to include many of these priorities in the new franchise.
- Helping over 3400 rail passengers with unresolved complaints
- Undertaking research asking passengers about their needs and concerns during construction work at King's Cross station
- Asking rail passengers about their priorities for improvement and feeding this into industry timetable planning processes for Kent, Sussex, East Midlands and Great Western routes
- Holding 30 meetings where passengers can meet and question senior rail and bus industry representatives over performance and planning
- Our reports 'Passenger perceptions of Personal Security' and 'Anti Social Behaviour report: Rail passenger views' helped encourage British Transport Police to put staff visibility at the core of their business planning.

Colin Foxall, Passenger Focus chairman, said: "Passenger Focus works in a simple, cost effective, responsive way. We ask passengers what they think of services and we publish the results. Our nationwide team of staff work with operators and government to make a difference. How do we know if it is working? We go back again to resurvey and check progress - so passengers really are driving change."



“Passenger Focus will continue making a difference for passengers over the next 12 months. We will focus on key passenger concerns: more buses and trains arriving on time, value for money, getting a seat and information during rail disruption”, Anthony Smith, chief executive, Passenger Focus



We have strived for improved services for Scottish and Welsh rail passengers this year. Their views form an integral part of the National Passenger Survey and have dedicated managers and board members working on their behalf.