

Sep 12 BM 8.0

Statistics Governance Group

Date: Wednesday 20 June 2013
Location: One Drummond Gate
Pimlico
London SW1V 2QY
Time: 1310hrs – 1530hrs

Present

Colin Foxall CBE	CF	Chairman
Nigel Walmsley	NW	Board Member
David Leibling	DL	Board Member
Anthony Smith	AS	Chief Executive
Ian Wright	IW	Head of Research
David Sidebottom	DS	Passenger Team Director
Jon Carter	JC	Head of Business Services
David Greeno	DG	Senior Passenger Advisor
Murray Leader	ML	Research Advisor

Guests

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted no apologies

2. Minutes

The Group approved the minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2012 and authorised the Chairman to sign them.

3. Action matrix

The action matrix was noted as 'complete delete' except for those items covered on the agenda

National Rail Passenger Survey

4. Improving response rates

The Group reviewed the BDRC Continental report on the post card test conducted as part of the Spring wave. It was noted that the response rate of 1.7% for completed questionnaires was very disappointing and the Group therefore **agreed** with the recommendations which included that no further consideration should be given to pursuing this option again. The Group took some comfort from the fact that young people are prone to not participating in this kind of survey and they become more inclined to do so as they get older.

5. Non participation survey

6. New questionnaire format

The Group reviewed the BDRC Continental report on non participation conducted as part of the Spring wave. An emerging issue was demographic weighting, since the NPS weighted by journey rather than by people, although the NPS review had concluded this was perfectly appropriate. A longer term aim should be to be able to achieve greater granularity on ethnicity. Noting the comparison with the NRTS in terms of age (in particular youth) and gender, the Group nevertheless felt that more work was needed to address concerns in both these areas. The Group also **agreed** that keeping up the response rates was the priority in the meantime, especially with 15 year franchises with performance arrangements tied into the NPS. The Group **agreed** with the recommendations, noting that the survey should not get any longer but that equally tinkering should also be avoided. It also concluded that panel based surveying was not appropriate to the NPS.

SGG 49	20/06/12	Maintaining response rates	Further options to be developed	IW	Dec 12	
SGG 50	20/06/12	NPS review	Check for any outstanding actions	DG	Dec 12	
SGG 50A	20/06/12	Gender and age	Options to be developed to address concerns in these areas	DG/IW	Dec 12	

7. Spring Wave fieldwork checks

DG reported that 20 spot checks had been attempted during the Spring wave, covering 17 out of 155 fieldworkers. Whilst there was obviously supervision of fieldworkers by BRDC Continental, the Group felt that the level of checking was now so low that it was approaching the limits of validity, both in terms of the number and geographical spread of shifts. The Group accepted that with fewer staff it was difficult to cover more.

SGG 51	20/06/12	Fieldwork checks	Explore options for improving the number and spread of checks	DG	Dec 12	
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8. Sampling and weighting update

DG reported on current activities with regard to sampling plans and reweighting which were updated every two years. These are based on ORR data. Profiles with respect to journey purpose and days of travel were also being checked. The contract to produce annual stations usage estimates is being retendered by ORR.

Bus passenger survey

9. BPS business case

IW reported that indications were that the three year BPS business case was getting closer to being signed off by DfT.

10. Methodological overview

ML presented his report on the underlying BPS methodology which so impressed the Group that a request was made for a presentation to the full board later in the year. A methodology summary has been made available on the website by way of ensuring that it was fully, publicly, understandable. The Group were particularly keen to review the response rates per fieldwork shift and the expectation of improvement as GfK settles in to the survey.

SGG 52	20/06/12	BPS methodology	Present to Board	ML	September 2012	
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11. BPS funding model

ML introduced his report on funding arrangements and how 'rules' could work in respect of industry partners. The survey was growing and it was important that it was properly regulated.

So far, the approach had been largely reactive, in which we responded to requests from the industry. Nonetheless, in the 2010-11 survey year £180,000 of boost funding was secured on top of the £240,000 Passenger Focus budget. Whilst Passenger Focus had always planned to be a minority funder (although probably the largest single contributor) the success in attracting boost funding now meant that some ground rules were required. These extended to sampling, where areas with more than 100m, between 10m and 100m, and less than 10m journeys would be subject to 800, 600 and 400 surveys respectively.

The issue of central / project management costs was discussed, and why some or all of these were not recharged. It was agreed that not all such costs could be recharged, but that the establishment of a PaxCo may provide a mechanism for recovery. This would be important if we were to encourage longer term funding relationships.

The Group felt on balance that principles were preferable to rules, and asked ML to consider what these might be. This should be done sooner rather than later, and certainly well before the Group next met. The Group commended ML on his proposals and analysis.

SGG 53	20/06/12	Funding arrangements	Develop principles	ML	September 2012	
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Signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting:

Colin Foxall CBE
Chairman

Date: _____