

Board Meeting Paper	
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Report for	Decision Information <input type="checkbox"/> Information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Restricted or confidential Information?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If confidential, protective marking ¹	
Date of Meeting	Wednesday 19 September 2012
Agenda Item	6.0
Report Title	Review of national issues, priorities and objectives
Sponsor	Mike Hewitson
Author(s)	Mike Hewitson



1. Work plan 2011-12 – Progress and forward look

This report is for the first quarter of 2012-13 (April – June)

Key Themes - Bus, Coach and Tram

Punctuality (Mike Bartram)

- Passenger Focus has had direct discussions with operators in Derby, Hertfordshire and Southampton; elsewhere local authorities have approached the operators on our behalf. A total of 19 routes have now been identified across the five local authorities with whom we are working directly, and a further ten in the PTE areas. The routes give good coverage of both commercial and tendered services. Some areas are well advanced, have started to analyse data and even identified and started to introduce interventions. Some, however, have been slower to respond. One of the principle issues is the availability of robust data to quantify delays and show patterns of delays.
- *Looking ahead to Qtr 2:* Meeting of the Project Steering Group on 3 July; progress report to the Bus Partnership Forum chaired by the Minister later that month.

Accountability – bus cuts

- Draft report of the ‘consultation toolkit’ produced and circulated for comments to external contributors.
- *Looking ahead to Qtr 2:* Finalise draft and publish

Bus service disruption (Guy Dangerfield)

- *Looking ahead to Qtr 2:* During Qtr 2 we will specify research to understand the impact of delays and cancellations on bus passengers and explore what would help them in these circumstances. Guy Dangerfield has had exploratory meetings with various bus industry managers and more are planned to establish what, if any, research exists in this area already, gather views about key areas to probe in the research etc. Research to commence Quarter 3.

¹ ie RESTRICTED plus COMMERCIAL / POLICY / STAFF / PERSONAL PROTECT

Key Themes – Rail

Accountability / Transparency (Sharon Hedges)

- We met with ORR to discuss next steps on the transparency agenda and their work towards a consultation document to be issued during Q2. We maintained calls for greater transparency through our franchise and industry planning submissions.
- *Looking ahead to Qtr 2:* Respond to ORR consultation on transparency.
The National Taskforce has established a working group looking at the publication of ‘right time’ train performance information, on which Guy Dangerfield has represented Passenger Focus. Right time data for the last 10 years was published in July by the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) and Network Rail, but only at ‘sector’ level (i.e. long-distance, London and South East and regional) and only measured at a train’s destination. It has been agreed (with considerable reluctance in the TOC community) that the industry must go further and give passengers insight to punctuality at intermediate stations, not just destination, and that passengers should be able to see the performance of individual trains. National Rail Enquiries (NRE) is developing a proposal, subject to funding, to present historic train running information. Passenger Focus was invited to provide insight to how passengers wanted ‘right time’ information presented. Research is currently underway in a three-way funded project (us, ORR and NRE) to do just that. Initial findings will be available mid October 2012.

Disruption (Guy Dangerfield)

This theme encompasses both unplanned and planned disruption:

Unplanned:

- Guy Dangerfield’s programme of presenting research findings to the industry has now finished – presentations to Chiltern, CrossCountry and Scotrail took place in recent months.
- We have continued to highlight the key findings to the teams preparing bids for the Greater Western, Thameslink/Great Northern and Essex Thameside franchises.
- We completed research into passengers’ attitudes towards and experiences of using social media when travelling by rail and launched “short and tweet” on 28 June 2012. For the launch we invited key representatives from train companies to a presentation of the findings, followed by a discussion session facilitated by Anthony Smith. The approach was very well-received.
- We have continued to work with Network Rail on how they will measure, for the elements that are within their control, if the handling of unplanned service disruption is improving.
- *Looking ahead to Qtr 2:* on this subject, we have moved from the active ‘selling’ of research messages to more of an encouraging progress role. This is important to guard against complacency within the industry that the issue is “sorted”, particularly after a mild winter and after the flurry of activity related to the new licence conditions has died down. Where we can still add value we will continue to engage with individual TOCs and Network Rail, and will continue to highlight the issue in meetings with bidders for new franchises. Although we are not planning new research if snow and ice causes major disruption, we will gear up to get a sense of whether past problems recur or whether there has been genuine progress.

Planned:

- The new research into passengers' attitudes to and needs during engineering-related disruption is complete and will be published shortly.
- We continue contributing to discussions about improving the way the industry measures the level of engineering-related disruption to passenger services, an initiative that will lead to a new measure sitting alongside the Possessions Disruptions Index – Passenger (PDI-P).
- We continue to challenge train companies and Network Rail to ensure that timetable information is correct in online systems 12 weeks ahead and are exploring with Network Rail how to achieve greater transparency in this area.
- *Looking ahead to Qtr 2:* Publish Engineering work research and sell' key messages to train companies, Network Rail and bidders for new franchises. All other work continues: finalising the process to involve Passenger Focus earlier in discussions about the passenger impact of particular engineering tasks; discussions about a new measure; and highlighting incidences of incorrect timetable information in the public domain.

Fares, ticketing and value for money (Jocelyn Pearson)

- Fares and ticketing response and summary of Passenger Focus research and recommendations published and distributed. This has also allowed us once again to raise issues with TVM and webs sites at a national level.
- Some bid teams have outlined ambitious changes to ticket machines, and ATOS have started to share the development of their new products with us.
- Some changes have been made on the ground. To help this along Anthony has written to TOC MDs and groups reminding them what we have asked for and advising that next year we will be undertaking an audit to ascertain progress.
- We are engaged in ongoing work to with ATOC, to improve information provided to passengers at the point of ticket purchase e.g. ticket formats.
- Our report, "Ticket to Ride?" has been launched and well received. We have had several meetings with ATOC to press our views on the content of the proposed code of practice.
- We have also used the report in our work with franchise bid teams pressing for changes in revenue protection, and improved retailing. Work with TOCs has commenced.

Regulatory and Consumer Protection (Jocelyn Pearson)

- We continue to meet ORR on a regular basis. We have presented our "Ticket to Ride?" report linking it to earlier work around the complexity of retailing. We argue that if restrictions and conditions are complex, and information is not available or clear, then some passengers will make unintentional mistakes. ORR is considering the legal position.

Influencing National Issues

2014-19: High Level Output Statement/Periodic Review 2013/ Control Period 5.

- *Looking ahead to Qtr 2:* comment on/respond to HLOS publication (July).

Franchising (Sharon Hedges)

- Continued liaison with DfT and bidders on Great Western (GW), Essex Thameside (ET), East Coast (EC), Thameslink, Southern, Great Northern (TSGN) and Southeastern (SER) franchises. (Engagement also included a meeting with Richard Parry, First West Coast MD designate).
- We submitted our formal consultation response to ET and also provided initial comments on East Coast and TSGN/SER franchises.
- Developed proposals for methodology for enhanced NPS assessments within ET, GW and TSGN contracts.
- Commissioned and ran Northern /TPE focus group research, with DfT and TfGM in attendance at initial sessions.
- Presented and discussed implications of Futures study findings with senior members of DfT franchise team.
- Presented FCC/SER research findings to TL consortium and at DfT stakeholder consultation events.
- Raised handling of Legacy complaints with DfT following problems after transfer of Greater Anglia franchise.
- *Looking ahead to Qtr 2:* initial discussions with DfT on Greater Anglia (Long) and Transport Scotland on next Scottish franchise, publication of Northern/TPE research, increasing engagement with PTEs/TfL on devolution, consultation responses on TSGN, SER and East Coast.

2. National passenger issues – additional information

- Responded: to House Commons Transport Inquiry on competition in the local bus market; Welsh Affairs Committee on cross Border connectivity; DfT consultation on rail decentralisation; and OFT consultation on bus mergers.
- Creation of accessibility 'handbook' (background to in-house accessibility training).
- Monitoring availability of (non-games) Advance tickets during the Olympics.
- We have been approached by DfT regarding rail timetabling for sporting and cultural events.
Discussion paper attached for members approval in private session.