

Passenger Focus Annual Conference 2008

Delivering a modern railway - questions for the panel

Question 1

Name: Christopher Irwin

Organisation/region: TravelWatch South West

Question: Will the railway be better still if growth drops away?

Question 2

Name: John Friedberger

Organisation/ region: Railfuture/Wessex

Question: The industry's aim for 92.6% punctuality by 2014 sounds great, but 1 in 12 trains will still be late. How does 92.6% compare with Swiss, German and Netherlands railways? (not including France as frequent strikes bedevil good TGV services).

Question 3

Name: Andrew Long

Organisation/region: Commuters Association/London/East midlands

Question: There is presently a conflict at Bedford where rail passengers to/from London St Pancras and also to/from the East midlands are to suffer service reductions on long distance East Midlands Trains services (Dec' 08 timetable) as a consequence of the new stagecoach franchise. How can these conflicts be reconciled?

Question 4

Name: Elisabeth Townsend

Organisation/region: Northampton Rail User's Group

Question: The 2008/9 timetable appears to favour North England/Scotland to the disadvantages of passengers everywhere South of Warrington. What can be done to readdress the balance?

Question 5

Name: Mark Thomas

Organisation/region: East Cheshire Lines Rail User Group

Question: It is clear that significant disruption including replacement bus services on working days will occur in the next 12 months to complete the West Coast modernisation. We believe this has reached the point where a cross train operating company/industry communication function is required to provide comprehensive messages to passengers – as was the case in the earlier phases of the project. This function was previously managed effectively by the Strategic Rail Authority.

Question 6

Name: Bryan Frost

Organisation/region: East Suffolk Traveller's Association Felixstowe

Question: How should train operating companies be striking better deals with Network Rail in respect of providing better arrangements when there is planned disruption e.g. weekend engineering works and the quality/quantity of substitute transport and passenger information?

Question 7

Name: Richard Pout

Organisation/region: Institute of Logistics and Transport Rail Group/ Railfuture London

Question: With the knowledge that Government budgets are to be cut; what do the panel see as the best use of funds to boost capacity, support sustainability and/or make trains more affordable?

Question 8

Name: Peter Wakefield

Organisation/region: Railfuture East Anglia

Question: Should the national network be leading towards an hourly clock face timetable? – i.e. for most of the day hourly, a journey can be made across the network with no more than 20/25 minute connection at junctions.

Question 9

Name: Rowland Pittard

Organisation/region: Railfuture South Wales

Question: Why did the Department for Transport (DfT) specify 'no growth franchises' when passenger growth was inevitable. What should Government do to resolve the situation? Should the funding for new coaches be for England only and not for Wales and Scotland?

Question 10

Name: David Redgewell

Organisation/region: TravelWatch Network/ Campaign for Better Transport

Question: With the DfT/Scottish Government/Welsh Assembly specification of the franchise, why put company brands on trains?

Should branding now be stopped to allow money not to be wasted and rolling stock to be changed between franchises? Should the DfT, Welsh and Scottish Government not set regional brands perhaps operated by First/National Express/Serco etc...such as it is in main land Europe. Passengers do not care about the colour of the trains, just National Rail standards.

Question 11

Name: Roger North

Organisation/region: (East) Chelmsford Commuters and Rail Travellers (CART)

Question: Safety: Modern Railways magazine reported that some freight containers not locked into wagons rely on gravity and there have been recent incidents when several have blown off in gales.

What is the response/action to address? Surely this is a serious safety issue

Question 12

Name: Roger Dixon

Organisation/region: Torbay Line Rail User's Group

Question: Why do the franchise specifications make no requirement for train operating companies to carry a given number/or percentage of journeys made on each given route? – what is not carried by rail needs to travel by road at a cost to taxpayers, the environment and congestion.

Question13

Name: Ken Allot

Organisation/region: Northumberland Rail User's Group/South East

Question: Is the Ashington-Blyth-Tyne railway one of the lines you are considering re-installing for passengers?

Question 14

Name: Chris Precey

Organisation/region: Railfuture/ East Midlands

Question: Bridge bashing – who picks up the costs and can they be recovered from the basher?

Question 15

Name: Ken Allot

Organisation/region: Northumberland Rail User's Group/South East

Question: Why is there no standardisation so that passengers can enter trains at platform level?

Question 16

Name: Anthony Lambert

Organisation/region: Travel/transport journalist

Question: Car park expansion is costly. Do train operating companies/Network Rail support financially the creations of safe cycling routes to stations? If not why not?

Question 17

Name: Andrew Long

Organisation/region: Bedford Commuters Association

Question:

- Who takes ownership of station travel plans?
- Modal split. Is Southern train operating company breakdown typical? Targets?
- Many Local Authorities do not have a 'Rail Officer', so Local Transport Plans not rail inclusive!

Question 18

Name: Bryan Frost

Organisation/region: East Suffolk Traveller's Association Felixstowe

Question: How can the fares information given by National Rail Enquiries be improved? e.g National Rail Enquiries has no info on 'ranger' tickets in some areas resulting in fares being quoted which deter potential users?

Question 19

Name: John Friedberger

Organisation/region: Railfuture/Wessex

Question: Planning a long distance cross-country journey (and making changes at times of disruption) is difficult, will Association of Train Operating Companies (or Passenger Focus) please reintroduce the blue booklet 'high speed rail services'?

Question 20

Name: James King

Organisation/region: Passenger Focus/Scotland

Question: What is the maximum length of time a passenger should queue to buy a ticket for an immediate journey of, say no more than 30 mins? Should train operating companies be required to ensure queues are kept short?

Question 21

Name: Gordon J Edwards

Organisation/region: TravelWatch South West

Question: All the services from my local station are provided by one train company, however the cheap day return fares from my local station are set by four different train operating companies who all impose different time restrictions. The customers travelling from my local station are totally confused why cheap day returns can be used to some destinations on certain trains but not other destinations.