

## Passenger Focused Franchises

Wednesday 8 November, Radisson SAS Hotel, Birmingham

### Attendance

Of 116 attendees at the Conference, 18 returned their feedback forms, representing a 16 per cent response rate.

### How useful

**100 per cent** of the attendees who returned their feedback forms rated the event as **quite or very useful**, with several people noting that this had been one of the most impressive and informative Passenger Focus events they had attended.

### Quality of the event

Similarly high scores were received for the quality of the event, with over **80 per cent** of delegates ranking the following aspects as **four out of five or above**:

- Location of venue
- Quality of facilities/catering at venue
- Helpfulness of staff
- Quality and range of speakers
- Opportunities for audience participation

### Range and quality of speakers

The quality and range of speakers this year were particularly impressive and many attendees commented favourably on the high calibre of the speakers. The majority of delegates found the two parliamentary addresses from Mr Tom Harris MP and Mr Stephen Hammond MP of exceptional interest, and especially appreciated the Q&A sessions that followed their presentations.

### Feedback included:

- *“Being able to hear first hand from the minister was invaluable”*
- *“Unique opportunity to hear the Minister and his Shadow at the same event”.*

### Other comments:

- *“Most useful part was the presentation on the Birmingham Gateway Project and the debate on New Street Station”*
- *“The panel discussion before lunch highlighted a number of important issues for me”*
- *“The presentation by Anthony Smith on the results of your research positively crackled with energy”.*

Some delegates mentioned that they would have found it beneficial to hear from other stakeholder groups such as Network Rail and some of the rolling stock companies.

### **Opportunities for audience participation**

Whilst some delegates said that they would have appreciated longer Q&A sessions and panel discussion on the day, we asked people whether they felt they had an opportunity to contribute fully to discussions and to give their views throughout the event, and of those responding, over 67 per cent said 'yes'.

### **Venue**

A few delegates mentioned that the size of the conference room was too small and that the air-conditioning was poor, and some suggested that the lunch area could have been larger.

### **Overall impression of the event**

Delegates were also asked to rate the overall event out of five and it was pleasing to see that **89 per cent** of attendees ranked it at **four or above**:

Feedback included:

- *"Congratulations on a lively, informative conference, packed with information and influential people"*
- *"The most useful event organised by Passenger Focus and any of its associated predecessors that I have had privilege to attend (and that goes back 11+ years)".*

### **Future topics for events**

Delegates were asked to suggest topics for further discussion at Passenger Focus events. By far the most popular were the general approach of Network Rail to expanding its network, and the future political direction of the rail industry. Transparency in and simplification of the ticketing process, railcards and commuter services were also suggested as future topics for discussion. These will be taken into consideration when putting together agendas for other Passenger Focus events.

### **Equal opportunities monitoring**

As part of our commitment to equal opportunities, a section of the feedback form included a request for information about gender and ethnic origin. This was so that we could monitor the representative nature of attendance at our events and to assess whether Passenger Focus offers equality of opportunity and treatment to all ethnic groups.

Of those completing this section, 72 per cent were male and 89 per cent classed themselves as white British. While this does not show a particularly balanced attendance profile at the moment, we hope that by monitoring attendance and actively promoting Passenger Focus and its events, we will be able to attract a more representative audience to future events.