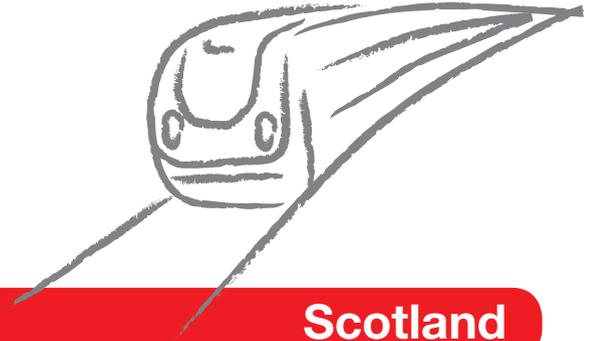


Independent national passenger watchdog

# Passenger Voice Rail



Spring 2011

Scotland

**In this issue:** • Weather causes delays • Renton named Best Adopted Station 2010

## Passengers rate Scotland's railway

### Autumn 2010

Train company	Overall satisfaction	Most significant improvement in satisfaction since Autumn 2009	Decline in % satisfied since Autumn 2009
Great Britain result	84%	Value for money (4%)	No significant decline
CrossCountry	84%	No significant improvement	The upkeep/repair of station buildings/platforms (5%)
East Coast	89%	Connections with other forms of public transport (7%)	Punctuality/reliability (7%)
First TransPennine Express	87%	Facilities for car parking (15%)	No significant decline
ScotRail	86%	No significant improvement	Cleanliness of the inside of the train (7%)
Virgin Trains	90%	The frequency of trains (4%)	No significant decline

Passengers using ScotRail services have given the operator an 86% overall satisfaction rating.

Almost 31,000 passengers have responded to the independent passenger watchdog's National Passenger Survey (NPS), which rates Great Britain's (GB) rail companies, train and station facilities.

Passenger Focus's survey found ScotRail's overall satisfaction score beat the GB rating of 84%. ScotRail received better marks for passengers' top priorities, including value for money (57% compared with the GB score of 49%), punctuality (86% compared with 82%) and sufficient room to sit/stand (72% versus 68%).

However, when looking at the passenger experience by route, passengers travelling on urban journeys are much more satisfied (91%) than those travelling on ScotRail rural services (74%) and those on Strathclyde routes (85%).

For the first time, Passenger Focus has published route-based results in the NPS.

Robert Samson, Passenger Focus Scotland manager, said: "Taking a closer look at the results in this way means that government and industry can respond strategically to passenger issues".

## May 2011 East Coast timetable

Big changes to the East Coast train timetable, which covers London to Peterborough, Doncaster, Leeds, York, Newcastle, Edinburgh and Glasgow are planned from 22 May 2011. Passenger Focus encourages passengers to check what it means for them – the new timetables can be viewed at [www.eastcoast.co.uk/22May](http://www.eastcoast.co.uk/22May).

Passenger Focus manager, Guy Dangerfield said: "Many passengers will welcome these improvements, but there are downsides and the original proposals promised more. For instance, the original standard journey time from Edinburgh to London King's Cross was to be four hours and 20 minutes. From 22 May, it will be four hours and 25 minutes, faster than some current trains, but slower than others.



"Passengers will also be frustrated that the rail industry has not consulted on the timetable as a whole, or at all about weekend trains."



Photo courtesy British Transport Police

# Future West Coast rail

Passenger Focus has responded to Network Rail's draft West Coast Main Line (WCML) Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS), which sets out the priorities for rail investment between now and 2024.

As part of the consultation process, Passenger Focus and Network Rail have held meetings in Glasgow, Preston and London for rail user groups to discuss what the RUS should be addressing. The group discussions highlighted some key priorities, including capacity, connectivity and station improvements.

Feedback from these groups, together with other Passenger Focus research were used to inform the response to Network Rail.

Robert Samson, Passenger Focus Scotland manager, said:

"Passenger Focus welcomes the opportunity to comment on the West Coast Main Line RUS. We support the broad thrust of what has been proposed. However, in our response, we stressed that the West Coast railway will need to allow for continued passenger growth while addressing passenger priorities for improvement." Meanwhile, Passenger Focus has called on the Government to ensure that the new West Coast franchise, currently run by Virgin Trains, is based on passengers' needs and priorities.

Passenger Focus has undertaken research to understand what existing West Coast passengers think needs to be improved. The findings will form the basis of Passenger Focus's discussions with the Government and companies vying to operate West Coast services from 2012 onward.



## Scotrail commuters receive smartcards

New electronic smartcards will make travelling easier and quicker for commuters in Scotland, according to Passenger Focus.

All weekly or monthly ScotRail season-ticket holders who travel between Glasgow Queen Street, Croy, Falkirk High, Polmont, Linlithgow, Haymarket or Edinburgh Waverley will be eligible to use the smartcards.

Robert Samson, Passenger Focus Scotland manager, says: "Many passengers are unhappy with ticket-buying facilities at stations so we welcome all improvements to ticketing. Smartcards are a convenient solution to improve the journey experience."

Passenger Focus has raised a number of issues around smartcards, including how they will work outside of major towns and cities, how a pay-as-you-go system would operate when using a smartcard, and how the technology could be used across all public transport – from the train to the bus, tram and subway and vice versa.

# Weather causes delays

Rail passengers were forced to take rail-replacement bus services as the opening of three stations along the new Airdrie-Bathgate Rail link were delayed.

Freezing temperatures and heavy snowfall disrupted the finishing work at Armadale, Caldercruix and Drumgelloch stations.

Robert Samson, Passenger Focus Scotland manager, said: "We welcome the new line and the benefits it will bring passengers. Although this holdup has been disappointing for passengers, we recognise the difficulties experienced by Network Rail due to severe weather conditions."

Passenger Focus has been monitoring the information given to passengers to ensure that there has been plenty of advice and help given to allow people to plan their journeys.

The new route, opened in December and operated by ScotRail, runs all the way from the west of Scotland through Glasgow Queen Street to Edinburgh Waverley, via Airdrie and Bathgate.



## Scotland future rail plans

In its response to Network Rail's Scotland Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS), Passenger Focus expects the rail programme to allow for the continued growth in passenger numbers and further improve performance and passenger satisfaction.

This is a second generation RUS which looks in detail at how the rail network needs to develop between now and 2024.

The independent watchdog has used its research on what passengers want to inform its input to this RUS.

Robert Samson, Passenger Focus Scotland manager, said: "Passengers in Scotland have told Passenger Focus that their top three priorities for improvement are value for money, performance and service frequency. These issues, together with seats and capacity, should be major considerations in the final plans."

# Renton named Best Adopted Station 2010

Passenger Focus named Renton station in West Dunbartonshire the 2010 Best Adopted Station in Scotland for 2010.

The accolade was in recognition of the transformation of a disused booking office into a modern heritage centre to commemorate Robert the

Bruce, who spent his last three years at Renton.

The project was a partnership between local volunteer group Strathleven Artizans and ScotRail's Adopt a Station scheme, which aims to put stations at the heart of communities.