

## Statistics Governance Group

Date: Wednesday 16 March 2016  
Location: Piccadilly Gate, Manchester, M1 2WD  
Time: 11:00 – 13:00

### 1.0 Welcome and apologies

SL welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies from AS and TdP.

#### Present

Stephen Locke	SL	Chair
Philip Mendelsohn	PM	Board Member
Bob Linnard	BL	Board Member
Ian Wright	IW	Head of Insight
Jon Carter	JC	Head of Business Services
Manuela Widmer	MW	Business Services Officer
Robert Pain	RP	Senior Insight Adviser

### 2.0 Minutes

The group discussed some minor wording changes of the minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2015. Changes were made and approved. The new minutes were then signed by the Chairman.

### 3.0 Action Matrix

The action matrix was discussed and updated and is attached to these minutes. It includes action points from this meeting.

### 4.0 NRPS update

#### *Spring pilots*

IW reported that the pilots (a shorter questionnaire and online option) were in the field and although he had wanted to enlarge the pilot in December there were no funds available then. The DfT had now found £40K which will be used to enhance the pilots,

The department had also found a further £40k which will be used for the software for the online panel. The department sees value in this as they can potentially use the panel.

Initial response rates were somewhat disappointing at around 20%, but were anticipated to improve during fieldwork based on previous experience.

## *Stakeholder Forum*

IW also reported back on the stakeholder forum which went well. The composition of the group was good. He also advised that a re-naming of the Expert group should be considered. SL believed the forum was not as interactive as one might have hoped and maybe in future the audience should be asked/invited to participate more; a theatre style layout should be avoided. It was thought that sending out briefing papers before the forum might be useful and that people should be asked to give feedback afterwards. A date for June needed to be set.

## *Online panel oversight*

The question of whether the panel falls within the remit of the SGG was raised. It was noted that the matter had been discussed at the recent MT and the suggestion was made that it might be incorporated within an existing group, e.g. SGG. The matter would also be discussed at the board meeting the next day. The Group discussed the matter and came to the conclusion that it would be necessary for the Group to kept updated on the operation of the panel but impractical to be closely involved. This would be the recommendation to the board meeting.

## *Other activities*

The expert panel would be renamed technical advisory group. Clearly, the right people with the right expertise were needed, and it was agreed that Adrian Chapman from ATOC would be a useful additional member.

## **5.0 Project Plan**

IW updated the Group on the project plan. The June meeting of the SGG would need to consider the results of the pilot in some detail. It was not anticipated these would be published alongside the spring wave results but they would need to be available for purposes of the ITT, which should also be available for the June meeting. The Group was clear that the timetable could not be amended again.

Decisions in respect of going online would be very important, and the pilot results may not be conclusive. An option would be parallel running but there is a funding issue. The online

element is difficult to factor in given an average two day delay in completion can seriously impact on the type of response given.

<b>SGG 1516-103</b>	16/03/16	June meeting	Extend by one hour (Manuela)	<b>JC</b>	<b>April 16</b>
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The Group also discussed the risks to DfT and TS as they related to franchise management. A dip in satisfaction levels due to online completion may be unavoidable and acceptable in the light of a modern approach to surveying, but both organisations would need to be comfortable with the possible outcomes.

## 6.0 Bus Passenger Survey

RP provided an update on BPS. The detailed technical review is still being prepared, which will include a section covering the potential impact of technical changes made to the latest survey design (revised sampling approach and the introduction of an online survey option). Initial observations suggested that the online survey responses were less positive than those for paper responses, but that the impact of this would not be great, as online surveys accounted for only 8% of the data collection. Possible reasons for this were discussed; while online completion was more likely amongst younger male passengers, there was still a difference in response after accounting for age profile differences; another difference from paper was that there was a delay in the receipt of the online survey (while collected email details were processed) of potentially 2 or more days from the time of recruitment, which in itself raised some issues in respect of accurate respondent recall. Whilst the current 8% share of responses would not have a major impact on overall results, a future 16% or 20% share would be more likely to.

The Group discussed the issue of the technical review and the information that would be needed alongside the publication of the next wave. It was agreed that references to 'improving the quality of the survey' should be avoided. There was no weighting framework for BPS (unlike NRPS, which uses industry data) and we had developed our own, and there should be no suggestion that there was anything wrong with it. The sampling plan was agreed as good in the circumstances. IW considered the bigger issue was delay in completion of the online survey – 'delay = decay' as was said in the industry. The greater the gap, the less valid the results as a measure of specific journey satisfaction.

The Group agreed that it was essential to review the technical paper with a mind to publishing it in some form. A longer term strategy was needed for dealing with the expected growth in the number of online responses, bearing in mind the impact they may have on overall results, but it was agreed that from a policy perspective, excluding responses because they have a negative impact on results is not credible.

<b>SGG 1516-104</b>	13/01/16	Technical review	Bring to SGG for further thoughts before publishing	<b>IW</b>	<b>June 16</b>
<b>SGG 1516-105</b>	16/03/16	BPS Fieldwork	Identify any learning points from TPS fieldwork review (Robert)	<b>IW</b>	<b>June 16</b>

## *Response rates*

The total sample size was 40,380. The lower sample size was mainly due to lower recruitment rates. There were 48 recruits per shift in 2014 and in 2015 it was 45 (online and paper combined).

It was agreed that improving the online experience is very important as the dropout rate within first few question is very high.

## **7.0 Tram Passenger Survey: Autumn Wave 2015 – update**

The final sample size was 5,707. A draft technical report is due by end of next week (25th March). We have asked the agency to provide a similar assessment of the impact of methodological changes to the survey results as for BPS, including an analysis of the online vs. paper responses.

Overall journey satisfaction has risen from 90% to 92%, driven mainly by an improvement in Manchester Metrolink (now at 89% overall journey satisfaction). There was also an improvement for Sheffield Supertram (up to 97%), while Midland Metro has declined (to 81%), where engineering works came into play part of the way through fieldwork. Highest overall journey satisfaction was for Nottingham NET (at 98%), where a second line had been introduced in 2015. Satisfaction levels at Blackpool Transport (96%) and Edinburgh Trams (97%) remain very high.

The Group was keen to look at the impact on the online survey results of the delay between recruitment and receipt of the survey link/completion of the survey (similar to BPS). The new app-based collection of respondent email details should have reduced the delay to hours, rather than days, in most cases. This could provide valuable learning for BPS as well as TPS.

## **8.0 Roads: New RUSS – update**

IW updated on New RUSS. We are still hoping to use the database of drivers from the DVLA. Due to data retention/data security issues the request has gone to the DVLA board (meeting on 17 March 2016) and their answer is expected imminently. The issues included the involvement of 3<sup>rd</sup> parties and we were working on a way around it. DVLA is rightly aware of

the fact that sharing data is a big step and needs careful consideration. A plan B had been developed, if needed.

The Group recorded the excellent progress made on this project; those involved should be commended for the important part they had played.

## **8.1 NRUSS update**

It was noted that Transport Focus will take over the NRUSS from Highway England from 1 April 2016 for two years. This will enable the comparison of 'old' and new data.

A Single Tender Action procurement arrangement with current provider Aecom (who also happen to be on our current Preferred Supplier List) had been deemed necessary in the circumstances, with which process the Group did not disagree, urging the team to ensure the best value for money possible was realised.

## **Any other business**

The Group noted the report into roadside facilities was on the agenda for the board meeting the following day, and that it appeared to be a fine piece of work.

There being no other business, the meeting concluded at 12.40. The next meeting is planned for Thursday 16 June 2016 at Fleetbank House, London.

Signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting:

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**Stephen Locke**  
**Chair**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_