

Minutes

Statistics Governance Group

Jul 17 BM D 01.2

Date: 13 June 2017
Location: Meeting Room 2, Fleetbank House, London, EC4Y 8JX
Time: 14:00 – 15:30

Present

Stephen Locke	SL	Chair
Philip Mendelsohn	PM	Board Member
Bob Linnard	RL	Board Member
Theo de Pencier	TP	Board Member
Anthony Smith	AS	Chief Executive
Jon Carter	JC	Head of business services
Ian Wright	IW	Head of Insight
Robert Pain	RP	Senior Insight Advisor
Elizabeth Ganak	EG	Business services officer

1.0 Welcome and apologies

SL welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no apologies for absence.

2.0 Minutes

The Group discussed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 15 March 2017; no substantive changes were made and the Group authorised the Chair to sign them.

3.0 Action Matrix

The Group noted that most actions had been completed with the exception of 1516-097 (BPS Open data tool) which was still awaiting some form of action by Management Team. IW undertook to reassess the need for any further work on this tool given low levels of interest, and to report back by the next meeting.

National Rail Passenger Survey

4.0 Spring 2017 update

DG confirmed that field work for the spring wave, having started in January, was complete by the end of April.

The hand out rate (55.6 per shift) was below the spring 2016 rate of 64.9 but had shown a significant rise towards the end of the field work. The amount of details to be collected, and potentially the use of tablets, might have had an effect on the response rates. The use of tablets could eat into fieldwork time and possibly bring the handout rate down.

A total number of 2,216 shifts had been completed in this wave, including 637 top up shifts (all done at larger stations). The spring 2017 response rate was 25.2%, slightly down from the spring 2016 pilot, with no obvious reason. Approximately 30% of the Chime field force have worked on NRPS before. The overall sample size was 27,176.

11% of the people who responded to the survey responded online, which is around half of the spring 2016 pilot; on the other hand the online response rate was much higher at 29.4% (2016 22.2%). The online survey was sent out much more quickly than previously, which may have helped with the increase of the online response rate.

On the ScotRail parallel running exercise, DG cited the 1% difference in satisfaction between the old (90.5%) and the new (89.5%) methodology, and that Chime will now do the weighted results comparing the parallel run on ScotRail with the new methodology. Both methodologies are showing an uplift in overall national satisfaction compared with the previous wave of about 3%.

SL enquired about the recent meeting with Chime, where TF asked them to carry out further analysis, in particular whether the difference in satisfaction compared with the previous wave was due to the timing of shifts, some being post Easter, or the change in methodology, or if it was a combination of both). TF also asked if the large amount of top up shifts would have an effect, and it was agreed that it might, but the top up shifts only accounted for 6% of the interviews, so any effect could only be marginal.

Provisional early results showed a number of TOCs with significant improvements in satisfaction scores compared with the previous wave, suggesting service improvements, potentially partly as a result of rolling stock reliability issues being

The NRPS technical group would meet on 3 July, and would discuss what had changed and why, against a background of the spring wave results, and any issues arising from the change of agency and additional fieldwork. A detailed technical document was being prepared. This would not be published along with the main NRPS results but would be available on request.

The Group noted the developments so far, and requested a further update for its September meeting.

The Group then turned to the trust research and emotional tracker. Initial results suggested that the data was more in line with the 2014 results than with the 2017 results, But there were still some puzzling features of the data which required further analysis before it could be published.

Age and gender formed a part of this survey in a way it had not been previously, enabling a profile of journeys, rather than just people. It is now clear that younger passengers are generally under represented in survey results. This finding is potentially very useful to the industry. Future surveys could be weighted more precisely to allow for age differences.

5.0 Future NRPS developments

IW provided a verbal update. At the time of this meeting, responses to our proposals were still coming in. The TF Insight Team had put together a range of proposals regarding NRPS timing for the DfT to consider, including a more frequent NRPS, ranging from an extra third wave to a continuous survey. Initially, the DfT had indicated that they did not want to pursue any of the NRPS options, rather they would prefer a different form of complementary research based on other channels and/or methodologies. A workshop between RDG, DfT and TF will be held later in June, at which these issues would be discussed.

The Group noted that, whatever options emerged, it was clear that social media must form part of the package. The Group also advised that options must be based on functional need rather than 'nice to have', clarity on who pays for any enhancements;, and that the presumption of publication remained a golden rule.

Strategic Road User Survey

6.0 New SRUS Update

BH reported that the online survey through DVLA did quite well with a conversion rate of 41%, which is higher than indicated by the original independent review. However the number of people who clicked into the survey in the first place, in response to a DVLA email, was very low at 4.7% resulting in an overall response rate of just 1.6%. A blanket reminder, unusually offered by DVLA, had helped, but not very much.

The team are now looking into what could have caused this poor result, and currently do not think it is from an inherent lack of interest – it is more likely to be a technical problem and / or the wording of the email invitation.

This will be addressed with an online panel specialist group to help develop an effective email template to avoid these problems in future email surveys.

Results for the survey are coming in, and it seems (unsurprisingly) that people who live closer to the Strategic Roads Network are more likely to use them, while people who live farther from these roads are less likely. This may be one factor affecting the low response rate but it would not explain all of it.

In terms of driver classifications, the online survey is picking up a higher number of responses from harder to reach groups, such as HGV drivers.

PM asked about contingency plans for keeping the older versions of SRUS going. This possibility has been brought to DfT's attention and is part of an ongoing discussion. The new RIS period will start in April 2020, and new data to set new targets for HE is important. But TF is fully engaged with DfT and ORR in trying to find a way forward.

RL asked when we would know whether the face to face and the omnibus were producing similar results, since in the future we would need to use one of the two as the better version of survey. It was agreed that the degree of alignment between the two sets of results would be an important yardstick. The full report will be available at the end of June 2017. AS asked if anything could be read yet from the online pilot of the overall satisfaction scores, and while the face to face is in line, the online is much lower (about 20%). The Group noted that it was not wholly surprising for online survey results to be lower, as participants may be less likely to hold back critical opinions, than face to face with a researcher.

Other aspects of pilot SRUS currently being worked on included:

- An investigation to determine the viability of the 'one road' approach as a basis for aggregating individual responses by road into an overall KPI for the network. One key issue is how the distribution of road usage emerging from the survey pans out when compared with SRN usage data. A second issue is the sample sizes required to create an effective measure. TF is currently in discussion with Steer Davies Gleave (SDG) on this element of the work programme: SDG has already built an SRN usage model on our behalf to support the 'one road' approach being used to pilot SRUS,
- An exploration to determine whether the 'drivetime' approach to sampling recommended in the Independent Analytical Review is appropriate. This is based on the general observation that people who live closer to the SRN are more likely to use it. If it is considered appropriate, this principle will be reflected in the main SRUS by oversampling respondents who live closer to the SRN. This would help to ensure that the survey fairly reflects overall SRN

usage, in the same way that NRPS reflects usage of the rail network with regards to frequency of travel. To test the principle, fieldwork has recently been conducted through the Kantar online panel – this method was chosen because it provides a large unclustered sample cost effectively and at a quick turnaround. The ONS random probability omnibus was considered, but it was too time consuming to collect a reliable volume of data by this means.

- Working with research partners – Future Thinking, Kantar TNS, Kantar Public, Real Research and DVLA – to work towards a consistent approach to reporting that will meet the evaluation criteria for pilot SRUS. As part of this evaluation, consideration of each of the success criteria that were shared with our external stakeholders at the beginning of the SRUS programme will be made. These are:
 - Response rates: overall and by region, demographics and driver classes,
 - The confidence of respondents in identifying their most recent journey,
 - Data that produces SRN usage levels that are reflective of real journeys made,
 - Accurate recall (by comparing responses with Highways England information),
 - Potential for expansion to the main survey (sample size and budget),
 - Statistical analysis that is capable of revealing the key drivers of satisfaction (a check we haven't lost important questions from NRUS),
 - Cell size large for sub-group analysis,
 - Absence or mitigation of context effects from surrounding questions on the omnibus,
 - The number of interviews achieved with HGV drivers and other hard to reach groups,
 - One road specific data that also provides a viable key performance indicator for the SRN as a whole through the aggregation of individual responses.

The Group noted the substantial progress made, but was concerned that there were still plenty of loose ends, especially in the arrangements with DVLA. They requested a further update at the September meeting.

7.0 SRUS Project Plan

PM had asked for this so that the Group could better understand next steps. It was thought useful as a work in progress.

8.0 SRUS Agencies

The Group thanked BH for clarifying the roles the various agencies play.

Bus passenger survey

9.0 BPS Update

RP updated the Group about the latest wave, which was in its final week of field work at the time of the meeting. He mentioned that this wave is also considerably later in the year than prior waves, because of discussions TF was having with TfWM, around the suspension of bus lanes in the Coventry area (a phased approach is being used) and TF was asked to talk with them about how we could help, all of which came to very little.

RP warned that the survey was carried out during a better time of year (spring time) and could mean there is less likelihood of discomfort at bus stops, potentially affecting the results. Drop outs were discussed and the Group agreed that there is more work to be done on this. One favourable indication was that, of those who clicked on the link, only 17 or 5% dropped out at this point.

SL asked about the inclusion of data on trust; RP confirmed there is no trust element in BPS yet, as there are certain data conflicts to resolve.

SGG 1718-116	13/06/17	BPS Update	Provide analysis on Trust	RP	Sep 17
-------------------------------	----------	---------------	---------------------------	-----------	---------------

Tram Passenger Survey

10. TPS Update

RP reported that he was looking into concerns at Edinburgh trams, where number of online responses has dropped from 17% in 2015 to only 2% for 2016. This could have an impact on the results, and is mainly due to lower recruitment levels of online respondents.

Instant online recruitment was used in this wave and reduced the average response time from five days in 2013 to two days 2016. 43% of the participants opened the online survey within a 24 hour period, with 21% completing the survey. While this response rate is - overall - disappointing, the Group suggested that there might be an issue with nature of the interviewer's interaction with the participants. The agency has been asked to provide a profile of fieldworkers, which will be available at the next meeting.

Due to reviews at BDRC, additional data was not yet available but will be distributed at a later date.

SGG 1718-117	13/06/17	TPS additional data	Distribute when available	RP	Jul 17
SGG 1718-118	13/06/17	TPS (Edinburgh) fieldworker profile	To report at next meeting	RP	Sep 17

Passenger Contact/Open Data

11. Data Transfer Audit Final Report

JC presented the long-awaited report, and pointed out that Key findings 3 and 5 were the only medium priority actions, which have been completed by the Advice Team.

The report was **noted**.

12. Rail passengers' Trust and Priorities for improvement

IW provided an update. A recent online survey regarding general experiences with the rail system in Great Britain combined trust and priority research, where in the past (most recently in 2014) these had been separately measured. The trust results show a big 'improvement' in overall levels of trust from 40% in 2014 to 60% in 2017. Whilst welcome at one level, this result was puzzling because it ran counter to expectations and the spring 2017 NRPS findings.

The Group noted that there was a range of possible explanations for the divergence. One was that there had been significant changes in methodology, combining what had previously been two separate surveys into a single one. The much larger total sample size (12,800 as against 4,000 in 2015) ought to be helpful, but combining the two surveys will inevitably have affected the ordering of questions. A second factor was that three different commercial panel providers were used to deliver the number of passengers needed for this survey. One of the panel providers produced significantly higher trust scores than the others, which was being investigated at the time of this meeting.

The Group considered in more detail the 'questionnaire order effect' – the impact on results by the ordering of the questions. The previous 2014 trust survey had been a standalone online survey, with a single panel provider, mainly asking experiential questions (eg about level of engagement and willingness to recommend) aimed at

warming up respondents before asking directly about trust. In the 2017 survey these questions were left out. The impact on the overall score could be either positive or negative, and more work was underway to understand this better. It was also noted that the trust scores from the most recent NRPS were much more in line with the 2014 trust results.

The Group agreed that these issues needed to be probed further before the survey results could be published. In particular they noted plans to test the 2014 and 2017 questionnaires on a matched sample basis, to test whether the questionnaire order was having an effect on the substantive results. Whilst the priorities findings were less subject to question, the Group acknowledged that the possible anomalies in the trust data meant that both sets of findings needed to be analysed further before they could be used or publicised. The Group requested details of the results when they were available, and an update at the September meeting.

SGG 1718-119	13/06/17	Trust and priorities	Circulate when available	IW	Jul 17
-------------------------------	----------	----------------------	--------------------------	-----------	---------------

Any other business

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 1530 hrs.

Signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting:

Stephen Locke
Chair

Date: _____