



Insight Plan 2017-18: Making a difference for transport users

Summer 2017

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What is Transport Focus?

We are the independent, statutory, consumer watchdog for Britain's rail passengers, bus, coach and tram passengers in England (outside London) and all users of England's motorways and major 'A' roads – the Strategic Road Network (SRN). Transport Focus's statutory roots go back nearly 70 years.

We aim to be useful to those who make decisions about transport, to help them make better decisions. We use evidence to drive change and make a difference. Transport Focus strives to give all transport users as powerful a voice as those that provide transport services and we listen to those users in a variety of ways.



The Insight Plan

Transport Focus is an evidence-based organisation. Developing insight and research into the experiences, needs and priorities of transport users is the keystone of our work. This year we will talk to around 170,000 transport users.

Our *Insight Plan* sets out what insight work we have recently published and plan to carry out – it will be regularly updated. Our plan *Making a difference for transport users: the next three years 2017-20* sets out main goals and the themes for our work. It also contains more information about us and how we work. It should be read alongside this Plan. It identifies four key themes:

- making a difference for today's transport user
- making a difference for tomorrow's transport user
- making Transport Focus an insight and evidence hub
- creating a modern workplace for great people.

In addition, we need to make sure we make best use of our resources with excellent delivery, value for money and governance. We will spend around 35 per cent of our budget on insight activities this year. The amount may rise if third parties commission more.

In this Plan, we set out our key insight activities with anticipated publication dates in brackets. Inevitably there will be more projects emerging through the year, which we do not know about at this stage, including working with partners.

If you would like to know more about the insight projects or publications, please do get in touch with our Insight Team louise.coward@transportfocus.org.uk

Our plans are as follows:



Bus passengers

- Continue enhancing the Bus Passenger Survey (BPS), funded by us along with local authorities and bus companies
- Prepare a BPS proposal for the Scottish and Welsh Governments and operators for further consideration (funded by governments and bus companies). This work will build on the successful 2016 BPS in Scotland
- Carry out and publish the 2017 BPS (funded by Transport Focus, operators and local authorities) (Spring 2018)
- Publish research on the needs and views of younger passengers (aged 14-19) (Autumn 2017)
- Carry out and publish fresh analysis of the 2016 BPS data focusing on understanding how passenger satisfaction varies among younger people, those travelling at peak times and those using smart ticketing.



Rail passengers

- Continue to modernise, carry out and publish two waves of the National Rail Passenger Survey (NRPS), engaging over 65,000 passengers in the process (Summer 2017). We also use NRPS as the basis for supplementary work, such as a boost for ScotRail and continuous measurement in East Anglia
- Conduct and publish research to inform franchise specifications (funded by the Department for Transport (DfT) and Transport for Wales)
- Ensure that we continue to monitor the passenger experience before, during and after planned engineering works to inform each programme at a local level and to establish best practice generally
- Carry out a continuous Guest Satisfaction Survey for Caledonian Sleeper (Spring 2018) following initial development work
- Carry out and publish research into the views and experiences of rail passengers with disabilities (funded by DfT)
- We will continue to develop the HS2 Customer Community, surveying and convening our panel and producing regular reports (funded by HS2 and ongoing since 2014) (Autumn 2017)
- We will find out what passengers like and dislike about the existing design of trains as well as proposals for new or refurbished trains. This should help the design of more passenger-friendly train interiors (work funded by train leasing companies, local authorities, manufacturers and, potentially, HS2)
- Carry out and publish work looking at rail passengers' priorities for improvement (Autumn 2017)
- Carry out and publish updated work on rail passengers' trust in the industry and operators (Autumn 2017)
- Carry out and publish work looking at non-users of the railways (Autumn 2017)
- We will look at passenger views of the potential ombudsman scheme, including the signposting for passengers.



Road users

- Complete piloting of the new Strategic Roads User Survey (SRUS) and prepare for full operation
- Carry out the existing National Road Users' Satisfaction Survey (NRUSS) in 2017/18, involving 2,000 road users this year. Publish the results of the NRUSS for 2016-17 (Summer 2017)
- Publish detailed research into users' priorities for improvement to road surfaces (Autumn 2017)
- Publish the first Motorway Services Users Survey and explore funding options for further work, with the aspiration to move towards full industry funding (Summer 2017)
- Carry out further research to sense check the proposed performance specification for the second Road Investment Strategy (RIS 2) against road user opinion (to be part-funded by the Office of Rail and Road)
- Explore opportunities for research to ensure that the 30-year vision for the Strategic Road Network (SRN) is aligned with road user views
- Publish research into road users' experiences of using smart motorways, including sections of 'all-lane running' (Autumn 2017)
- Carry out and publish work into the experience of SRN users with disabilities
- Conduct and publish our first survey of satisfaction with the SRN among logistics sector and coach company managers (Autumn 2017)
- Continue to develop our approach to assessing satisfaction among cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians who use or cross the SRN, including publication of our initial research (Autumn 2017)
- Publish research into road users' views about how the A120 trunk road in Essex should be upgraded, following work in partnership with Essex County Council and Suffolk County Council (Summer 2017).



Tram passengers

- Carry out and publish the 2017 Tram Passenger Survey (funded by Transport Focus, operators and local authorities) (Spring 2018).



Smart ticketing

- Carry out and publish additional work on passengers and smart ticketing.



Accessibility

- Analyse satisfaction among passengers with disabilities who take part in NRPS, BPS and TPS and highlight key areas where operators should focus effort to improve services.

New insights

We are piloting a new online road user survey – the Strategic Roads User Survey. If the pilot is successful the new survey will provide much better quality feedback from SRN users than it is possible to gather at present. We firmly believe this new survey will change the way that governments and those running our roads view the user experience. Those taking part will also have the opportunity to join our new Transport User Panel.

The Transport User Panel is made up of respondents to our rail, bus, tram and road user surveys who have agreed to take part in further surveys. It has already allowed us to get quick feedback on issues such as customer service on Northern Rail trains and awareness of the MerseyRail Wirral Tunnel closures.

We are getting a very good response rate from users and hope to develop the panel further. Among other things,



Provisional publications scheduled during 2017-18

for projects already underway

Publication period	Project
April-June 2017	Tram Passenger Survey Caledonian Sleeper RIS 2 Road Users' Priorities for the Road Investment Strategy, 2020-25 Wales and Borders service/franchise
July-September 2017	National Road Users' Satisfaction Survey A120 upgrade Rail priorities for improvement National Rail Passenger Survey – Spring wave 2017 Motorway Services Users Survey
October 2017-March 2018	Smart motorways Road surface quality HS2 – year three output Young people and buses (England only) Cyclists equestrians and pedestrians East Midlands franchise Non-rail users Planned engineering works – Great Western Railway Northern and Waterloo engineering work – passenger awareness Understanding trust in transport providers Measuring satisfaction with the SRN in the coach and logistics sector Ombudsman signposting

we will be able to use our panel as a sounding board to test out user attitudes to potential changes to rail, buses, trams and roads. We are exploring using it in different ways, beyond online questionnaires.

We want to lead the debate about how transport user satisfaction is gathered as we and others develop more digital and innovative ways of gathering satisfaction data. We want to hold a conference to gather views, ideas and best practice from other sectors. We are looking for interested organisations who might join us in partnership for this conference.

We are collaborating with DfT and the rail industry to design new insight tools to complement the NRPS, which may build on our work using apps and emotion-tracking.

These tables will be reviewed and updated quarterly.



Planned projects 2017-18 not yet underway

Project	Expected start date	Expected publication date	Other comments
Focusing on RIS 2	September	January	
NRPS Autumn wave 2017	September	January	Ongoing input. More welcome
BPS Autumn 2017	September	March	Ongoing input. More welcome
TPS Autumn 2017	September	March	Ongoing input. More welcome
Disabled motorists using the SRN	August	January	Keen to involve partners
Transport User Panel	Ongoing	Ongoing	Keen to speak to partners who may like to use our panel of engaged transport users



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