



REPORT TO: Stakeholder Relations & Communications Strategy Committee
DATE: 20 October 2009
SUBJECT: Spring 2009 National Passenger Survey
SPONSOR: Marie Daniels
AUTHORS: James Patterson, Stephanie Weller

1. PURPOSE OF PAPER

1.1. This paper provides a summary of the headline findings from the British Transport Police Authority (BTPA) / British Transport Police (BTP) sponsored questions from the spring wave of the 2009 Passenger Focus *National Passenger Survey* (NPS), and provides a direct comparison with the spring 2008 data.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 BTP has questions on both the spring and autumn waves of the NPS. The 2009 spring wave was completed by 25,905 passengers, and included questions on awareness of BTP, Neighbourhood Policing and public confidence. Please see annex A for a copy of the survey.

2.2 The findings are presented in relation to supplementary data on demographics (gender and ethnicity) and purpose of travel. Relevant findings will be sent to the Diversity Unit for their own use.

2.3 Data from the NPS has been weighted in order to provide a more representative set of results, and is comparable against weighted data from previous waves. Data is weighted by station size (based on passenger footfall), purpose of journey (commuting/business/leisure), and by day of week.

3. SUMMARY



- 3.1 Respondents were asked to identify the top priority that BTP should focus its resources on. An analysis of verbatim responses showed that visibility was the main priority for passengers.
- 3.2 Passenger ratings of personal security have improved by two percentage points when making a journey (72%, up from 70% spring 2008) and when in the station environment (63%, up from 61% spring 2008). Ratings of personal security differ according to ethnicity.
- 3.3 Awareness of BTP continues to be high amongst railway users; 88% of passengers are aware of its existence, which is a slight increase from the previous spring wave (87% spring 2008). In addition, there is now a greater awareness of BTP Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs) in comparison to last year (27% spring 2009; 20% spring 2008).
- 3.4 The majority of passengers “don’t know” if BTP do a good job, suggesting that passengers do not feel sufficiently informed as to the role of BTP in order make a judgment on whether it succeeds in that role.

4. PASSENGER PRIORITIES

- 4.1 For the spring 2009 wave, passengers were provided with a freetext question and asked to state the main priority they felt BTP should be focusing resources on. This replaced the question previously used which asked respondents to prioritise their top six options from a pre-defined list.
- 4.2 The top eight priorities for passengers are identified as being:
 - Visibility: 34%
 - Ensuring personal safety/security: 24% (including lone women passengers)
 - Improving safety/BTP presence at night: 21%
 - Anti social behaviour: 18%
 - Alcohol/drug related concerns: 12%
 - Environmental/TOC issues: 10%
 - Violence/threat of violence: 10%



- Groups of youths: 8%

4.3 When comparing passengers' top priorities with NPS spring 2008 results, a demand for higher levels of visibility remains the main priority for BTP to focus their resources on.

4.4 The Quality of Service team will explore the possibility of producing analysis of passenger priorities at a local level. This may enhance the usefulness of such data, and identify passenger concerns by specific stations or police posts.

5. PERCEPTIONS OF PERSONAL SECURITY

5.1 Passenger ratings of personal security have improved when making a journey and when in the station environment. Encouragingly, since spring 2007 there has been a rise of six percentage points in passenger ratings whilst using the station. Personal security on train has also improved, but by a smaller margin of three percentage points. Table 1 illustrates this:

Year of survey (Spring NPS waves)	2007	2008	2009
Rating of personal security whilst using station	57%	61%	63%
Rating of personal security whilst making a train journey	69%	70%	72%

Table 1

5.2 Station size appears to have an impact on passenger perceptions of personal security. Figure 1 shows that ratings of personal security decline with the size of station¹:

¹ Network rail groups its stations into six categories according to their size and role, with "A" being the largest (i.e. national hubs) and "F" being the smallest (i.e. small unstaffed stations).

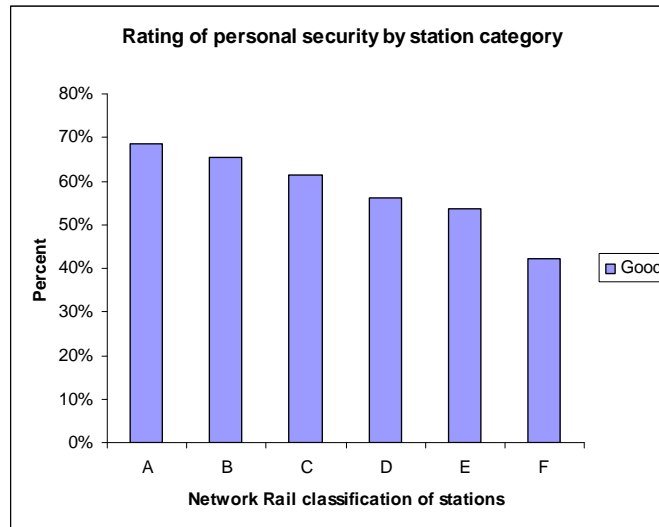


Figure 1

- 5.3 The ethnic breakdown of the sample is 8% BME passengers and 92% non BME passengers. Passengers from black and minority ethnic (BME) backgrounds have significantly lower ratings of personal security (55%) when using the station in comparison to non BME passengers (64%); this gap in perceptions of personal safety has widened since spring 2008 (BME 59%; non BME 61%). An initial analysis suggests two possible explanatory factors.
- 5.4 Passengers who travel alone (62%) have lower ratings of personal security at the station in comparison to those travelling with others (68%). A greater proportion of BME passengers (89%) make journeys alone in comparison to non BME passengers (83%).
- 5.5 Passengers that use the railways in order to commute to work have lower ratings of personal security at stations (58%) when compared to those respondents making journeys for business (63%) or leisure (68%) purposes. A greater proportion of BME passengers are commuters (BME 60%; non BME 42%).



- 5.6 In addition to lower ratings of personal security at the station, a greater proportion of BME passengers (61%) rate their personal security on the train as lower than non BME passengers (73%).
- 5.7 There are indications that poor ratings of environmental factors (such as cleanliness of station, upkeep and repair) can have a negative effect on passenger ratings of personal security; this impact is greater on BME passengers' ratings of personal security.
- 5.8 Passengers who state they always get a seat on their journey (77%) rate their personal security on the train as higher than those who state they usually have to stand when it is very crowded (54%). This suggests that congested/overcrowded trains can affect passenger perceptions of personal security, which helps to explain why commuters have lower ratings of personal security.

6. PASSENGER AWARENESS AND NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING

- 6.1 Awareness of BTP continues to be high; 88% of passengers are aware of BTP's existence (87% spring 2008). Awareness of BTP is lower amongst those from a BME background (79%) in comparison to non BME passengers (89%).
- 6.2 Passenger awareness of the existence of BTP Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs) has increased to 27%, up from 20% in spring 2008. Around a fifth (17%) of passengers believed there was an NPT at the station where they received their survey, whilst almost three quarters (74%) did not know.
- 6.3 Passengers who believed there was an NPT at the station where they received their survey rated their feelings of personal security much higher (76%) than those who believed there was not an NPT in operation (51%). This suggests that passengers who believe that an NPT is in place (regardless of whether there is one or not) display higher levels of reassurance when using the railways.



6.4 Passengers who believed there was a NPT at the station were more likely to agree that BTP: deal with ASB, treat passengers fairly and with respect, make an effort to get to know passengers, provide a visible police presence, and keep passengers informed.

7. CONFIDENCE

7.1 Anticipating a move towards a confidence based agenda, a number of questions were included in the survey, aimed at providing a measure of passenger confidence in BTP.

7.2 A question aimed at measuring public confidence levels asked passengers if they felt BTP do “a good job” at their station. Significantly, over half (61%) of the respondents had no opinion or “don’t know” if BTP do a good job, suggesting that passengers do not feel they have enough knowledge of what BTP do in order to make a definitive judgment on the role that BTP play on the railways. This leaves 14% of respondents who agreed that BTP do a good job; 13% felt that BTP do a “fair job”; and 12% stated that BTP do a “poor job”. Whilst this provides a baseline for future waves, the high proportion of “don’t know” responses should be acknowledged.

7.3 The large number of “don’t know” responses have been excluded from the following analyses in order to enhance the value of the data.

7.4 A greater proportion of females (40%) felt that BTP do a good job (compared to 33% of males). Additionally, a higher proportion of respondents using the railways for leisure purposes (45%) agreed that BTP do a good job. Only 31% of commuters surveyed felt that BTP do a good job.

7.5 Significantly, the number of passengers who felt that BTP do a good job falls steadily by size of station. Excluding the large proportion of “don’t know” responses, 53% of passengers from the largest stations (station classification A) felt that BTP do a good job, in comparison to only 37% of those from smallest stations (station classification F). This represents a similar pattern to that seen when passenger ratings of personal security declines by size of station (figure 1).



8. CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 Personal security ratings for passengers at the station and on the train have improved for the second successive year.
- 8.2 Passengers feel that increased levels of visibility should be the number one priority for BTP to focus their resources on. This demand for greater police presence from passengers may be partially met through the increasing number of BTP NPTs; however, NPT officers and PCSOs should continue to be encouraged to engage with passengers when on duty, in order to maximise visibility.
- 8.3 Positively, passenger awareness of NPTs continues to improve and is significantly related to positive feelings of security. Although awareness of NPTs is currently much lower than general awareness of BTP, it is anticipated that with the ongoing roll out of the Neighbourhood Policing programme, this should improve over time, as should ratings of personal security.

9. ACTION PLAN

- 9.1 The recommendations below have been approved by SCT to address the findings of this survey.
- 9.2 The Quality of Service team will review current NPS questions to ensure they remain relevant, particularly those aimed at measuring public confidence levels amongst passengers on the railways.
- 9.3 The Quality of Service team will explore the possibility of producing analysis of passenger priorities at a local level. This may enhance the usefulness of such data, and allow Areas to identify passenger concerns by specific stations or police posts.
- 9.4 The Quality of Service team will look to explore the disparity between ethnic groups' feelings of safety. Relevant findings will be passed to the Diversity Unit for their consideration.



BRITISH
TRANSPORT
POLICE

Agenda Item 7

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 That the committee note the contents of this paper.