
Secretariat memorandum

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Casework report

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To record the performance of London TravelWatch's Casework Team in the period January to March 2010.

2 Casework database

- 2.1 As reported at the last meeting, there have been a number of difficulties in compiling performance data due to the fact that caseworkers were still getting used to the new database and the reports on the system were compiled in such a way as to make auditing of them quite difficult and time consuming.
- 2.2 Fundamentally, the new casework database system is sound and enables casework staff to undertake their job efficiently. Nevertheless, our experience in the period since last October has shown us that the date recording of the different stages of cases is not proving as accurate as we would wish. This is due to the stages of cases being recorded through workflows which are manually completed by the staff member rather than the date of the email or letter sent. It is not possible to enter the actual date an action was completed after the event, and therefore we have found that a number of inaccurate dates have been recorded. We have also found now that we have a record of every email and telephone call being undertaken on a case, that the workflow process is too rigid for our needs and does not reflect the number of different ways a case can be handled and resolved.
- 2.3 We have therefore agreed in principle with the contractor that we will move away from capturing key dates through workflows to capturing them through date fields on the case. The exact changes required are currently being specified but should make performance monitoring easier by making them more accurate. While dates will still need to be manually entered by caseworkers, they will be able to put the actual date an action was undertaken in the database record as opposed to the date being generated by the workflow which experience has shown is often inaccurate because it cannot be overridden. Having discussed this issue with Passenger Focus, they have recently made a similar change to their casework management system.

3 Performance reports

- 3.1 We recognise that there is a strong desire amongst members and our sponsors for performance data to be provided more quickly. These reports track the performance of the team in dealing on all cases received in a period

for all of our targets and incorporate some information already shared with members at the last meeting. We recognise that, due to meeting dates, that the time between the end of a period and the presentation to members of performance data is currently uneven and have agreed changes to meeting dates in future to ensure that data is reported more quickly in future.

- 3.2 Part 1 records performance against the targets 1 and 2 for the period from January to March 2010.
- 3.3 Part 2 analyses issues received by operator for the period from January to March 2010.
- 3.3 Part 3 provides a performance update on the number of cases open on the database as of 5 July 2010 and their status.
- 3.4 Part 4 records the findings of the questionnaire survey of appellants whose cases were concluded in the period October 2009 to March 2010.

4 Equalities and inclusion implications

- 4.1 Due account will be taken whenever any such implications arise from cases brought to the attention of London TravelWatch.

5 Legal powers

- 5.1 Section 248 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 places upon London TravelWatch (as the London Transport Users Committee) a duty to consider – and, where it appears to it to be desirable, to make representations with respect to – any matter affecting the services and facilities provided by Transport for London which relate to transport (other than freight) and which have been the subject of representations made to it by or on behalf of users of those services and facilities. Section 252A of the same Act (as amended by Schedule 6 of the Railways Act 2005) places a similar duty upon it in respect of representations received from users or potential users of railway passenger services provided wholly or partly within the London railway area.

6 Financial implications

- 6.1 There are no specific financial implications for London TravelWatch arising from this report.

7 Recommendation

- 7.1 That the report is received for information.

Part 1: Case handling (January to March 2010)

Purpose of report

To record the proficiency of London TravelWatch and of the relevant transport operators in dealing with appeals cases received and referred during the period January to March 2010. The report covers cases received up to and including 31 March 2010.

Target One

This target requires the Casework Team to acknowledge all newly received appeal cases and record them in its database within five working days. Cases which are dealt with directly, as opposed to being referred to an operator, are recorded under Target 5. The exception is those cases which are responses to consultations where we decide to acknowledge the case as a full response cannot be sent prior to the end of the consultation and/or a decision by the Board. The table below shows the performance achieved during the period under review, together with that in the preceding six months (*in italics*).

During the reporting period, 94.9% of cases were acknowledged within five working days, and 98.4% were acknowledged within 10 working days. This represents a decline in performance as compared with the previous period, albeit the volume of appeals received increased by about 27% over the previous period. Further analysis of these 13 cases revealed that the cases that were not being acknowledged promptly were those being forwarded by Passenger Focus and those where initial cases then became appeals. The new Casework Manager has changed procedures to ensure that cases forwarded by Passenger Focus are acknowledged the same day by a Casework Assistant and that where initial cases are escalated to an appeal that a new case reference and acknowledgement are provided.

Working days Elapsed	January to March 2010		<i>October to December 2009</i>	
	No of cases	% of cases	<i>No of cases</i>	<i>% of cases</i>
Days 0-5	244	94.9%	<i>197</i>	<i>97.5%</i>
Days 6-10	9	3.5%	<i>3</i>	<i>1.5%</i>
Days 11-20	4	1.6%	<i>2</i>	<i>1.0%</i>
Days 21+	0	0.0%	<i>0</i>	<i>0.0%</i>
Total	257	100.0%	<i>202</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

Target Two

This target requires the Casework Team to refer 75% of all newly received cases to the relevant operator for attention within five working days, and 100% within 10 working days. The table below shows the performance achieved during the period under review, together with that in the preceding quarter (*in italics*).

During the period, January to March 2010, 75.3% of cases were referred to operators within five working days, compared with 75.1% during the previous quarter. In addition, 90.7% were referred to the relevant operator within 10 working days, compared with 89.1% during the previous quarter. This represents an improvement in performance as compared with the previous period, despite the fact that the number of appeals referred increased by 34% over the previous period.

Working days Elapsed	January to March 2010		<i>October to December 2009</i>	
	No of cases	% of cases	<i>No of cases</i>	<i>% of cases</i>
Days 0-5	195	75.3%	<i>145</i>	<i>75.1%</i>
Days 6-10	40	15.4%	<i>27</i>	<i>14.0%</i>
Days 11-20	21	8.1%	<i>15</i>	<i>7.8%</i>
Days 21+	3	1.2%	<i>6</i>	<i>3.1%</i>
Total	259	100.0%	<i>193</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

As outlined above, performance on Target 3, 4 and 5 will form part of the next report to this Committee.

Target Three

This target, agreed with the transport operators, requires them to respond to 66% of referrals from London TravelWatch within 10 working days, and to 100% within 20 working days. It is accepted that in some complex cases it may not always be possible to meet these deadlines, and in these cases we expect to receive a holding response from an operator followed by regular updates on progress. Performance to this target relates to the substantive response from the operator rather than the holding response.

The tables show the performance achieved during the period under review. The data was presented in overall terms for the last quarter, rather than separately for Transport for London and National Rail due to time constraints. The overall statistics for the last quarter showed 55.7% of cases receiving a response within 20 days and 21.6% of cases taking more than 41 days for a response. We have therefore witnessed an improvement in response times by operators overall during this period.

NATIONAL RAIL		
Working days Elapsed	January to March 2010	
	No of cases	% of cases
Days 0-10	86	61.0%
Days 11-20	19	13.5%
Days 21-40	15	10.6%
Day 41+	21	14.9%
Total	141	100.0%

During the period, 74.5% of responses were received within 20 working days, while the proportion of cases waiting more than 41 days was 14.9%.

TRANSPORT for LONDON		
Working days Elapsed	January to March 2010	
	No of cases	% of cases
Days 0-10	44	40.4%
Days 11-20	34	31.2%
Days 21-40	21	19.3%
Day 41+	10	9.2%
Total	109	100.0%

The proportion of cases dealt with by Transport for London within 20 working days was 71.6%, and that of cases taking over 41 days was 9.2%.

Breakdown of response times by operator

The following table shows the average time taken by each operator to respond to appeal cases. Most operators are responding to cases within 20 working days. For those operators giving rise to relatively few cases, the average response time should be treated with caution, as a delay in responding to a single case may significantly affect the average. This table records only substantive replies and does not include holding responses.

OPERATORS' RESPONSE TIMES		
Operator	January to March 2010	
	Number of appeal cases	Average number of working days
ATOC	0	n/a
BTP	0	n/a
c2c	3	76.7
Chiltern	2	7.5
CrossCountry	0	n/a
Department for Transport	0	n/a
East Coast	3	21.3
East Midlands Trains	2	1.0
Eurostar	7	5.1
First Capital Connect	24	17.6
First Great Western	4	6.3
Heathrow Express	1	6.0
Hull Trains	0	n/a
IAS	1	0.0
IPFAS	0	n/a
London Midland	3	17.7
London Overground	7	12.7
National Express East Anglia	15	11.2
National Rail Enquiries	0	n/a
Network Rail	2	4.0
ORR	0	n/a
RPSS	0	n/a
ScotRail	0	n/a
Southeastern	25	15.2
Southern	11	25.7
South West Trains	17	17.1
Trainline	1	1.0
Virgin West Coast	12	17.4
TfL London Buses	33	15.5
TfL London Underground	20	16.5
TfL Roads & Streets	1	64.0
TfL Dial-a-Ride	1	15.0
TfL Oyster	46	16.2
TfL Other (inc DLR, Taxicard)	8	25.8

Target Four

This target requires 90% of final replies to be written with ten days of receipt and 100% within 20 days of the operators' response. Where there has been more than one response from an operator, the target is based on when the caseworker considers that an acceptable response has been provided.

The table shows the performance achieved during the period under review, with that in the preceding six months (*in italics*).

Working days elapsed	January to March 2010		<i>October to December 2009</i>	
	No of cases	% of cases	<i>No of cases</i>	<i>% of cases</i>
Days 0-10	142	77.2%	<i>135</i>	<i>78.5%</i>
Days 11-20	20	10.9%	<i>19</i>	<i>11.0%</i>
Days 21-40	17	9.2%	<i>10</i>	<i>5.8%</i>
Days 41+	5	2.7%	<i>8</i>	<i>4.7%</i>
Total	184	100.0%	<i>172</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

There was roughly a 1% decline in performance against target compared with the last period for this target against a 7% increase in the number of final replies sent. During this period, final responses to 77.2% of cases were sent within 10 working days and 88.0% of cases within 20 working days (as compared with 78.5% and 89.5% respectively in the last period).

Target Five

Target 5 applies to cases which are dealt with direct by London TravelWatch, without referral to the operator. These cases are usually those where the facts are clear, our policy is well established, and referral to the operator would add no value. The main issues raised during this period were the delays and cancellations on First Capital Connect, penalty fares, changes to booking office opening hours at South West Trains and Chiltern, and changes to the N213 bus route.

For those cases which we are able to provide a response at the time of receipt, the target is based upon the number of working days from receipt of the case to final reply. For those cases, which are the subject of a consultation exercise, the target is based upon the number of working days from the end of the consultation period or when a decision has been made by the Board to when a final reply was provided, whichever is the latter. We consider that, in this way, this provides a true reflection of the performance of the casework team on these issues.

The table shows the performance achieved during the period under review, together with that in the preceding six months (*in italics*).

Working days elapsed	January to March 2010		<i>October to December 2009</i>	
	No of cases	% of cases	<i>No of cases</i>	<i>% of cases</i>
Days 0-10	272	87.2%	253	87.5%
Days 11-20	25	8.0%	28	9.7%
Days 21-40	13	4.2%	4	1.4%
Days 41+	2	0.6%	4	1.4%
Total	312	100.0%	289	100.0%

There was roughly a 2% decline in performance against target compared with the last period for this target against an 8% increase in the number of direct final replies sent. The proportion of cases receiving a final response within 10 working days was 87.2%, while the proportion receiving a final response within 20 working days was 95.2%.

Part 2: Issues by operator

Purpose of report

To record the volume of casework received during the period January to March 2010. A total of 2,873 cases were opened on the database which generated 2,931 complaints. Of these, 1,847 were enquiries and 396 were initials and were signposted or forwarded to the relevant operator for action.

The remainder were either taken up with the relevant operator on behalf of the complainant or were responded to direct. There were a number of consultation cases relating to proposed changes to ticket office opening hours on Chiltern and South West Trains. A full breakdown of the casework by operator is provided below.

Issues	January to March 2010
Enquiries	1847
Initial cases	396
Appeal cases	276
Consultation cases	88
Direct cases	314
Member cases	1
Officer cases	9
Number of complaints	2931

Count of Issue	Case Type							Grand Total
	Appeal	Consultation	Direct	Enquiry	Initial	Member	Officer	
Abellio London				2				2
Abellio Surrey				2				2
Arriva Kent Thameside			1					1
Arriva London North				1				1
ATOC	1		3	1				5
C2C Rail	4		1	22	6			33
Chiltern Railways	2	9	3	6	3			23
Congestion Charging			1	4	1			6
Department for Transport			1	3				4
Dial-a-Ride	1			14	4			19
Docklands Buses					1			1
Docklands Light Railway	1		2	210	9		1	223
East Coast	4				1			5
East Coast Main Line					1			1
East Midlands Trains	2			8	4			14
Eurostar	8		1	18	8			35
First Beeline (Slough)				1				1
First Capital Connect	36		46	112	65			259
First Great Western	7		2	6	2			17
First Hull Trains			1					1
Heathrow Express				2				2
Independent Appeals Service (IAS)	3		7	11	4			25
IPFAS	7		25	11	6			49
Local Government Ombudsman				1				1
London Borough of Lambeth			1					1
London Buses	23		129	970	50		1	1173
London Buses Customer Services Centre	1							1
London Councils				16	3			19
London Midland	2		2	6	7			17
London Overground	4		4	5	8			21
London Tramlink					1			1
London TravelWatch			3	3				6
London Underground	14		10	18	21			63
National Express					1			1
National Express East Anglia	13		7	18	5		2	45
National Rail Enquiries	1		2	121	1			125
National Railways Timetable				1				1
Network Rail	7		1	5				13
Oyster Helpline	13		2	20	15			50
Passenger Focus	1		1	11	14			27
Public Carriage Office	1			1				2
Rail Europe			1					1
RPSS			3	1	1			5
South West Trains	19	78	10	9	19			135
Southeastern			6	11	26			43
Southeastern Railway	29		10	3	12		1	55

Count of Issue	Case Type							Grand Total
Operator	Appeal	Consultation	Direct	Enquiry	Initial	Member	Officer	Grand Total
Southern	10		9	16	11			46
Trainline	2		1	1	1			5
Tramtrack Croydon Limited			1	1	1			3
Transport for London	51	1	13	126	73	1	4	269
Transport for London River Services			1	3				4
Transport for London Streets	1		2	9	2			14
Victoria Coach Station				1				1
Virgin Trains	8		1	33	9			51
(blank)								
Grand Total	276	88	314	1844	396	1	9	2928

Part 3: Performance Update

As of 8 July 2010, the number of cases open on the casework database was 177. Of these, 100 were awaiting an operators' response and 17 were awaiting further correspondence from the complainant.

Case Stage	Case Type					Grand Total
	Appeal	Direct	Enquiry	Initial	Officer	
Awaiting operators' response	92		2	3	3	100
Awaiting referral	2					2
Awaiting response from complainant	16		1			17
Case Received	13	3	4			20
Escalated	3	1				4
Under Consideration	26	1	4	1		32
(blank)	2					2
Grand Total	154	5	11	4	3	177

Part 4: Questionnaire Survey

This report analyses questionnaires which were completed and returned to London TravelWatch relating to cases received between 1 October 2009 and 31 March 2010.

The total number of questionnaires received is currently showing as 120 as compared to 170 in the previous six month period, despite the number of cases increasing. The main reason for this is that the design of the workflows on the new database have meant that only cases taken forward as appeals have been receiving questionnaires and those that have been dealt with direct have not. The contractor has advised us against redesigning workflows in a live environment, and therefore we will amend this issue as part of the planned changes to the database.

Direct cases tend to be resolved more quickly – we can usually tell the complainant our views on an issue or provide them with the information they need without having to go to an operator first – this also impacts on the proportion of cases that issue a response more quickly or have the information. Therefore while providing some interesting data, these figures do not provide a like for like comparison with the previous six month period.

Some of the questions may not sum to 120, as some respondents did not answer all questions.

Question 1: Have you ever contacted London TravelWatch before?

Answers	Oct 09 to Mar 10		Apr 09 to Sep 09	
Yes	25	(21%)	20	(12%)
No	95	(79%)	148	(89%)

Question 2: How did you first hear about London TravelWatch?

Answers	Oct 09 to Mar 10		Apr 09 to Sep 09	
Transport provider or member of staff	35	29.5%	69	40.5%
Notice at station	1	1%	13	8%
Item on timetable/bus map	3	2.5%	4	2.5%
Notice on bus, tram, train, pier	5	4%	5	3%
London TravelWatch website	9	7.5%	6	3.5%
Operator website	17	14.5%	17	10%
Other website	14	12%		
Word of mouth	10	8.5%	13	7.5%
Newspaper/magazine/radio/TV	0	0%	3	2%
London TravelWatch leaflet	3	2.5%	2	1%
Passenger Focus	7	6%	11	6.5%
ORR	0	0%	0	0%
DfT	0	0%	0	0%
National Rail Enquiries	0	0%	0	0%
Other sources	14	12%	27	16%

During this period, the largest proportion of complainants heard of London TravelWatch from the transport provider was 29.5%. However, it is noticeable that a significant proportion found out about us through the web with a further 34% stating this source (our website 7.5%, operators' websites 14.5% and other websites 12%).

Question 3: What was your complaint about?

Answers	Oct 09 to Mar 10		Apr 09 to Sep 09	
Transport service performance	20	17%	25	15%
Staff conduct or availability	14	12%	11	6.5%
Sale of tickets, fares and refunds	48	40.5%	49	29%
Information on vehicle, station or stop	3	2.5%	6	3.5%
Information by phone, web or other provider	2	1.5%	4	2.5%
Timetable	5	4%	3	2%
Cleanliness of vehicle, station or facilities	3	2.5%	1	0.5%
Complaint handling by operator	10	8.5%	18	10.5%
Safety and security	1	1%	3	2%
Travelling environment	3	2.5%	3	2%
Accessibility	2	1.5%	31	18.5%
Other	7	6%	15	9%

The most common complaint category during the period was Sale of tickets, fares and refunds, followed by transport service performance.

Question 4: How satisfied were you with the outcome of London TravelWatch's investigation into your concerns?

Answers	Oct 09 to Mar 10		Apr 09 to Sep 09	
Very satisfied	32	27%	76	45%
Fairly satisfied	28	24%	43	25%
Dissatisfied	21	18%	24	14%
Very dissatisfied	38	32%	27	16%

On a weighted scale ranging from 100 (=100% 'very satisfied') to 0 (= 100% 'very dissatisfied') the six month mean score was 48. This was an 18 point decrease on the previous period, which we believe was primarily due to the change in the sample as explained above with dissatisfaction particularly centring on issues that we find difficult to impact such as staff conduct.

Question 5: How quickly did London TravelWatch deal with your concerns?

Answers	Oct 09 to Mar 10		Apr 09 to Sep 09	
Very quickly	29	25.5%	70	42%
Fairly quickly	47	41%	65	39%
Slowly	23	20%	16	10%
Much too slowly	15	13%	14	8%

On a weighted scale ranging from 100 (= 100% 'very quickly') to 0 (=100% 'much too slowly') the six month mean score was 60. This was a 12 point decrease from the previous period.

Question 6: Leaving aside the outcome, how satisfied were you with the way London TravelWatch handled your concerns?

Answers	Oct 09 to Mar 10		Apr 09 to Sep 09	
Very satisfied	49	42%	93	59%
Fairly satisfied	28	24%	32	20%
Dissatisfied	18	15.5%	17	11%
Very dissatisfied	22	19%	16	10%

On a weighted scale ranging from 100 (=100% 'very satisfied') to 0 (=100% 'very dissatisfied') the six month mean score was 63. This was a 13 point decrease from the previous period.

Do you have any comments to make on the service you received from London TravelWatch?

A selection of responses appears in the appendix of this report.

Question 7: Would you recommend London TravelWatch to anyone else who had transport problems in and around London?

Answers	Oct 09 to Mar 10		Apr 09 to Sep 09	
Yes	87	72.5%	129	80%
No	33	27.5%	32	20%

For those respondents who provided such information, below are the results of the additional monitoring questions.

Age	Oct 09 to Mar 10		Apr 09 to Sep 09	
Under 18	0	0%	1	0.5%
18 – 24	4	3.5%	4	2.5%
25 – 34	24	21%	25	16%
35 – 44	30	26.5%	33	21.5%
45 – 54	27	23.5%	31	20%
55 – 64	21	18.5%	38	24.5%
65+	8	7%	22	14.5%

Type of transport user	Oct 09 to Mar 10		Apr 09 to Sep 09	
Regular commuter	72	63.5%	81	53.5%
Occasional commuter	10	21%	19	12.5%
Regular leisure user	13	11.5%	22	14.5%
Occasional leisure user	9	8%	17	11.5%
Business user	4	3.5%	8	5.5%
Other	5	4.5%	4	2.5%

Gender	Oct 09 to Mar 10		Apr 09 to Sep 09	
Male	82	68.5%	99	65%
Female	38	31.5%	53	35%

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?	Oct 09 to Mar 10		Apr 09 to Sep 09	
Yes	7	6%	10	6.5%
No	113	94%	139	93.5%

Ethnic origin	Oct 09 to Mar 10		Apr 09 to Sep 09	
White British	75	71.5%	103	74.5%
White Irish	3	3%	4	3%
White Other	15	14.5%	14	10%
Black Caribbean	0	0%	2	1.5%
Black African	0	0%	4	3%
Black other	1	1%	1	0.5%
Asian Bangladeshi	0	0%	0	0%
Asian Pakistani	0	0%	0	0%
Asian Indian	0	0%	3	2%
Asian other	4	4%	2	1.5%
Chinese	1	1%	3	2%
Other ethnic group/Dual heritage	6	6%	1	1.5%

Working status	Oct 09 to Mar 10		Apr 09 to Sep 09	
Working full-time	77	67.5%	96	62.5%
Working part-time	18	16%	18	12%
Retired	9	8%	29	19%
Unemployed	4	3.5%	1	0.5%
Student	2	2%	1	0.5%
Not working	1	1%	1	0.5%
Other	3	2.5%	7	4.5%

Type of ticket	Oct 09 to Mar 10		Apr 09 to Sep 09	
Season ticket	33	28.5%	36	24%
Oyster Pay-as-you-go	28	24.5%	25	16.5%
Travelcard	20	17.5%	23	15.5%
Ordinary single/return	14	12%	28	18.5%
Freedom pass	8	7%	26	17.5%
Advance Purchase	2	1.5%	1	0.5%
Other	10	9%	11	7.5%

Appendix: extracts from comments received

- 1 Operator's version of events was inconsistent with my evidence
- 2 The company would not make refunds for cancelled services
- 3 You should encourage best practice in complaint handling by operators
- 4 I was not told exactly what action was taken against the driver concerned
- 5 I feel that FCC should have explained more on the purchase of my ticket
- 6 The train company refused to offer a refund. LTW did their utmost to argue my case.
- 7 Not the fault of LTW - Southeastern refused to budge on refunds
- 8 I was happy that you represented me but unhappy with the compensation.
- 9 Negotiations between operators will take a long time. There is hope it will happen.
- 10 There was no better outcome than when I had contacted SWT directly myself.
- 11 The answers from operator were unsatisfactory but partial refund was welcomed
- 12 I only got vouchers and I should have got a refund as it was not my fault
- 13 TfL should provide compensation to season ticket holders for closures not advertised a year in advance

Annex A: Case Types and Stages

Case Type	Explanation
Appeals	Cases we take up on behalf of the complainant. We refer these to the appropriate operator(s) and consider the response we receive from them.
Consultation	Cases that are subject to consultation. For example, cases received as part of the proposed changes to booking office hours by First Capital Connect where we would respond once a Board decision has been made.
Direct cases	Cases where we respond directly to a complaint, without going to the operator, either because we know the answer, have already got an agreed policy on the issue or we have no remit e.g. penalty fare cases which have followed the correct procedure.
Enquiries	These are requests for information, and are dealt with primarily by telephone. For many enquiries, we act as a signpost informing complainants who the most appropriate operator is to deal with their complaint or request for information or to register a lost property request.
Initials	Cases which have not yet been dealt with by the appropriate transport company. We pass to the appropriate operator and inform the complainant that we have done so
Members	Cases raised on behalf of London TravelWatch members
Officers	Cases raised on behalf of London TravelWatch officers

Case Stage	Explanation
Awaiting operators' response	Cases which are awaiting a response from the operator
Awaiting referral	New cases which await referral
Awaiting response from complainant	A request for further information has been sent to the complainant
Case Received	New cases awaiting action.
Escalated	Cases which have been escalated to a higher level with an operator, to a regulatory body or to a committee
Under Consideration	Direct cases awaiting a response or appeal cases where an operators' response has been received
Blank	Cases requiring classification