
Secretariat memorandum

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Agenda item
CA057
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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 April to June 2010.

2 Casework database

- 2.1 Work is ongoing on making changes to the database to improve performance reporting. The test environment has been commissioned which will enable changes to the database structure to be tested prior to going live. We are currently agreeing a specification to changes to functionality with the contractor which, when completed, should enable a quicker turnaround time for performance reports in future.

3 Performance reports

- 3.1 This report covers the period from April to June 2010. During this period, the number of appeal and initial cases remained broadly unchanged, while the number of direct cases significantly decreased. The period also witnessed an improvement in performance against all of our targets, and a welcome overall improvement in response times by operators. Susan Parham-McCance joined the team as the new Casework Manager replacing Christine Evans.
- 3.2 Part 1 records performance against the turn round targets set in the Business Plan for the period from April to June 2010.
- 3.3 Part 2 analyses issues received by operator for the period from April to June 2010.
- 3.4 Part 3 provides a performance update on the number of cases open on the database as of 7 September 2010 and their status.

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 (April to June 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 April to June 2010. The report covers cases received up to and including 30 June 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 three months (*in italics*).

During the reporting period, 98.9% of cases were acknowledged within five working days, and 99.6% were acknowledged within 10 working days. This represents an improvement in performance as compared with the previous period, and affirms our view that we now have robust procedures in place to ensure cases get acknowledged quickly. While emails are automatically acknowledged, we ensure that cases that are in letter or fax form or originate from Passenger Focus are acknowledged the same day by a Casework Assistant.

Working days Elapsed	April to June 2010		<i>January to March 2010</i>	
	No of cases	% of cases	<i>No of cases</i>	<i>% of cases</i>
Days 0-5	278	98.9%	<i>244</i>	<i>94.9%</i>
Days 6-10	2	0.7%	<i>9</i>	<i>3.5%</i>
Days 11-20	1	0.4%	<i>4</i>	<i>1.6%</i>
Days 21+	0	0.0%	<i>0</i>	<i>0.0%</i>
Total	281	100.0%	<i>257</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 April to June 2010, 88.7% of cases were referred to operators within five working days, compared with 75.3% during the previous quarter. This represents the best performance on this target since 2003.

In addition, 97.7% were referred to the relevant operator within 10 working days, compared with 90.7% during the previous quarter. This represents an improvement in performance as compared with the previous period.

Working days Elapsed	April to June 2010		<i>January to March 2010</i>	
	No of cases	% of cases	<i>No of cases</i>	<i>% of cases</i>
Days 0-5	235	88.7%	195	75.3%
Days 6-10	24	9.1%	40	15.4%
Days 11-20	3	1.1%	21	8.1%
Days 21+	3	1.1%	3	1.2%
Total	265	100.0%	259	100.0%

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.

NATIONAL RAIL				
Working days elapsed	April to June 2010		<i>January to March 2010</i>	
	No of cases	% of cases	<i>No of cases</i>	<i>% of cases</i>
Days 0-10	85	68.5%	86	61.0%
Days 11-20	14	11.3%	19	13.5%
Days 21-40	14	11.3%	15	10.6%
Day 41+	11	8.9%	21	14.9%
Total	124	100.0%	141	100.0%

Some 79.8% of responses were received within 20 working days, which represents a small improvement on the last period. The number of cases waiting more than 41 days for a response declined to 8.9% of cases.

TRANSPORT for LONDON				
Working days elapsed	April to June 2010		<i>January to March 2010</i>	
	No of cases	% of cases	<i>No of cases</i>	<i>% of cases</i>
Days 0-10	50	43.9%	44	40.4%
Days 11-20	49	43.0%	34	31.2%
Days 21-40	13	11.4%	21	19.3%
Day 41+	2	1.8%	10	9.2%
Total	114	100.0%	109	100.0%

The proportion of cases dealt with by Transport for London within 20 working days was 86.8%, which was a significant improvement over the previous period. The number of cases taking over 41 days was also significantly lower at 1.8%.

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	April to June 2010		January to March 2010
	Number of appeal cases	Average number of working days	Average number of working days
ATOC	1	1.0	n/a
BTP	-	n/a	n/a
c2c	-	n/a	76.7
Chiltern	1	1.0	7.5
CrossCountry	-	n/a	n/a
Department for Transport	-	n/a	n/a
East Coast	5	11.2	21.3
East Midlands Trains	-	n/a	1.0
Eurostar	10	4.0	5.1
First Capital Connect	17	11.2	17.6
First Great Western	-	n/a	6.3
Heathrow Express	-	n/a	6.0
Hull Trains	-	n/a	n/a
IAS	3	5.0	0.0
IPFAS	1	0.0	n/a
London Midland	6	30.5	17.7
London Overground	4	9.0	12.7
National Express East Anglia	13	7.8	11.2
National Rail Enquiries	1	45.0	n/a
Network Rail	1	20.0	4.0
ORR	-	n/a	n/a
RPSS	-	n/a	n/a
ScotRail	-	n/a	n/a
Southeastern	19	13.3	15.2
Southern	18	17.8	25.7
South West Trains	17	6.5	17.1
Trainline	6	8.0	1.0
Virgin West Coast	5	20.4	17.4
TfL London Buses	26	11.8	15.5
TfL London Underground	26	11.7	16.5
TfL Roads & Streets	2	6.0	64.0
TfL Dial-a-Ride	-	n/a	15.0
TfL Oyster	50	14.8	16.2
TfL Other (inc DLR, Taxicard)	6	9.3	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 three months (*in italics*).

Working days elapsed	April to June 2010		<i>January to March 2010</i>	
	No of cases	% of cases	<i>No of cases</i>	<i>% of cases</i>
Days 0-10	212	88.7%	<i>142</i>	<i>77.2%</i>
Days 11-20	15	6.3%	<i>20</i>	<i>10.9%</i>
Days 21-40	6	2.5%	<i>17</i>	<i>9.2%</i>
Days 41+	6	2.5%	<i>5</i>	<i>2.7%</i>
Total	239	100.0%	<i>184</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

The period saw a much improved level of performance despite an increase in the number of cases finalised. During this period, final responses to 88.7% of cases were sent within 10 working days and 95.0% of cases within 20 working days (as compared with 77.2% and 88.0% 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.

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 three months (*in italics*).

Working days elapsed	April to June 2010		January to March 2010	
	No of cases	% of cases	No of cases	% of cases
Days 0-10	174	97.8%	272	87.2%
Days 11-20	1	0.6%	25	8.0%
Days 21-40	3	1.7%	13	4.2%
Days 41+	0	0.0%	2	0.6%
Total	178	100.0%	312	100.0%

The period saw a much improved level of performance, albeit that significantly fewer direct cases were finalised. During this period, final responses to 97.8% of cases were sent within 10 working days and 98.3% of cases within 20 working days (as compared with 87.2% and 95.2% respectively in the last period).

Part 2: Issues by operator

Purpose of report

To record the volume of casework received during the period April to June 2010. A total of 2,914 cases were opened on the database, which generated 2,951 complaints. Of these, 2,139 were enquiries and 311 were initials and were signposted or forwarded to the relevant operator for action.

We noted a significant increase in telephone enquiries relating to National Rail Enquiries during the period as our telephone number was prominent on a revised version of their website. These calls were for journey information and as such we considered that we were not best placed to deal with them. As a result, we came to an agreement with ATOC to remove our telephone number from the NRES website.

The remainder were either taken up with the relevant operator on behalf of the complainant or were responded to direct. The period witnessed a reduction in the number of direct cases after the high number in the previous quarter. A full breakdown of the casework by operator is provided below.

Issues	April to June 2010
Enquiries	2139
Initial cases	311
Appeal cases	316
Consultation cases	2
Direct cases	178
Member cases	3
Officer cases	93
Number of complaints	2951

Count of Case Type	Case Type							Grand Total
	Appeal	Consultation	Direct	Enquiry	Initial	Member	Officer	
Abellio Surrey				1				1
Arriva The Shires					1			1
Arriva Trains Wales	1							1
ATOC	2			1				3
British Transport Police				1				1
Bus Users UK				1				1
C2C Rail	2		1	17	4			24
Chiltern Railways	1	1	3	8	4			17
Department for Transport				1				1
Dial-a-Ride				12	5			17
Docklands Light Railway	2		3	108	4			117
East Coast	6			3	2			11
East Midlands Trains	1		2	10				13
Eurostar	11		9	8	16			44
First Beeline (Slough)				1				1
First Capital Connect	17		10	101	26			154
First Great Western			1	17	5			23
Heathrow Express				1				1
Independent Appeals Service (IAS)	5		4	13	7			29
IPFAS	2		12	11	12			37
London and Continental				2				2
London Buses	30		12	968	53	1		1064
London Buses Customer Services Centre	1							1
London Councils				6				6
London Midland	7		1	13	3			24
London Overground	3		1	7	5			16
London Tramlink	1		1	1				3
London TravelWatch			13	8	1			22
London Underground	25		7	23	19			74
Metroline				1	1			2
National Express			2	2	1			5
National Express East Anglia	13		6	29	21			69
National Rail Enquiries	2		11	444	9			466
Network Rail	3		7	14	8			32
Oyster Helpline	9		1	22	14			46
Passenger Focus	4			9	10			23
Public Carriage Office			4	3				7
RPSS	1			1				2
ScotRail			1					1
South West Trains	23	1	7	21	5			57
Southeastern Railway	29		12	21	16		1	79
Southern	22		12	21	10			65
Taxicard				1				1
Trainline	5			7	1			13
Tramtrack Croydon Limited			1	1	2			4
Trans Pennine Express			1					1
Transport for London	80		31	142	43	2	1	299
Transport for London Streets				10	1			11
Victoria Coach Station				4	1			5
Virgin Trains	8		2	43	1			54
Grand Total	316	2	178	2139	311	3	2	2951

Part 3: Performance Update

As at 7 September 2010, the number of cases open on the casework database was 162. Of these, 114 were awaiting an operators' response and 11 were awaiting further correspondence from the complainant.

Count of Case Type	Case Type					Grand Total
Row Labels	Appeal	Direct	Enquiry	Initial	Officer	
Awaiting operators' response	104	2	4		4	114
Awaiting referral			1			1
Awaiting response from complainant	9		1	1		11
Case Received	2	1	7	1		11
Escalated	4	1				5
Under Consideration	15		2	1		18
(blank)	2					2
Grand Total	136	4	15	3	4	162

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