
Report of meeting from external body

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Information Item (e)

LTW 287

Drafted 28/1/09

Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety minutes

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To record for information the proceedings of a meeting of an external body attended by a representative of London TravelWatch.

2 Information

- 2.1 The minutes of a meeting of the Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety held on 9 September 2008 are attached as Annex A. The Deputy Chief Executive, John Cartledge, represented London TravelWatch at this meeting.
- 2.2 The minutes were prepared by the Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety and London TravelWatch has no responsibility for their content or format.

3 Equalities and inclusion implications

- 3.1 Not applicable – report is for information only.

4 Financial implications

- 4.1 Not applicable – report is for information only

5 Legal powers

- 5.1 Section 252A of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 places a duty upon London TravelWatch (as the London Transport Users Committee) to keep under review matters affecting the interests of the public in relation to railway passenger and station services provided wholly or partly within the London railway area, and to make representations about them to such persons as it thinks appropriate.

6 Recommendation

- 6.1 That the report is received for information.

Annex A

PARLIAMENTARY ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR TRANSPORT SAFETY

Minutes of the 42nd meeting of the Rail Safety Working Party

Tuesday 9th September 2008 2-5pm

Railway Industry Association, 22 Headfort Place, London SW1X 7RY

1. Welcome, attendance and apologies

Attendees:

Professor Andrew Evans (Chair)	Imperial College, London
Robert Gifford	PACTS
Rebecca Gwilliam	PACTS
David Smith (replacing Chris Austin)	ATOC
Julie Mills	Greengauge 21
Sanjay Jamuar	Network Rail
Dave Bennett	ASLEF
Professor John Preston	University of Southampton
Rachel King	RSSB
John Cartledge	London Travel Watch/Passenger Focus
Sam Challis	ORR
Francis How	RIA

Apologies:

Andy Savage	RAIB
John Bengough	DfT

Professor Andrew Evans welcomed those present and thanked the RIA for kindly hosting the meeting.

2. Minutes of last meeting

John Cartledge (JC) commented that the Empathy project was now fully under way.

AE asked for a grammatical alteration on page two : RSSC was to be corrected to read RSSB.

3. Matters arising

Robert Gifford (RG) noted that as a consequence of the Joint Working Party note (tabled at the May 2008 meeting) ATOC, Network Rail and RSSB had all been approached and invited to attend this meeting. RG thanked them for sending representatives.

4. New Lines and High Speed Rail Presentations

The group received presentations from Sanjay Jamuar (SJ) of Network Rail and Julie Mills of Greengauge 21 on the topic of High Speed Rail (HSR). The first presentation covered the work currently being undertaken by Network Rail to see if a business case exists for one or more new lines which may incorporate HSR. The UK currently has the highest freight and passenger growth in Europe, and the potential to increase capacity on the traditional network, will not match projected demand growth.

Network Rail are looking at strategic issues such as the relationship between speed, reliability, capacity and mixed traffic and examining trade-offs that exist between these factors. Issues surrounding energy consumption, station location, released capacity as a result of new HSR lines, and the extent of the market for HSR are also being investigated.

Julie Mills of Greengauge 21, a not for profit company with a principle objective of researching and developing the case for high speed rail in the UK, gave a presentation on their progress. She argued that the four key drivers for HSR were; capacity, journey times, the environmental case and economic growth and regeneration. HSR, as evidenced in other countries, has an excellent safety record. Journey time benefits have tended to dominate the business case but safety benefits do exist, perhaps largely through the potential shift away from car use. In terms of modal shift, the largest movement will be from other rail services. The 'freeing up' of the conventional network, as a result of HSR introduction, is one of the cornerstones of the business case.

Greengauge have produced several reports on HSR including High Speed 2 and the Next Steps report. They have estimated that the cost of HSR-2 would be £11bn whilst the Next Steps report, sponsored by a public interest group with members including railway industry bodies, regional development agencies and City authorities, identified five possible corridors for high speed rail. Currently, Greengauge is working on assessing the potential of each of these lines and facilitating stakeholder engagement.

Considerable discussion of the issues raised followed. David Smith (DS) noted that the current economic climate and significantly disrupted services due to engineering work do not appear to have affected passenger numbers, reinforcing the strength of demand for rail services. JC questioned the assumptions upon which HSR was built on such as the 'predict and provide' mentality, long abandoned in other modes of transport. He suggested that the basic needs of passengers on less fashionable lines should be catered for before new HSR lines were installed.

JM accepted that problems needed to be sorted on existing lines, but noted further that HSR was not being suggested as the answer to all rail related problems. She commented that HSR was being proposed as a key opportunity to provide economic and environment efficiency to the UK. Whilst producing this case was clearly a work in progress, hence the work of Greengauge and Network Rail, she believed the fundamental principle of providing for the demand for rail services to be sound. JM also commented that some public funding would be required for the HSR-2 project.

Discussion also centred on the geographical elements of the project. Currently Network Rail had not touched upon this element of HSR, although it was widely suggested within the group that there would be considerable political, economic, social and environmental tensions as to the potential location of the HSR-2 line and stations. Furthermore, areas with existing transport networks (motorways/rail lines) would be advantaged in the decision making process of HSR-2.

Several members of the group supported the belief that it was right to be considering the issue of HSR now, but the benefits to the existing railway, and the possibility of spending the money on other areas of the transport network should be considered further. RG felt that the three key

questions that needed to be asked concerned the benefits to safety through modal shift, the ability of the railway industry to upgrade the current lines and build HSR, and the identification of the likely consumers of HSR. AE pointed out that in terms of safety, the issue of access to stations would be fundamental.

AE thanked SJ and JM for their presentations.

5. Transport Select Committee Report: 'Delivering a Sustainable Railway: A 30 year strategy for Railways'

RG welcomed Professor John Preston (JP), adviser on the tabled report, to the meeting. He commented that the report had initially intended to focus on the three pillars of sustainability but had, in its final state, centred more around the issue of whether Network Rail could deliver HLOS 1 and the strategy, or lack of it, concerning electrification and HSR. He commented that there was little mention in the report of safety or safety targets. JC stated that we should take comfort from the fact that safety did not need to be top of the agenda although there needed to be space made for the funding of the railways and the so-called 'historic' public/private division and the levels of subsidy and fares. The issue of how long income effects would last in accommodating fare rises was also mentioned as well as the growth of a network which the current system is unable to cope with. Electrification was discussed with both DS suggesting that sensible electrification schemes in the short term would be most practical, and there was already some work being undertaken here. Dave Bennett (DB) circulated material produced by ASLEF in response to the report advocating electrification.

There was also a brief discussion on the process of producing the Select Committee reports.

6. 'Safe and Secure' – PACTS October Conference

RG circulated promotional material for the PACTS 'Safe and Secure' Conference, held this year on the 15th October at the Royal College of Surgeons, looking at the topic of safety within public transport.

7. AOB

AE invited members and any other interested parties to the 5th Lloyd's Educational Trust lecture on Wednesday 8th October at Imperial College. The lecture, entitled 'Transport Safety – is the law an ass?', and would be given by Dr. Chris Elliott. There would be no cost to attend.

RG highlighted the release of new RSSB safety reports, which are available on their website. Links will also be placed on the PACTS website.

AE commented on the disparity between RSSB and ORR casualty figures. Sam Challis (SC) responded that much work was ongoing to resolve this disparity, which centred on discrepancies in categorisation between the two organisations.

JC mentioned three projects he was currently aware of looking at platform edge fatalities and alcohol.

8. Dates of the next meeting

The proposed dates of the next two meetings are Tuesday 13th January 2009 and Tuesday 12th May 2009.