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**Secretariat memorandum**

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Casework report for the period October to December 2014.

**1 Purpose of report**

- 1.1. To record the performance of operators in handling appeals the period October to December 2014. To identify any issues of concern regarding operator performance and highlight key issues reported by the public.

**2 Performance report**

- 2.1 The report is divided into three parts. The first part records the volume and the type of incoming work. The second part monitors the time taken by transport operators to deal with appeals and the third part gives more information about the issues passengers are bringing to us.
- 2.2 There is one appendix which summarises the volume and case type received over the past four years.

**3 Equalities and inclusion implications**

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

**4 Legal powers**

- 4.1 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.

**5 Financial implications**

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

## 1: Cases received

This report covers incoming casework received from October to December 2014.

This part of the report records the volume of casework received during October to December 2014. A total of 1,274 contacts were received by London TravelWatch via telephone, email and web form.

Case types	Oct to Dec 2014	Jul to Sep 2014	Apr to Jun 2014	Jan to Mar 2014	Oct to Dec 2013	Jul to Sep 2013
Casework related telephone enquiries	188	392	451	436	355	398
Enquiries email	111	36	24	30	87	48
Initial cases	418	446	434	472	405	320
Request for papers	103	95	110	93	74	88
Appeals made to operator	210	287	296	274	237	291
Appeals responded to directly	244	306	320	347	235	250
<b>Appeals sub total</b>	<b>454</b>	<b>593</b>	<b>616</b>	<b>621</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>541</b>
<b>Total contacts</b>	<b>1274</b>	<b>1562</b>	<b>1635</b>	<b>1652</b>	<b>1393</b>	<b>1395</b>

### Enquiries telephone

This is a record of all telephone calls that have some connection to casework. It is not a record of all incoming telephone calls received by London TravelWatch.

Last quarter the casework report indicated that the location of our telephone number had been changed on a popular bus route website and the incoming casework telephone calls had fallen. Quarter three statistics clearly show the drop in bus related phone calls as passengers who are using the bus website are now being routed correctly through to Transport for London (TfL).

### Initials

An initial case is one where the complainant has not yet approached the operator.

### Papers

A case classified as request for papers is asking the passenger to forward full correspondence between themselves and the operator.

### Appeals made to operator

Where the passenger has already complained to the operator and London TravelWatch take it forward as an appeal.

### Appeals responded to directly

A 'direct' categorised case is one where London TravelWatch responds directly to the passenger without needing to contact the operator.

## 2: Operator response times

### National Rail operators

This target, agreed with the rail operators, requires them to respond to 75% 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	October to December 2014		July to September 2014	
	No of cases closed	No of cases closed	No of cases closed	No of cases closed
Days 0-10	85	79%	123	79%
Days 11-20	11	10%	8	5%
Days 21-40	7	7%	17	11%
Day 41+	4	4%	7	5%
Total	107		155	

The National Rail operator's responses have made small improvements to their average response times (to London TravelWatch) to 89% within 20 days. As part of their own internal service improvements, many operators advertise that they will aim to respond within 10 days to passenger complaints but they have not yet indicated a similar intention towards London TravelWatch.

## Transport for London

Transport for London have no official agreement to respond to London TravelWatch however late 2013, TfL reduced their response targets for passengers and London TravelWatch from 20 to 10 days.

TRANSPORT for LONDON				
Working days elapsed	October to December 2014		July to September 2014	
	No of cases closed	No of cases closed	No of cases closed	No of cases closed
Days 0-10	<b>28</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>75%</b>
Days 11-20	<b>16</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16%</b>
Days 21-40	4	8%	7	7%
Day 41+	1	2%	2	2%
Total	49		94	

It is clear that TfL's performance percentage of responding to passengers within 10 days has decreased quite considerably. However, the number of cases received in quarter three is almost half that of quarter two. This could mean that TfL are managing their complaints more effectively and only the more complex issues are reaching London TravelWatch or that TfL themselves had reduced contacts but there is no current evidence to support either hypothesis.

Incoming appeals regarding TfL modes will be monitored over the coming months to see if the quantity of cases remain low and to check the response times to London TravelWatch appeals.

## National Rail operators' response times

Operator	Oct to Dec 2014		Jul to Sept 2014		Apr to June 2014		Jan to Mar 2014		Oct to Dec 2013	
	No of cases	Average working days	No of cases	Average working days	No of cases	Average working days	No of cases	Average working days	No of cases	Average working days
ATOC	1	11	1	1			2	7	1	52
BTP										
c2c	3	2	2	1	2	8	2	5		
Chiltern	1	5	5	28	6	3	1	1	3	18
CrossCountry										
Department for Transport	1	29								
Deutsche Bahn										
East Coast	4	14	11	18	6	15	6	10	1	61
East Midlands Trains					1	1				
Eurostar	4	1	7	1	1	1	4	3	3	3
FCC/Thameslink (GTR)	4	1	13	3	16	13	15	13	16	5
First Great Western	4	9	5	19	8	22	2	1	3	6
Grand Central									5	3
Gatwick Express										
Greater Anglia	13	13	14	13	11	12	15	2		
GTR	7	1	3	21	4	10	1	0	2	11
Heathrow Express					2	18	1	0		
Hull Trains			17	4	21	2	20	3	13	3
IAS	10	1	14	0	6	2	11	1	8	1
IPFAS	5	1	1	0	2	8	5	1	3	2
London Midland	2	50			1	5				6
National Rail Enquiries	1	8	3	12						
Network Rail	1	42								
ORR										
RailEurope							1	1		
RPSS	1	1							1	1
Rail Easy										
ScotRail										
Southeastern	7	11	12	14	12	8	13	1	13	9
Southern	20	6	26	6	40	10	41	5	39	6
South West Trains	15	9	19	7	27	6	23	4	12	5
Trainline			1	0					2	4
Virgin West Coast			1	0			4	3	1	1

## Transport for London

Operator	Oct to Dec 2014		Jul to Sept 2014		Apr to Jun 2014		Jan to Mar 2014		Oct to Dec 2013	
	No of cases	Average working days	No of cases	Average working days	No of cases	Average working days	No of cases	Average working days	No of cases	Average working days
Docklands Light Railway	1	16	4	1	7	2	6	3		
London Overground	1	1	3	4	5	2	4	1		
TfL London Buses	21	10	20	11	24	9	40	9	20	5
TfL London Underground	4	14	16	6	16	8	14	4	14	6
TfL Roads & Streets	1	1	6	14	4	9	4	8	2	5
TfL Dial-a-Ride			2	0	1	2				
Oyster	18	7	27	6	25	9	25	4	16	8
TfL Other	3	9	16	15	5	1	13	5	17	2

*\*IPFAS, IAS and RPSS are all appeal or revenue collection bodies. IAS also manages the first stage penalty fare appeal for Transport for London.*

The table above and on the preceding page shows the average time taken by each operator or TfL mode, to respond to appeal cases. The average response times should be treated with caution, as a delay in responding to a single case may significantly affect the average.

## **Information regarding cases open longer than 41 days**

### **National Rail Operators**

#### **Greater Anglia**

A passenger made a complaint about the available space for wheelchairs in first class. Greater Anglia resolved the complaint satisfactorily and offered a good will gesture. Unfortunately, the cheque was not raised and then the Christmas post delayed it further. The case was kept open until the passenger confirmed receipt.

#### **East Coast**

This passenger did not receive tickets which were to be sent to her home address. The first batch of tickets appeared to go astray and the TOC not keen to dispatch a second set. The TOC agreed with London TravelWatch that a second set of tickets should be dispatched and the passenger confirmed receipt enabling us to close the case.

#### **London Midland**

This case took a long time to resolve but it was resolved successfully due to London Midland's help. A car parking issue arose in a London Midland station adjacent car park which is run by a third party company. The customer had received a parking fine but was in the possession of a valid ticket. The delay in closing the case was due to the correspondence moving between the customer and Meteor parking via both London TravelWatch and London Midland. The outcome of the case is that the error was recognised and the customer received a full refund.

#### **Network Rail**

This case came from an elderly passenger who felt that there was insufficient time between the platform announcement and the train departure at Kings Cross station, particularly for the Great Northern trains. The caseworker discussed this with the casework manager who is familiar with the station and the train service mentioned. There should be an announcement minimum of 10 minutes before departure for suburban service platform. The large departure screens do normally give 10 minutes but the verbal announcements may not be immediate due to other services. Also Great Northern trains can arrive/leave from the other side of the station and less than 10 minutes is insufficient time for some passengers to reach their train before it departs.

Network Rail stated that there were often delays in selecting platforms for the arriving suburban trains (as these trains go out again almost immediately) and this could delay the platform announcement. But Network Rail did say that they would try to ensure as much notice as possible.

The caseworker suggested to the passenger that if the return journey time was known, station assistance could be booked. It would then be responsibility of Network Rail to ensure he made his train.

This has been passed to the policy team to take forwards.

### **Transport for London - Bus**

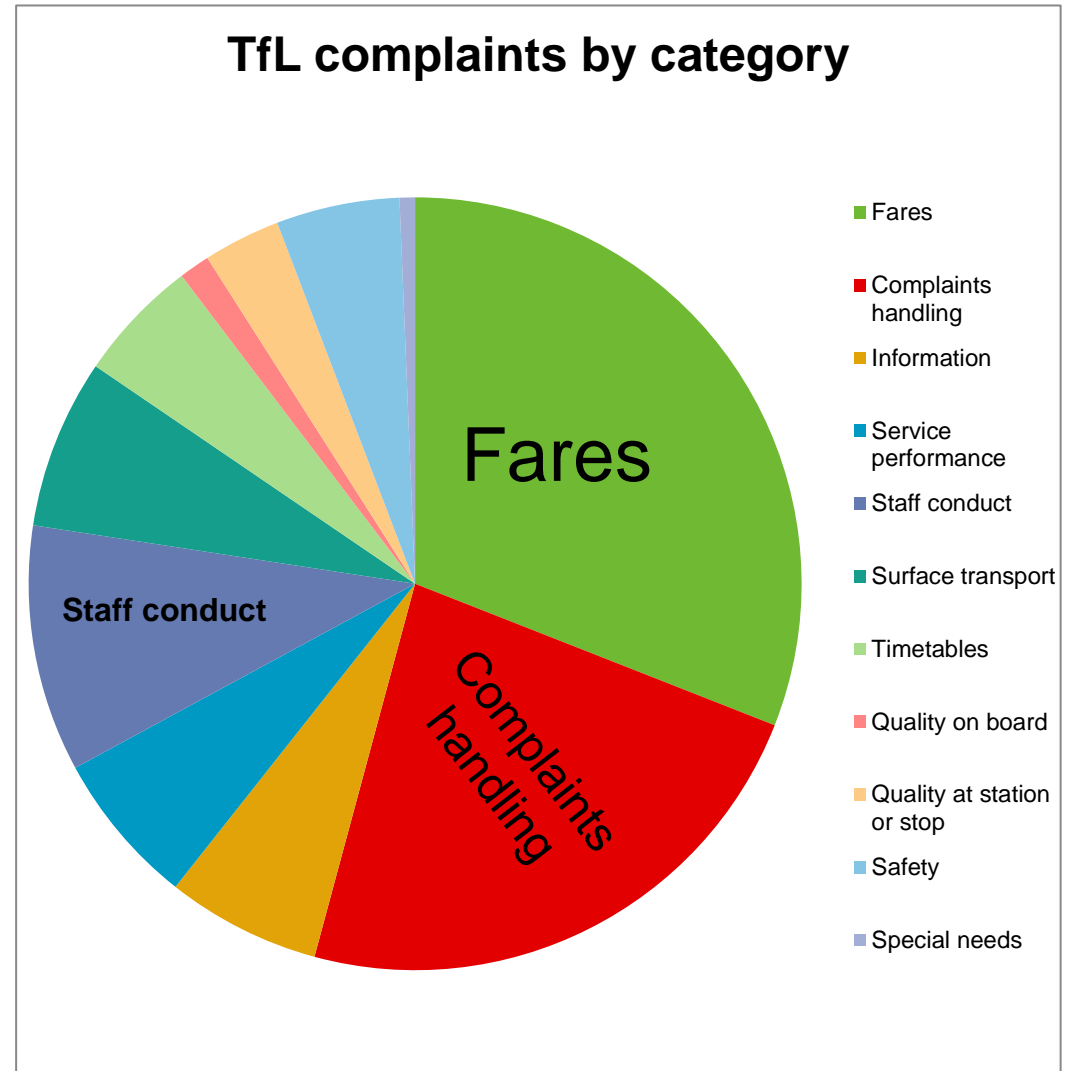
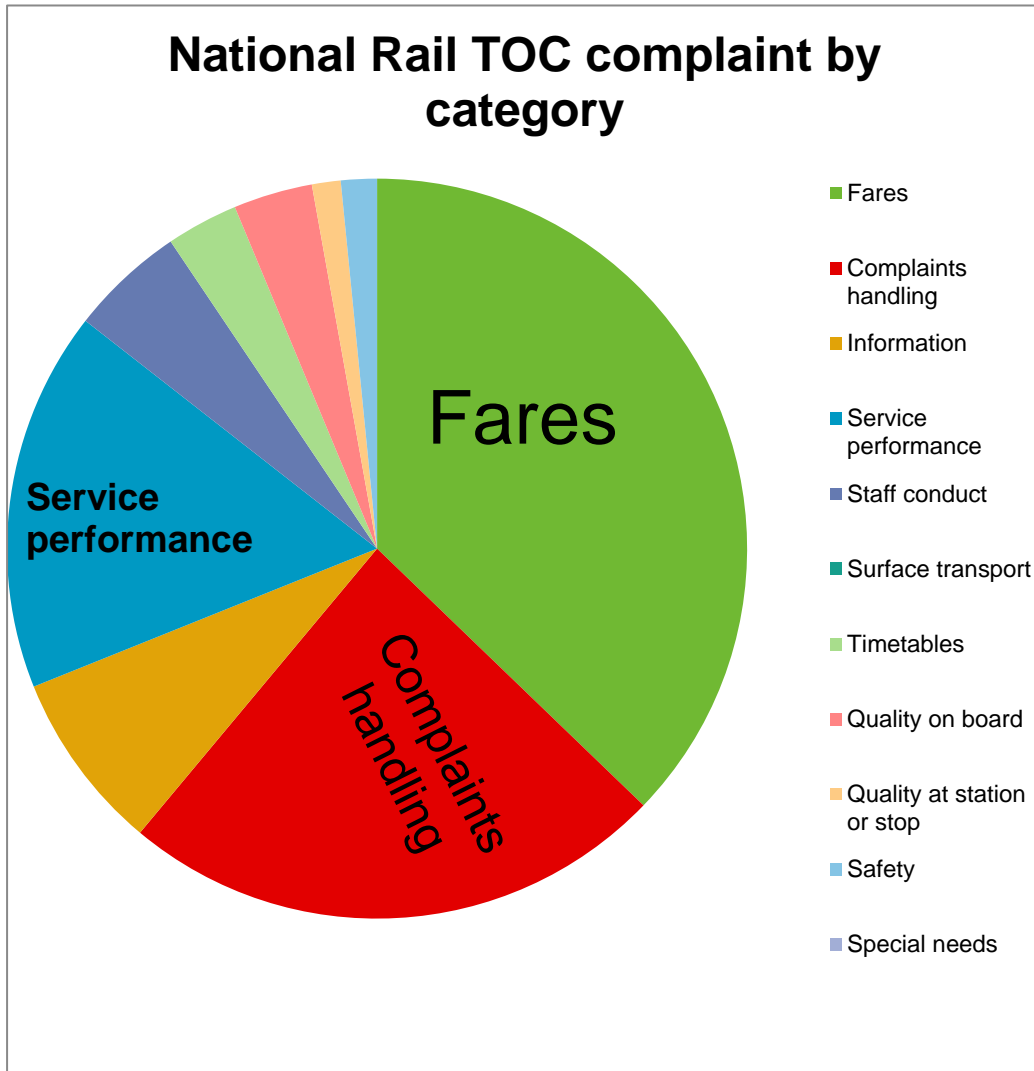
A passenger appealed to London TravelWatch as her bus route 308 was so overcrowded in peak times it frequently did not stop at her bus stop. London TravelWatch spoke to Transport for London who carried out a survey of the bus route and the outcome indicated a capacity issue. London TravelWatch closed the case based on this response but also requested that the passenger keep an eye on the situation and to notify us if there were no improvements in the near future.

This has been passed to the policy team for further investigation.



### Three: appeals by category

The charts below clearly demonstrate the categories of appeals received by London TravelWatch regarding both National Rail operators and Transport for London.



### 3. Main issues received during quarter three

This part of the report highlights some of the issues that were raised in quarter three.

#### National Rail operators

##### Fares

During the course of daily casework it was found that a previously unheard of season ticket is being offered to passengers on the First Great Western route. These are called First Eastbound only tickets. These tickets are aimed passengers travelling between Maidenhead/Twyford to London Paddington. Passengers using this ticket can travel first class into London in the morning when the trains are busier, and standard class for their journey home.

Maidenhead to London Paddington weekly season tickets 2015:

Ticket classification	Weekly	Monthly	Annual
Standard	£72.70	£279.20	£2,908.00
First Eastbound	£91.00	£349.50	£3,640.00
First	£109.10	£419.00	£4,364.00

Penalty fares continue to be the single most complained about problem. New rules and regulations are being investigated and the Department for Transport is keen that until a penalty fare appeal is rejected, the penalty fare need not be paid.

##### Passenger charters

Crossrail and Serco Caledonian Sleeper both sent their passenger charters, complaints handling policies and their disabled person protection policies for comments. Both routes are new to London TravelWatch so all charters and policies made for interesting reading.

##### Information

First Capital Connect passengers had raised the issue of lack of information (particularly up to date London Underground information for London bound trains) on their routes over the past few years. The casework manager had noticed informative announcements had been made to passengers on the Great Northern route since the changeover to GTR Thameslink. Passengers who are London bound are advised of the current services of the London Underground and also additional information regarding recent issues such as the flooding at Farringdon. Passengers travelling north are advised of the geographical limit of their Oyster cards on a regular basis.

### **Delays and service disruption**

Just before Christmas, the casework team received a lot of contacts regarding Southern's new timetable and performance and Thameslink performance. This added to other evidence on this subject and resulted in London TravelWatch making formal complaint to the operator requesting enhanced compensation for passengers traveling on commuter services on journeys which are scheduled to take 30 minutes or less and which have regularly been arriving 10-15 minutes late. London TravelWatch also wrote to the Secretary of State and his ministerial team to raise these concerns.

This issue will continue to be monitored at Board level, London TravelWatch is now calling for a review of the current delay repay arrangements. We are also suggesting that delay repay timescales should be reduced from 30 minutes to 15 minutes to bring them in line with the London Underground policy. The organisation is asking for passengers travelling using smart tickets should have their delay repay compensation refunded automatically

### **Transport for London**

London TravelWatch and TfL met to discuss options for improving communication regarding passenger appeals. TfL keep a list of complainants that have asked for responses from more senior staff or managers and this is surprisingly short. Consideration was given as to whether TfL should advise London TravelWatch of their escalated complaints but it was felt that London TravelWatch should view all complaints, in the first instance, from the passengers perspective to maintain our complete unbiased impartiality.

Appendix one: Quantity of cases received

