SAFETY AND SECURITY ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN THE NORTH WEST

A Best Practice Guide

North West Public Transport Users Forum

March 2005

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction

At its meeting in June 2004 at Bolton the North West Public Transport Users' Forum discussed the important issue of Safety and Security.   It was recognised that many good schemes had emerged throughout the North West but that nothing had been done to draw together these good practices.

The Forum agreed to produce a guide which can inform the North West Regional Assembly's Regional Transport Strategy.

The discussion confirmed that for many passengers, especially the more exposed old, unaccompanied young women and some ethnic minorities, the perception of insecurity when travelling was significantly greater than the reality. (Statistics show that the travellers most at risk of assault are white adolescent males)

The discussion also highlighted the fact that a physical presence, not necessarily an employee of the operator, on a vehicle or at a stop, rank or station, can have a notable calming and reassuring effect, considerably reducing perceptions of insecurity.

This guide attempts to identify a number of examples of good practice in the North West, considering these under a number of categories, although inevitably some fall into more than one category.

- Physical presence on vehicles or at stations and stops
- Environmental safety
- Dedicated services
- Incident monitoring
- Safety Partnerships
- Safety Education Initiatives
- Travel Safe Strategies.

Although this publication is primarily intended to inform the Assembly's Regional Transport Strategies, it is hoped that it might acquire a wider readership both within and outside the Region.

The Forum will also be pleased to hear of other examples of good practice which might be included in any further editions and which could be used to persuade the providers and procurers of public passenger transport to emulate.

2.0 Physical Presence

2.1 CASE STUDY Police travel free on buses

Passengers perceptions of their own safety and security are always heightened by an actual human presence whether of operators' staff , outsourced security officers or police (including in some instances BTP).

Warrington Borough's "Police travel free on buses" initiative is nothing new. Older passengers will well remember the days when the conductor on a "corporation" bus would "miss" the fares of fellow passengers who were "uniformed" (not just Police, but post office, fire and ambulance).

Although the initiative has recently taken a back seat since the departure of the police inspector who was jointly promoting it, it is being resurrected under a restructured system of policing that is being introduced into Warrington

The Borough's Transport Co-ordinator, responsible for procuring public transport services, is on a group called the Neighbourhood Safety Delivery Group. This "partnership" meets on a regular basis to discuss crime statistics for the previous weeks with the police intelligence officer and looks at what measures can be introduced to deter specific crimes.

The initiative is just simply getting officers to use the buses when travelling to their various beats, thus gaining a higher profile for police officers with the travelling public and increasing their levels of perceived safety.

Warrington Borough had a "headstart" in promoting the initiative in that it is one of only thirteen authorities in the UK which still owns and manages (albeit at arms length) the former municipal bus operations. However, as elsewhere outside London, Warrington Transport's services are deregulated and the undertaking faces the same commercial pressures as other operators in the Borough.

2.2 CASE STUDY Taxi Marshals

The Taxi Operators and Drivers Association (TODA) of the cities of Manchester and Salford, working with the joint cities' hackney carriage licensing authority began an initiative to provided marshals at taxi ranks in the City Centre between 2230 and 0330 on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights in the winter (November - March) of 2003, and again in 2004.

The licensing authority obtained European Funding for the experiment.

The scheme has improved taxi turnout at nights as drivers can feel safe when they stop at ranks with long queues, and success is thus reinforced as additional taxis equate to shorter queues!

TODA and the Licensing Authority are pleased with the scheme, and comments from the public are all favourable.

Taxis do not have to stop at ranks or when hailed but once they do so they are obliged to take the hire. The Marshall's have received some slight criticism from a minority of drivers who like to "cherry pick" their hires, and some, TODA feels, sensible, criticism over their sometimes "over enthusiastic" apprehension of cabs. TODA however believes that this can easily be addressed by additional training.

Though difficult to prove, TODA believes the scheme has encouraged a better night turnout, which, they point out, is more a function of driver willingness than numbers of licenses! And, in their view, the scheme makes drivers feel safer.

2.3 CASE STUDY Serco Metrolink Public Safety Officers

No matter how effective covert surveillance methods such as CCTV are, passengers perceptions of their own safety and security is always heightened by an actual human presence whether of operators' staff , outsourced security officers or police (including in some instances British Transport Police - BTP).

Metrolink "buy" a police presence from Greater Manchester Police (GMP), but also employ their own Public Safety Officers (PSOs).

The initial idea to employ PSOs was to further strengthen passenger and staff perception of safety on the Metrolink system by increasing the physical presence of uniformed staff during the last eight hours of service seven days a week.

There were several reasons why it was thought that an additional staff presence would be of benefit:

1. To give reassurances to customers and staff of an additional uniformed presence
2. Assist Revenue Inspectors
3. Carry out ticket checking duties
4. Support the Metrolink Police Unit
5. Tackle problems of anti-social disorder
6. Report safety matters upon detection
7. Enforce the Bye Laws and Conditions of Carriage
8. Underpin the GMPTE initiative for Transupport

The PSOs have been trained to check tickets and distinguish those that are valid from the invalid. Although the PSOs have not been trained to collect revenue they have the powers of an Authorised Officer and can ask those passengers not in possession of a valid ticket to leave the stop or tram.

PSOs are trained to be fully conversant with all the byelaws and conditions of carriage that exists on the Metrolink system; this knowledge will be used to assist the Metrolink Police Unit during joint operations and whist on and about the system.

The PSOs duties also involve patrolling Metrolink Stops and "moving on" youths that congregate around the Stops intimidating customers and staff alike. PSOs will be in a position to prevent unruly passengers from travelling thereby ensuring the safety of passengers already using the Metrolink system.

PSOs will report any matter of safety or damage to the system upon detection to the Metrolink Control staff so that any potential hazards can be rectified immediately.

PSOs are tasked to concentrate on particular areas, this is not set in concrete and PSOs are flexible to move to areas where problems are occurring The Metrolink Duty Manager coordinates this.

The kinds of Incidents occurring in a typical evening roster and the PSO duties these generate are shown below -

- Removal of vagrants and drunks
    Escort vagrants/drunks off Metrolink property ensuring that passengers are not intimidated entering or leaving the stop.

    Check for beggars at stop entrance and ensure all passengers entering stop have valid tickets (This deters the undesirable travelling late in the evening)
- Bye Law Offences
    Ensuring passengers smoking or drinking leave the tram
- Youth Nuisance at Stops
    Moving on youths and gangs congregating at stop entrances and platforms with no intention of travelling
- Revenue Operations
    Ejecting abusive fare evaders during Revenue Inspectors' operations and giving support to Revenue staff
- Last Tram
    Support for driving staff to reduce the number of incidents caused on the last tram (drunks, interfering with the door operations, smoking, vomiting and general anti social behaviour). This is achieved by controlling passenger entry

The trial has proved to be very successful, with lots of feedback from staff and customers. PSOs have built up a rapport with regular evening commuters, discouraged beggars from stations and have reduced the anti-social behaviour on many of the stops. In addition the PSOs have assisted the Revenue Inspectors at weekends during 'check and eject' operations.

With the success of the trial the scheme was approved and from Monday 21st June 2004, the PSOs increased from two to six on duty. This meant that there is a dedicated pair of PSOs on each line (Bury, Altrincham and Eccles).

The remit for the PSOs remains unchanged; they continually patrol the system and have become widely accepted by passengers and staff alike. One passenger commented:

"It is nice to travel on the last tram at night without having to suffer from other passengers smoking and generally being boisterous".

Another passenger commented:

> *"What a great idea, I know that they will not always be present, but it seems to have deterred the youths from congregating around the entrance at Crumpsall".*

Staff at Metrolink further support these comments; the drivers feel that their personal safety has been enhanced with the introduction of additional staff on the system late at night and the Revenue Inspectors welcome their assistance during special events and disruptions.

Driving staff would like to see the initiative extended further to take in the school children on their journey home, this would give additional security to school children, protect them from potential bullies and calm their behaviour whilst at stops and on board the tram.

The statistics demonstrate that the number of passengers checked is increasing each period whilst the no ticket/evasion rate falls.

Overall, the initiative has been very successful from both staff and passenger points of view; there has been an increase in revenue through the ticket vending machines during the periods that the PSOs are on duty, which demonstrates that the PSO presence is having an effect on passenger journeys.

3.0 A Safer Environment

3.1 CASE STUDY Secure Transport Routes[1] - Manchester Victoria to Clitheroe

The roles of all aspects of the route's environment having the potential to effect passenger safety and security were investigated. This included, in addition to the rail journey itself, connecting modes (bus, cycle, walking, car parking and taxis) as well as the surrounds of the route - lineside and catchment areas.

This **holistic approach** was adopted and justified because of a realisation that if one link in the journey chain is wrong the trip may not be taken, or be taken by car.

The report identifies and illustrates a number of existing **good practices** including Merseytravel's "Travel Safe" and "Community Links" as well as citing others in SYPTE, NEXUS and TfL areas.

It contains an **action plan** which recognises that such a holistic approach will inevitably produce an enormous "shopping list" of potential improvements and that whilst ideally a whole journey approach entailing implementing actions

---

[1]. *Crime Concern.   Report to DETR Mobility and Inclusion Unit. March 2001*

across the entire route would be optimal, in reality agencies would have to prioritise their actions, either by type or location.

It suggests that **locations** might be selected on the basis of areas with the highest reported crime, vandalism or antisocial behaviour, or alternatively on the basis of their remoteness (the line is a mix of dense urban and sparse rural operation). Hall i'th Wood station was suggested as a trial starting location.

Particular **types of actions** which could be implemented first to reduce the fear of insecurity were flagged as those addressing issues around

Ÿ staffing
Ÿ information
Ÿ accessibility
Ÿ reporting

Similarly, the report points out, if agencies were to prioritise actions highlighted by the **Secure Stations Scheme** then impacts would be felt along the entire route.

Perhaps the project's main value has been its cataloguing and classification of the myriad of issues surrounding safety and security. Whilst action on the ground on this route has not been spectacular (and indeed seems to have lost impetus since publication), the report and its invaluable bibliography at least provide a robust template for other studies.

3.2 CASE STUDY Preventing Attacks on staff[2]

The British Transport Police (BTP) identified a 14% increase in reported attacks on rail staff in 2004. Aggressive, violent and antisocial behaviour, verbal abuse (often racial or sexual) can be encountered by staff at bus and rail stations, on vehicles and even away from their normal workstations.

Training in how to defuse a potentially dangerous situation can be helpful, giving staff some degree of confidence, but the reality is that often they are working alone and unable to summon assistance before an incident escalates into aggression and violence.

Whilst employers must conduct a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks their staff face[3] and all attacks are legally reportable[4], the legislation is too often reactive to prevent recurrences.

Merely supplying mobile phones or radios is not going to prevent attacks, although it may help apprehend the attacker. Staff need a way of summoning

---

[2] "Protecting workers from travel rage" Swallow, C. Focus (CILTUK) October 2004.
[3] The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1998 (MHSW)
[4] Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR)

assistance which is covert, since the very act of doing so can incense the attacker!

A device known as Identicom has come on the market which combines the innocence of the ubiquitous normal identity card and holder with powerful inbuilt mobile phone technology.

It enables the worker, if threatened, to raise the alarm covertly but also allows a third party to listen to what is happening and record events. It is a step change from older (yet still effective to a degree) technology such as "panic buttons" which can not always be activated surreptitiously - for example, if the worker is attacked away from the "button".

The worker's location can also be pinpointed accurately by the device using GPS technology. The "identity card" is worn suspended from a lanyard around the neck. If the assailant should realise its potential and try to remove it the alarm will be triggered.

Prevention, as stated above, is obviously better than protection, and such devices should not be seen as substituting for effective training in conflict handling. However, where situations deteriorate to the extent that protection does become necessary, the issue of these or similar devices can be seen to be excellent practice by employers. Staffs and their trade unions can certainly be expected to support their issue, as too might the employer's insurers.

Employers must however put in place robust and reliable procedures for responding immediately to alarms if they are serious about protecting their staff from abuse and do not wish to create any false sense of security.

3.3 CASE STUDY CCTV at LIVERPOOL Lime Street Stations

Network Rail's priority when it took over the management of Liverpool Lime Street Station from First North Western was to install a comprehensive CCTV system. Within a few months 40 full colour CCTV cameras were operational at a cost of £250k. Merseytravel then donated £100k for a further 17 cameras to allow Network Rail to provide coverage of the platform entrances.

The images from each of the 57 cameras are recorded 24 hours per day on industrial DVD recorders and are archived for 31 days for evidential purposes. The facility exists to download a hard copy of any image viewed on the CCTV. For Court purposes the images can be downloaded onto CD ROMs or onto video tape.

Passengers cannot enter or exit Lime Street Station nor board or alight from a train without passing a CCTV camera..

A pan tilt and zoom camera covers the Concourse and operators can zoom in onto suspicious packages avoiding the need to evacuate the Station.

The CCTV system is operated and managed strictly in accordance with the Data Protection Act and meets TRANSEC requirements for security at

Stations. The system has proved of great assistance to the British Transport Police and to civil police offices from many forces who can often be seen viewing footage of persons of interest to them.

Discussions are underway to link the Lime Street CCTV system into the City Centre wide CCTV system to provide an integrated CCTV system for Liverpool.

TRANSEC and the National Railway Security Programme provide clear guidance on what equipment is required and what areas should be covered by CCTV at Rail Stations. The National Railway Security Programme also defines the repair timescale for defective CCTV equipment.

The system has already proved successful at Liverpool Lime Street with positive identification and arrest of an individual who assaulted a member of station staff; resulting in a conviction. Not only does the CCTV system and signage provide a clear deterrent to potential offenders, but it also protects the industry against bogus compensation claims.

The physical presence of the CCTV cameras, Public notices and Security Staff gives passengers a feeling of a safe and secure environment.

3.4 CASE STUDY CCTV on Merseyrail trains

British Transport Police have had significant success in arrests from on train CCTV images recording a number of offences. It has cut down a great deal of police time in terms of investigations. The on train images are extremely good for recognition purposes and have been welcomed by the trade unions.

Merseyrail currently have more than 50% of their fleet refurbished with the on train digital CCTV and the work is scheduled for completion by the end of 2004. It is a comprehensive CCTV system and has been a great success story achieved by a partnership between Merseytravel, Angel Trains and Merseyrail.

4.0 Dedicated Services

4.1 CASE STUDY   Night buses

GMPTE's "Night Buses" have become a regular feature of a night out in Manchester and Wigan for many people. Encouraged by their success the PTA intend providing "kickstart" funding" for a further network around Bolton.

The buses run on **Friday and Saturday Nights between midnight and 0300** from the city centre to the main suburbs and satellite towns in Greater Manchester, and from Wigan and, eventually Bolton, to the suburbs of those Metropolitan Boroughs.

The PTE has a well established and successful safety and security team which worked in partnership with GM Police to establish the night buses (as

well as other initiatives such as the **Rapid Response Mobile Security Unit** set up to improve safety and security in the late afternoons and evenings at four of the Executive's **bus stations** where specially trained RRU Officers are in close radio contact with supervisors at Bury, Bolton, Rochdale and Oldham Bus Stations and able to respond quickly to incidents)

Not all the **night buses** are financially supported, some have operated commercially for some time, often on more than just Friday and Saturday nights, but one criteria for selecting routes to add to the network is that they should be sustainable in the medium term, either commercially or with limited subsidy.

Patronage on the tendered (non commercial) Manchester City Centre Night Bus network over a period of 120 weeks from their inception increased from 1600 passengers to 2000 passengers per weekend.

This has been a successful initiative with well used services on which demand is still growing. A **flat fare** of (currently) £2.50 on non commercial services is charged. This avoids argument and is typical of the low profile security measures which appear to work well. The majority of commercial services are on the University and A6 corridors which have historically generated good patronage of the night economy (including buses) from a large transient population of young people.

The initiative is promoted with leaflets, posters and flyers in bars, clubs and record shops.

It has not been found necessary to support drivers with either conductors or "escorts".

4.2 CASE STUDY Halton Borough Council's "Womens' Safe Transport"

See under **Travel Safe Strategies**

5.0 Incident Monitoring

5.1 CASE STUDY Incident Reporting of Bus Related Crime and Disorder. MERSEYTRAVEL

A recent briefing paper from the DfT[5] identifies the critical importance of improving the collection of information on bus crime and disorder. Much of this goes unreported since there is no specific code for public transport crime and disorder in national police systems. While a number of forces have made great efforts to address the issue this basic lack of intelligence has meant that beyond specific initiatives the problem has been less visible than it should be.

In addition to the considerable resources that Merseytravel has provided to tackle these issues "on the ground" much work has gone into developing a

---

[5] "Links between bus-related crime and other crimes" (DfT Nov 2004)

new Incident Reporting System (IRiS). This system is provided free of charge to bus operators who complete a simple electronic form to provide details of the incident. The form takes about one minute to complete. It captures the range of data that would be expected, (time, date etc) and has the specific key benefit of:

- Categorisation of crime types
- Victim details
- Offender details
- Geo-coded location of incident

The final point on this list is the key development as it allows for the mapping of bus related crime and disorder.

The data for each incident is saved and e-mailed to Merseytravel. It is then automatically archived and the data placed into a relational database. In effect this means that each element of the data is available for analysis in relation to any other or combination of other elements. The system balances ease of use by the bus operators with the capacity for quick and powerful analysis of problems which can then be mapped.

For example a possible search could be for incidents involving male offenders between the age of 11 – 15, where stones have been thrown, damaging side windows, in daylight on specific bus routes and between specific stops.

This depth of analysis allows Merseytravel to produce detailed maps of "hot" locations and profiles of offenders and offences. Crime analysis reports thus generated are then used to inform the range of interventions available to TravelSafe.

These interventions range from education initiatives, youth work outreach, target hardening, capable guardians and joint police actions. The system also allows Merseytravel to manage the performance of these interventions as they could expect incidents in a given area to decrease following an intervention.

The bus crime analysis reports are also shared with the police and the district Crime and Disorder Reporting Programmes (CDRPs).

By working in partnership a still wider range of interventions can be deployed. There is an increasing level of interest from partners in using this data as an indicator of levels of anti-social behaviour and the "liveability" of neighbourhoods.

5.2 CASE STUDY Lancashire County Council

Referred to in Conclusions

6.0 Safety Partnerships

6.1 CASE STUDY Halton Travelsafe Initiative

The travelsafe initiative is a partnership between Cheshire Police, Arriva Northwest, Halton Transport and Halton Borough Council. A series of meetings took place to determine exactly what was required and to identify the problems facing the initiative should the funding be awarded. The Borough had witnessed a growing problem with vandalism to infrastructure and attacks on buses. This was particularly prevalent on the Runcorn Busway. The attacks reached an unprecedented level during November 2002 rising to more than 40 in a month. The attacks lead to the withdrawal of services by the 2 main operators Arriva and Halton Transport.

The withdrawal of the services meant that there potentially could have been an increase in social exclusion as services did not operate and fares increased to accommodate the short fall in revenue and the cost of vandalism, Withdrawal from areas would make them no go areas and this would mean an increased cost to the supported bus network.

Following the identity of the problems the idea to provide the Travelsafe initiative was thought to be the way forward and has proved successful.

The Travelsafe team consists of one Police Constable and a Community Support Officer. The team will work to a rota to cover the most vulnerable times of the day. The team also visit the operator depots to hold intelligence gathering surgeries with the drivers and managers. They provide a high visibility reassurance for the service user as well as speaking to the passengers when they board the service vehicles.

Funding for the initiative comes from the various partners on an annual basis.

Halton Council was awarded Beacon Status in 2004/2005 under the "Better Public Transport" theme and the travelsafe initiative was part of the bid for the status.

6.2 CASE STUDY Merseytravel / Merseyside Police partnership to provide Community Safety Officers on MT's bus network.

See under **Travel Safe Strategies**

7.0 Education Initiatives

7.1 CASE STUDY Halton Borough Council's "Engaging with Halton's youth" project.

See under Travel Safe Strategies

8.0 Travel Safe Strategies

Both Halton and Merseytravel have contributed their Travelsafe strategies to this research. The **vision** of these is the creation of safe and secure public transport systems, in most cases through appropriate partnership working.

One of **Halton's** specific travelsafe initiatives, the creation of a safety and security team to target problems mainly, but not exclusively, on **Runcorn Busway**, is dealt with elsewhere in this report.

Other initiatives spelt out in their Strategy document include

- Safer waiting areas
- On bus security
- Increased presence
- Reliability
- Monitoring performance

Two other initiatives target specific groups of passengers:-
8.1 **CASE STUDIES – Halton Borough Council**

1. **Womens' Safe Transport.** Perception surveys reveal that whilst women make up a larger proportion of public transport users they are most in fear of travelling. The Council, in recognition of this, provides funding to Halton Community transport for a door to door women's safe transpot service.

2. **Engaging with Halton's Youth.** The Council in 2001 identified the urgent problem of educating youths about the serous consequences of attacks on public transport. In 2002 Halton led a bid on behalf of all NW Authorities for Urban Bus Challenge funds which enabled the preparation of a high quality interactive educational package for use in schools. This is made available in Halton through a Travelsafe team and has been rolled out to all NW schools during 2004.

The **Merseytravel Travel Safe Strategies** are aimed at tackling

- Perceptions of insecurity
- Criminal damage
- Railway Crime
- Assaults
- Resource targeting

A strong partnership approach is applied, and specific issues such as the problems associated with unruly youths, town centre and specific transport corridor safety, law enforcement, vandalism and reassurance measures are addressed.

8.2 CASE STUDY:-

The Director General of Merseytravel has pointed the editors of this report towards a case study[6] which describes the role of Travel Community Safety Officers (CSOs).

Merseytravel has provided 50% of the cost of twelve CSOs to be employed in an intelligence led way on the public transport network. There is a clear business benefit in increasing reassurance leading to increased patronage.

The initiative builds on a history of effective joint working between Mersey Travel and Merseyside Police, where high profile operations on selected corridors have proved a major success in terms of arrests and consequent reassurance. The idea of the present initiative emerged from these operations. The CSOs are specially trained in respect of issues relating to public transport, especially buses.
(Merseyrail has its own travelling security officers)

9.0 Conclusions

The preceding case studies are not an exhaustive guide to best practice in the delivery of safe and secure public transport in NW England. It is known that authorities not already mentioned are currently trying out different initiatives which will have the potential to make further significant contributions. Like Merseytravel, **Lancashire County Council** are finding that by carefully monitoring incidents it is proving possible to predict where best to employ their limited resources to tackle recurrences.

However, it is hoped that the guide as it stands (and there could well be a further updated edition) is sufficiently comprehensive to

- inform the North West Regional Assembly's Regional Transport Strategy, and also
- to encourage local transport authorities who procure services, the operators who provide these, transport planners, law enforcement agencies and other partners to devise new ways of co-operating to overcome what in many cases is no more than a perception of insecurity, but, in some other cases is still, tragically, a reality.

The NW Public Transport Users' Forum would welcome comments on this publications and any further illustrations of safety and security initiatives which might be used in later editions. These can be e-mailed to john.moorhouse@railpassengers.org.uk

---

[6] HMI of Constabularies Merseyside Police Inspection Report (2004)

10.0 Acknowledgements