

Valerie Shawcross AM  
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Transport Committee  
GLA  
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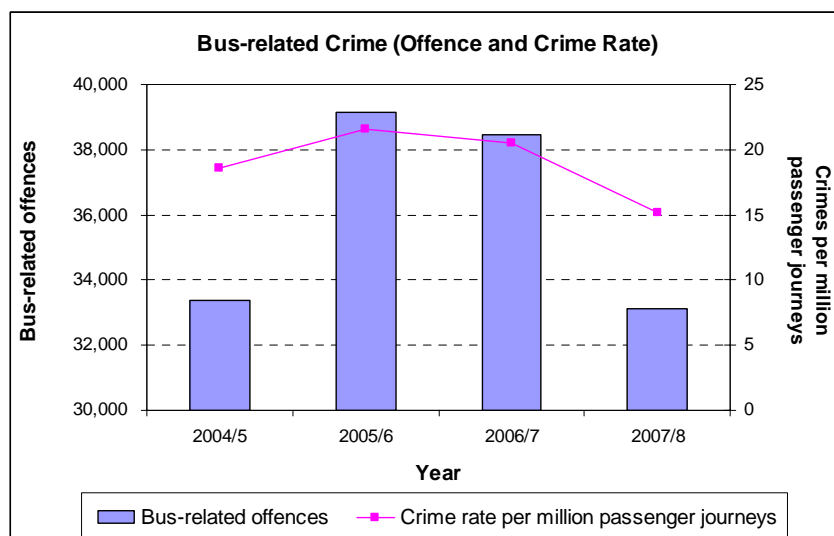
Dear Ms Shawcross

## Tackling crime and disorder on London's buses

I am writing to set out TfL's response to the recommendations made by the Committee in the above report.

TfL is not complacent about the safety and security of passengers using the bus network. The Committee noted TfL's efforts in this area, which have led to reductions in bus-related crime. The level of bus-related crime in 2007/08 was 14 percent lower than in 2006/07 – at a rate of crime for the bus network of 15.2 crimes per million passenger journeys. This downward trend has continued in 2008/9 showing a reduction of over 13.7% in the first quarter of 2008/9.

The reduction is best illustrated in the chart below.



The reductions in bus-related crime have been driven by a range of initiatives undertaken by TfL in partnership with the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). TfL's significant investment in transport policing and commitment to improving safety and security has ensured the system remains a low crime environment.

A number of new initiatives being introduced by the Mayor and TfL are expected to deliver further reductions in crime and anti-social behaviour and improve the experience of travelling on London's bus network. The key initiatives include:

- Additional 440 officers on the bus network working around transport hubs
- Payback London
- Alcohol ban

In addition TfL is also carrying out a trial of Live CCTV. on a bus route in north London whereby CentreComm staff are able to view the on-bus CCTV in real time to assist with incident response.

Turning now to the Committee's recommendations:

1. *TfL should install additional Oyster readers by the doors of bendy buses to make it easier for passengers to touch in.*

There are five Oyster card readers fitted to articulated buses currently: two at each of the second and third doors and one at the first, next to the driver. Space constraints and grab-rail requirements prevent us fitting any further readers.

TfL has undertaken a review of the signage on articulated buses to ensure passengers are aware of the need to validate Oyster cards on boarding, and the possible consequences of failing to do so. As well as providing additional signage at the doors of articulated buses, to remind passengers that they must have a valid ticket before boarding (or that they must validate their Oyster card on entry) a trial has also been ongoing on route 73, in which recorded announcements reminded passengers of the need to validate Oyster cards.

In light of the Mayoral commitment to replace articulated routes with other types of bus TfL will keep the situation under review and continue to look at options for improving the situation.

2. *TfL should include notices about the operation of pickpockets on busy routes and those where a high level of activity is known to occur.*

Available space for notices on buses is primarily used to promote mandatory legal and safety posters, and other statements including behavioural and crime prevention messages. Allocation of space and messaging is kept under review in light of priorities.

Intelligence gathered by the TOCU, STTs and Hub Teams builds a strong picture of where incidents occur on the bus network, including pickpocketing, and highlights the correct response to deal with this particular problem. This may be through deploying extra resources including covert and high visibility patrols, carrying out intelligence-led pro-active operations or communication activities as appropriate.

As an example, officers from the British Transport Police, TOCU, Safer Transport Teams and the City of London Police periodically run the joint theft awareness campaign – ZIP IT. This campaign uses posters alongside engagement with the public by officers, distributing Oyster card holders with theft awareness messages.

3. *TfL should monitor the cleanliness of buses through mystery traveller surveys and publish the results to put pressure on bus companies to prioritise bus cleaning.*

Cleanliness of buses is already monitored through TfL's Mystery Traveller and Customer Satisfaction surveys. The results of this monitoring are discussed regularly with operators to ensure that cleanliness remains amongst operator's priorities.

Building on the success of the current Quality Incentive Contract in transforming bus reliability, a new initiative has just begun aimed at raising standards of customer service.

Using the results of the comprehensive Mystery Traveller Survey as its basis, the 'QICs2' scheme offers financial incentives to bus operators whose drivers are able to improve and achieve higher than average performance for all bus passengers. Operators falling below minimum standards will face financial deductions.

Running along the same line as the driver scheme, a further Vehicle Quality aspect of incentivisation is planned to be launched in 2009 which will address the condition and cleanliness of buses.

4. *TfL should report back to the Committee on the effect and success in enforcing the new regulations for free travel six months after they come into place. This should include assessments from drivers on how effectively they are able to enforce the new scheme.*

As with all new initiatives, TfL is monitoring progress and reviewing the impact of the new child Oyster photocard for 11-15 year olds, and we have put in place appropriate mechanisms for driver feedback. The success of the new child Oyster photocard scheme has been judged on a number of factors, including uptake, driver feedback and the impact on youth and school travel issues.

With the requirement to use an Oyster photocard to get free bus and tram travel being extended to 11-13 year olds, and enforcement of the requirement to validate the card for all 11-15s, take up of the Zip Oyster photocard amongst under 16s has increased from 280,000 in December 2007, to its December 2008 level of 460,000. The number of daily validations by young people under 16 on buses and trams rose sharply from 160,000 prior to the new regulations coming into force to 400,000, within a week of the introduction of the new policy. There are now an average of 540,000 users of the under 16s Zip Oyster Photocard being recorded each weekday.

TfL's Revenue Protection Inspectors, who have a key role in dealing with fare evasion, ASB and enforcing TfL's Behaviour Code were deployed to areas identified through driver intelligence to support the rollout. In response to drivers' concerns about groups of schoolchildren refusing to validate their oyster cards we introduced simple to use 'Youth Data Forms' to capture intelligence from drivers on youth / school related issues. This information is mapped in conjunction with other intelligence sources and used to support RPI and police deployment and problem solving activities.

This enforcement activity is ongoing and is supported by the Safer Transport Teams and TOCU teams alongside the new Hub Teams, who provide valuable support to TfL in the enforcement of mandatory ZIP validation and the ZIP Behaviour Code.

TfL has dealt with over 16,000 ZIP concession holders for various reasons. We have permanently withdrawn the concession from over 2,000 young people.

Fare Evasion surveys conducted since the June 2008 mandation date have also demonstrated significant reductions in the levels of irregular travel undertaken by passengers in the 14 to 15 year age group. There has also been a very low level of irregularity relating to the new 11 to 13 year age group now covered by these requirements.

Drivers and other bus operator staff have been very supportive of the initial roll out of the enforcement arrangements. Drivers have enjoyed the regained sense of control over their vehicles. Both bus drivers and the travelling public have given positive and encouraging feedback about improved behaviour of young people on the buses.

5. *The Committee recommends that training should be given to all drivers on conflict resolution to enable them to deal with difficult situations and aggressive behaviour. This should be refreshed on an annual basis as part of drivers' continuing professional development.*

Advice on conflict resolution is already included within the BTEC training qualification which all drivers with at least one year's service must take and pass. The Committee will know that this qualification is bespoke to London.

From September 2008, all bus drivers now have to undergo an additional day of training every year, in order to obtain a new Certificate of Professional Competence which is being introduced across all EU states for all bus drivers.

6. *TfL should set out in its response to this report what arrangements it makes to ensure that bus companies are not penalised when drivers delay journeys to deal with incidents.*

Operators are required to complete records showing the proportion of scheduled mileage that has been operated or 'lost'. Operators are not financially liable for mileage 'lost' as a result of actions taken to deal with crime and disorder incidents.

Operators are also required to meet minimum reliability standards. The minimum standards set for each route allow for underlying delays including those resulting from actions taken to deal with crime and disorder incidents.

7. *TfL and the police should devise a system for reporting the results of investigations back to bus operators when they have provided CCTV packages. This should be reported to the Committee by July 2008.*

TfL and the MPS TOCU have put mechanisms in place to feedback to operators on the results of police investigations using on-bus CCTV images and evidence. Each month an updated extract from the TOCU's CCTV crime investigation database is sent to the relevant bus operating CCTV Data Control Room providing feedback on the progress and Status of the investigation.

TfL's CCTV Team work closely with bus operators and the police to ensure the most effective use of CCTV. The team is in regular contact with the bus operators' CCTV Data Control Room staff, providing feedback on the progress and status of the investigation.

Furthermore, TfL and the MPS are progressing towards the implementation of a CCTV SPOC (Single Point of Contact). The purpose of the SPOC arrangements will be to help manage the

overall level of demand and prioritise requests. It will also allow for the development of better record keeping and information on the numbers and type of requests and feedback to bus operators. The current expectation is that a short trial of these arrangements will be rolled out in late April 2009 and be fully operational by the late summer of 2009.

8. *TfL should conduct a feasibility study of live CCTV streaming to CentreComm activated by a driver incident report. The results of this should be reported back to the Committee by December 2008.*

A trial of live CCTV is currently in progress. The aim of the trial is to determine whether live CCTV on London buses improves the response to incidents from TfL and/or the MPS. The trial is operating on a busy north London bus route. In all 21 buses have been fitted with the technology, with up to 19 on the road at any one time. Live CCTV streaming is activated by our bus controllers in CentreComm when they are contacted via the bus radio by a bus driver making an incident report to the control room.

The trial will assess the impact of live CCTV on call handling and follow up in CentreComm and MetroComm (TOCU and Traffic OCU Control Room). The trial will last six months, during which time full monitoring (qualitative and quantitative) of the scheme will be undertaken. The evaluation is being carried out by TfL staff supported by Professor Martin Gill (a leading national expert in CCTV). Feedback on the trial and decision on the value and future of live CCTV will be reported in June 2009.

9. *TfL should develop and publish clear guidance for bus drivers about how to use the PA system to reassure passengers and keep them informed about what is happening when there are problems.*

By April 2009, all London buses will be fitted with a PA system.

TfL is also piloting some structured training to complement the development of the iBus system. As the Committee will know, the iBus system provides a number of automated messages that are of use to passengers. Of course, there may be occasions where drivers need to make non-standard announcements. TfL's training course aims to help drivers understand when and how to make these announcements.

10. *The iBus system clearly offers significant opportunities to make the bus environment safer for passengers. We believe consideration should be given to prioritising the roll-out of the system on those routes known to experience the most problems with crime and anti-social behaviour.*

The iBus system is being fitted on a garage-by-garage basis, rather than by route. TfL anticipates that full rollout of the system will be complete by April 2009.

11. *During TPED's review of resources, consideration should be given to whether the various strands of enforcement now present (STTs, RPIs and TOCU) complement each other as well as they could do. This should include an assessment of whether RPIs need additional powers and accreditation as PCSOs.*

TfL will continue to consider how to make the best use of all its enforcement resources and the most appropriate powers for its entire staff based on the roles undertaken.

Transparent deployment and performance management processes have been built into the arrangement between the TfL and the MPS to ensure the most effective and efficient use of both TfL and police resources on the transport network. Processes, such as the Joint Transport Action Group meeting have been established to coordinate policing and community safety activities on the transport network.

The roles and responsibilities of enforcement resources are currently being reviewed as part of the MPS review of transport policing structures. The review looked at existing transport policing structures within the MPS in order to deliver an organisational solution that provides the most efficient and effective transport policing services for London.

From 1 April 2009, the various transport policing units (TOCU, STTs and Hub Teams) will be managed within the same MPS business Group. A joint transition team is being established to take this forward and ensure that the changes deliver improved services to passengers and staff and deliver value for money. The transition team will look at ways to further improve the joint working between MPS resources and TfL's Revenue Inspectors.

In addition, work is also underway to improve the efficiency of TfL's revenue protection operations through the use of new technology. For example, we have already developed systems to improve TfL's ability to deal with passengers found to have evaded paying their fare. The new system allows RPIs to fill in prosecution notices on a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA), for immediate electronic dispatch to TfL's Investigation and Prosecutions department. We are also introducing (in January 2009) a system that will provide RPIs with improved name and address verification and alert them to repeat and/or dangerous offenders. We anticipate that this would further reduce the potential for passengers to attempt to avoid the consequences of fare evasion by providing incorrect contact details and will allow TfL to better handle passengers who are demonstrated to be persistent fare evaders.

The Committee will know that inspections are also carried out jointly with officers from the TOCU and Safer Transport Teams. These joint operations increase detection rates and will continue to be a part of TfL's strategy in tackling fare evasion, crime and anti-social behaviour.

12. *TfL should undertake a pilot study to assess the feasibility of deploying PCSOs as bus marshals along busy routes at certain times of the day to provide a permanent reassuring presence to passengers. The results of this should be reported back to the Committee by December 2008.*

TfL's priority is to maximise the visible, reassuring and accessible presence of uniformed staff across the bus network while reducing crime and anti-social behaviour through intelligence-led policing. We do not believe, however, that it would be an efficient use of uniformed resources to routinely travel the entire length of a route. It is more effective to deploy staff at identified locations along a route or at specified transport hubs to deal with issues and to maximise their visibility to the public by 'hopping' from bus to bus, while tackling crime and anti-social behaviour through partnership and problem solving techniques.

Further consideration is being given to uniformed staff presence on the New Bus for London that is currently being developed.

13. *TfL should conduct an assessment of the cost effectiveness of RPIs in recovered lost revenue, in order to inform what level of additional officers would have a substantial effect on reducing fare evasion.*

The cost-effectiveness and impact of all TfL's enforcement resources are reviewed as part of the annual business planning process. This process will also include an assessment of the appropriate level and deployment of RPIs. It is estimated that fare evasion currently costs the bus network £38m and we continue to keep the RPI structure and working practices under review to ensure that this revenue loss is minimised.

I hope this is useful. Please contact me if you require further detail on any of the above.

Yours sincerely

Jeroen Weimar  
Chief Operating Officer - Enforcement and Compliance