

Transport and Travel Statistical Advisory Committee Minutes 5 December 2017

Chair: Richard Morrison (RM)

Secretary: Jeanine Bezuijen (JB)

Attendees:

David Connolly (DC) – SYSTRA
Stephen Cragg (SC) – Transport Scotland
Bertrand Deiss (BD) – Transport Scotland
John Galilee (JG) – Transport Scotland
Tom Hart (TH) – Scottish Transport Studies Group
Amanda Horn (AH) – Strathclyde Partnership Transport
Alison Irvine (AI) -- Transport Scotland
Andrew Knight (AK) – Transport Scotland
Charlie Lewis (CL) – Transport Scotland
Catriona MacDonald (CM) – SEStran
Emma McCallum (EM) – Scottish Household Survey
Rory Morrison (RWM) – Transport Scotland
Linzi Pidgeon (LP) – Transport Scotland
Alan Rehfish (AR) – Scottish Parliament Information Centre
Paul Sloan (PS) – Transport Scotland

Agreed action points

1. TTSAC members to share any further comments on the draft paper circulated with RWM.
2. TTSAC members to share further comments with the TS statistics team on where they think data collection needs to change in order to capture data relating to these outcomes.

1. Welcome and Introductions

RM thanks everyone for attending. RM noted apologies from Derek Halden and Julie Clark and that he intends to meet with them in the new year.

2. Minutes from previous meeting

The minutes from the previous meeting were accepted. RM mentioned that an accessibility work group has not been established but work had been done in this area.

3. Scottish Household Survey, Questionnaire Review and future plans

EM gave an update on the Scottish Household Survey (SHS). In the past year the questions have been reviewed. There is a trade-off between length of the survey and sample sizes and a number of questions have been dropped.

Although other surveys are moving towards online data collection, budgetary constraints mean that this is not currently possible for the SHS. The biggest issue for the survey is the decline in response rate, which is consistent with what we see elsewhere. The SHS are planning to run a methodological experiment with targeted follow up responses to ensure data quality remains sufficient.

This year the results have been published in a Key Findings Report instead of long written reports. The team are also increasingly using social media and have created a number of films about the impact of the survey. These can also be used to boost response rate and explain the purpose to interviewers and respondents. The travel diary remains the most difficult part of the survey for interviewers. Interviewer training, which will take place later this week, is aimed at supporting the quality of the travel diary data. RM and JB will take part.

AI asked about sample sizes on travel diary when using the data for transport modelling. EM stressed sample size is ample and it is possible to boost the sample for local authorities if the budget is increased. SC mentioned the problems with small numbers on data zone level or when disaggregated by mode of transport. SC asked about the possibility of adding more questions. EM indicated this is possible if other questions are dropped. Technological improvements may be possible but the current contract is not focused on this. DC mentioned consistency was important so that data can be added together across years to create larger sample sizes.

4. Transport Scotland ASD updates

Statistics branch

RM gave an overview of the statistical publications that have come out throughout the year: Scottish Transport Statistics, Key Reported Road Casualties, Transport and Travel in Scotland and Reported Road Casualties. We have also provided support on the Hands Up survey which comes out in the spring.

RM thanked AK and CL for their work on Scottish Transport Statistics. JB has replaced Ben Collier.

Other work has included: analysis of air departure tax, the SHS questionnaire review, analytical support for concessionary travel, and developments within maritime statistics

DfT road safety statistics have recent personnel changes and had postponed publication of 2016 accident statistics. We are also working with Police Scotland to ensure their data capture system meets our needs.

DC asked if DfT problems were related to problems experienced by TfL because accidents were recorded in a different way. RM explained that this has not affected Scottish data but is understood to be related to the delay in publication of DfT statistics.

RM has met with DfT to discuss accessibility analysis. The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation accessibility domain remains the closest Scottish data set analogous to the analysis that DfT do on accessibility for England and Wales.

RM met recently with colleagues from DfT and Transport Scotland working on a review of UK traffic statistics. As well as establishing a basis of on-going collaboration TAS supported DfT's business case to secure funding to update traffic count benchmarks from Scottish sites.

TH asked if any work had been done on tourism, and people travelling in and out of Scotland. RM responded that we have not done any work on this ourselves but have worked with DfT. Most of this data is based on the International Passenger Survey.

Research projects

PS gave an update on various pieces of work undertaken by analytical services.

Extensive work was carried out around the devolution of Air Departure Tax. The economic assessment of the proposed 50% reduction in ADT is due to be published later this year or early January. There also has been a public consultation which will be published at around the same time. The noise impact assessment is due to be published next year.

The consultation on concessionary travel was a fairly high profile project, and the results are due to be published in the new year.

RWM has been leading on the National Travel Strategy review.

On ferries, work has done on the option appraisals for the next contract and the Outer Hebrides ferry service.

The Borders Railway Year 2 Evaluation is due to be published after Christmas. Consultation on road works is due to be published next year.

We are still working with Sustrans and Cycling Scotland to monitor the Cycling Action Plan.

The consultation on local buses and smart ticketing closes today. Results of the consultation are expected to be published in the new year.

5. Transport and Travel in Scotland: Recent Developments and Possible improvements

JB gave an update on Transport and Travel in Scotland, including the Scottish Access to Bus Indicator (SABI) which was published for the first time.

The committee expressed a keen interest in the Access to Bus indicator. AR asked whether the indicator reflected the utility of the bus services, e.g. whether they increased connectivity to labour market or services. JB clarified that the indicator focusses only on timetables of existing services but future analysis might incorporate access to, for example, labour markets. AI remarked that time series data would be useful. DC remarked that SABI should link to SIMD. JB responded SABI is published on statistics.gov.scot and can be linked with SIMD.

JB opened the floor on the three discussion questions that had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

- What should be the scope of the publication? Exclusive focus on SHS or wider range of data?

JB explained that TATIS includes data from a number of sources besides the SHS, such as STS, Reported Road Casualties and SABI. SC noted the main focus of TATIS could be considered to be customer experience of the transport network. SABI is analysis, not primary data, and it may be more appropriate to publish it elsewhere.

AR indicated that repetition across publications was not desirable because it might lead to confusion. Customers are unlikely to look for STS material in TATIS. RM noted that while we lead with contextual information on the front page of the publication this can sometimes lead to an undue focus on less novel results at the time of publication. DC indicated that it would be useful to have additional statistics in the publication if they provided context to the SHS material. Information on fares and affordability could be important for explaining patronage decline, for example.

- How can we improve the presentation of the material?

JB explained the publication currently consists of tables, a written report and infographics. The tables are used widely and we are not considering to make any

changes to them. However, we would consider limiting the written report and expanding on the infographic content. AI indicated that data quality was more important than presentation. AR said that before changing the presentation it would be important to know who the main non-technical audience were.

- Would there be any value in publishing topic reports in addition to the main publication?

AI and SC expressed an interest in publication of topic reports. However, it was noted that TAS need to be clear about the context of these reports since publishing once may create an expectation that reports are updated annually. DC mentioned car ownership as a potential theme for a topic report.

6. National Transport Strategy (NTS) review: review of performance against outcomes and data needs for the future

- **Review of performance against outcomes for the original (2006) NTS and learning for the current NTS Review (Rory Morrison, TSAS)**

TH asked when NTS review is supposed to be finished. BD indicated the aim is to publish in the summer of 2019.

RWM and BD gave an overview of the NTS review process which started at the start of 2017/end of 2016.

The aim of the review is to collaboratively (with a range of stakeholder organisations and wider public engagement) produce successor strategy to the original 2006 NTS. It will not feature mode-specific sub-strategies, but instead will provide overall strategic direction for transport policy and set out an updated vision for what kind of transport system we want for the whole of Scotland over the next 20 years. It will not cover strategic infrastructure priorities or investment, however it will inform the update of the Strategic Transport Projects Review (which outlines infrastructure priorities) by setting out the national outcomes we want to achieve from infrastructure investment.

RWM explained that the 2006 NTS outcomes and indicators are products of their time, pre-dating the National Performance Framework, and that our expectations are higher when it comes to developing a monitoring and evaluation framework for the successor NTS.

RWM talked the group through features, strengths and limitations of some of the indicators originally selected for the 2006 NTS. In discussion the group noted the following:

- **Some indicators could be improved, were they to be retained in the new NTS:** e.g. in the case of the self-reported congestion measure, which AI believed could be improved significantly as the current version does not allow assessment of whether we have improved or not.
- **Indicators/outcomes that are in conflict or tension:** (e.g. emissions reduction and increased aviation). AI highlighted that transport policies will never do everything for everyone, and DC commented that indicators don't need to measure everything and conflict is not in itself a problem as long as the 'side effects' are covered elsewhere. PS commented that in order to make these 'trade-offs' explicit we need to provide a wider narrative to accompany the indicators. It was agreed that scenario planning will be helpful for this.
- **Narrow indicators:** (e.g. Scotrail passenger kilometres, bus patronage) – while these measures have some strengths, they are relatively narrow. DC stressed the need to avoid indicators that are limited to one operator and that, for buses, the number of boardings is not a good measure (due to double counting). TH felt that for buses we need passenger kilometres (passenger trips are down but bus vehicle miles are up which suggests trip length is increasing). DC further noted that number of bus passengers is meaningless, as it depends on why people are taking the bus. In this sense bus satisfaction is more important.
- **What does success look like?:** (e.g. for carbon emissions is it absolute emissions or relative performance?) DC felt that the percentage of total is irrelevant, and it is the absolute value of total emissions that is important. Location of emission source is also important: high altitude vs low altitude.
- **Missing areas/poor coverage:** The group noted that there was little on affordability and nothing on air quality.

Action: TTSAC members to share any further comments on the draft paper circulated with RWM.

- **Discussion on the draft strategic outcomes framework for NTS2 and future statistical and data requirements to support its measurement (Bertrand Deiss, Alison Irvine, Transport Scotland)**

BD gave an update on the draft strategic framework. This will be shared with the whole governance structure of the NTS. This will then be shared with stakeholders and the public. In spring 2019 a public consultation will be launched, with NTS2 due to be published in summer 2019.

The draft strategic framework consists of a central vision, and four themes. Each theme has three outcomes. The outcomes include public/delivery partner behaviour and practice (which is acknowledged will need to change if we want to achieve these

outcomes) and do not just focus on actions the Government is responsible for. The group was asked to consider whether we need further statistics/data types to monitor these draft outcomes?

DC asked how fair access and ease of use would be measured. PS mentioned that we probably need a combination of indicators. Not everything can be covered by statistics, but other means of evidence can be necessary.

AR mentioned that the current statistics do not give a feel for change. TH noted fiscal changes can nudge people but were not included in the document.

DC mentioned that the outcome should be access to services through transport, not access to transport services.

PS indicated that this can't all be achieved by the government and will require buy in from private sector. The goals are deliberately ambitious.

AH indicated that it would be useful if the indicator selection criteria included potential to disaggregate to regional/local levels to support integration of regional/local frameworks with the national strategy. AR asked about plans for publishing progress against outcomes in for example an annual report.

Action: TTSAC members to share further comments with the TS statistics team on where they think data collection needs to change in order to capture data relating to these outcomes.

7. Any Other Business

RM thanked all committee members for their attendance.