

DfT Transport Sector Transparency Board – Minutes

Great Minster House, London 10.00 – 12.00, Wednesday 29th October 2014

Attendees: Steve Gooding, DG Roads, Traffic and Local, DfT (Chair) [SG]
Prof. Jonathan Raper, CEO Placr [JR]
Andrew Stott, Public Sector Transparency Board [AS]
Nick Illsley, Transport Direct [NI]
Fiona Walshe, Motoring Services [FW]
David Coker, Information and Security [DC]
Daryl Lloyd, Road Safety Statistics [DL]
Liam Murphy, Cabinet Office [LM]
Kirsty Ivanoski-Nichol, Network Rail [KIN]
Gary Crockford, DfT Highways Agency [GC]
Helen Pattington, Transport Direct [HP]

Introduction and Welcome

Matters Arising

1. NI advised there was a meeting scheduled between the rail industry and the Rail Minister to discuss provision of information and customer care, where improving communications will be discussed. There was some general discussion on rail data, where it is clear there is still some work to do to ensure restrictions are lifted on the use of data, and DfT will continue to press for open release.
2. NI also confirmed that funding had now been made available to enable the merger of the Integrated Transport Network (ITN) and National Street Gazetteer (NSG) into a single dataset.
3. NI advised that the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) were still working on data release.

Action: NI/HP to request a sample dataset on the enhanced airline and airport performance metrics from the CAA and forward to the Board.

4. NI advised that clearances had now been obtained for the consultation paper on the release of Vehicle Registration Marks (VRM) and Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) data, and a submission for Ministerial clearance for the publication of the consultation was now imminent.

Action: NI to provide LM with an update.

5. JR requested an amendment be made to the previous set of minutes, where paragraph 6 should be changed to “JR stated ‘We should welcome this, it is what we set out to do. However, NRE should choose whether it wants to operate in the market and be regulated on its pricing and licence terms by Office for Rail Regulation OR whether it wants to become the de facto distributor of all rail information to the industry and partners, in which

case it must release the data on a true OGL licence without developer conditions and free to scale.”

Future of Oversight of Transparency in Transport Sector

6. NI gave a short presentation, recommending that the Board continues to meet 3 – 4 times a year, with membership extended to the Open Data User Group (ODUG) and Big Data representatives, and with more involvement from DfT Directors to embed transparency in the line. It was agreed that a newsletter should be produced to provide interested parties with information about data issues. Other suggestions for the future included putting out information and inviting feedback from the Open Data community in advance of future board meetings. Another was that a transport data event be held to talk about open data requirements, which should ideally be held early in the New Year.

Network Rail Transparency Strategy and Change of Status

7. KIN gave a presentation on the work that Network Rail has already done and its future plans following its recent change to become a public sector organisation. Feedback from AS on the plans included recommendations that the raw data be made available whenever possible, historic data should remain available rather than be replaced, and the data should be made available in machine readable formats. JR advised that the Open Data Institute (ODI) certification process could be used to provide feedback on these issues.

National Information Infrastructure (NII)

8. LM advised that the Cabinet Office needs DfT to identify which of their core reference datasets should be included within the NII. Other general activities will include clarifying definitions, and defining how quality will be maintained. It was noted the NII can also include private sector data, as well as aspirations for data to be included which may not currently be available (e.g. bus fares). It was also recognised that there may be costs and other impacts associated with publishing and regularly maintaining data included in the NII, especially for organisations such as Network Rail and the Highways Agency.
9. A concern was raised regarding the ongoing availability of the key datasets, with nothing in place at present to prevent data from being revoked in the future. It was suggested that the Open Government Licence be strengthened to cover such things as providing advance notice to users of changes to the format or timeliness of data, etc. Clarity is also needed on whether the NII is to cover the United Kingdom, Great Britain or England.
10. The Cabinet Office is aiming to produce a framework proposal document in November, with the NII expected to be populated in the first quarter of 2015. For the initial discussion it was agreed to use the existing list of the

transport datasets that are already in the public domain from the October 2013 launch version of the NII, and consider whether any other datasets should be included or existing datasets excluded in due course.

Action: JR agreed to review the existing NII datasets and their relevance to the emerging NII model.

Action: NI/HP/LM to discuss the make-up of a transport case study, taking into account the review by JR.

AOB

11. NI gave a brief outline of the findings of the A14 project, which looked at the collation of disparate data via an information hub to produced enhanced information sources for re-use. The findings from this project will feed into a wider discussion on better sharing of data.

12. SG said that this was NI's last meeting before his retirement. NI had made a huge contribution to advancing the transparency agenda, and wished him all the best for the future.

Secretariat
27/11/2014