



Annual Report and Accounts
2005-06





Annual Report and Accounts **2005–06**

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Secretary of State for Transport

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Dear Secretary of State

I have pleasure in enclosing the annual report and accounts for 2005-06 from the Rail Passengers Council (operating as Passenger Focus), as required under Schedule 5 of the Railways Act 2005.

Yours sincerely

Colin Foxall CBE
CHAIRMAN

Who we are and what we do

Passenger Focus¹ is the independent national rail consumer watchdog. It is an executive non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Transport.

Our mission is to get the best deal for Britain's rail passengers. We have two main aims; to influence both long and short-term decisions and issues that affect passengers, and to help passengers through advice, advocacy and empowerment.

With a strong emphasis on evidence-based campaigning and research, we ensure that we know what is happening on the ground. We use our knowledge to influence decisions on behalf of rail passengers and we work with the rail industry, other passenger groups and Government to secure journey improvements.

Our vision is to ensure that the rail industry and Government are always

'putting rail passengers first'

This will be achieved through our mission of

'getting the best deal for rail passengers'

¹ Passenger Focus is the operating name of the Rail Passengers Council. The Railways Act 2005 provided for the abolition of the regional Rail Passengers Committees and former national Rail Passengers Council and the new RPC came into being on 24 July 2005. The name and identity for Passenger Focus was launched on 25 January 2006. For the purposes of this report, all references to activity undertaken between 24 July 2005 and 31 March 2006 will be under the name of Passenger Focus.

Over the next three years, our work will be based on the following five objectives, which underpin the vision and mission

1. understanding the needs and experiences of rail passengers
2. securing tangible and measurable improvements for rail passengers
3. empowering rail passengers with information, advice and advocacy
4. influencing major long-term decisions that affect rail passengers
5. being visible, accessible and understood by rail passengers and stakeholders.

Our corporate plan outlines what we are setting out to do until 2009 and can be obtained from our website at www.passengerfocus.org.uk or requested using the details on the back of this document.

Our values

In order to be influential and get the best deal for rail passengers, we must work in certain ways. We need to ensure that we are recognised as being forward-thinking, proactive, enabling and prominent, so that we achieve results for rail passengers.

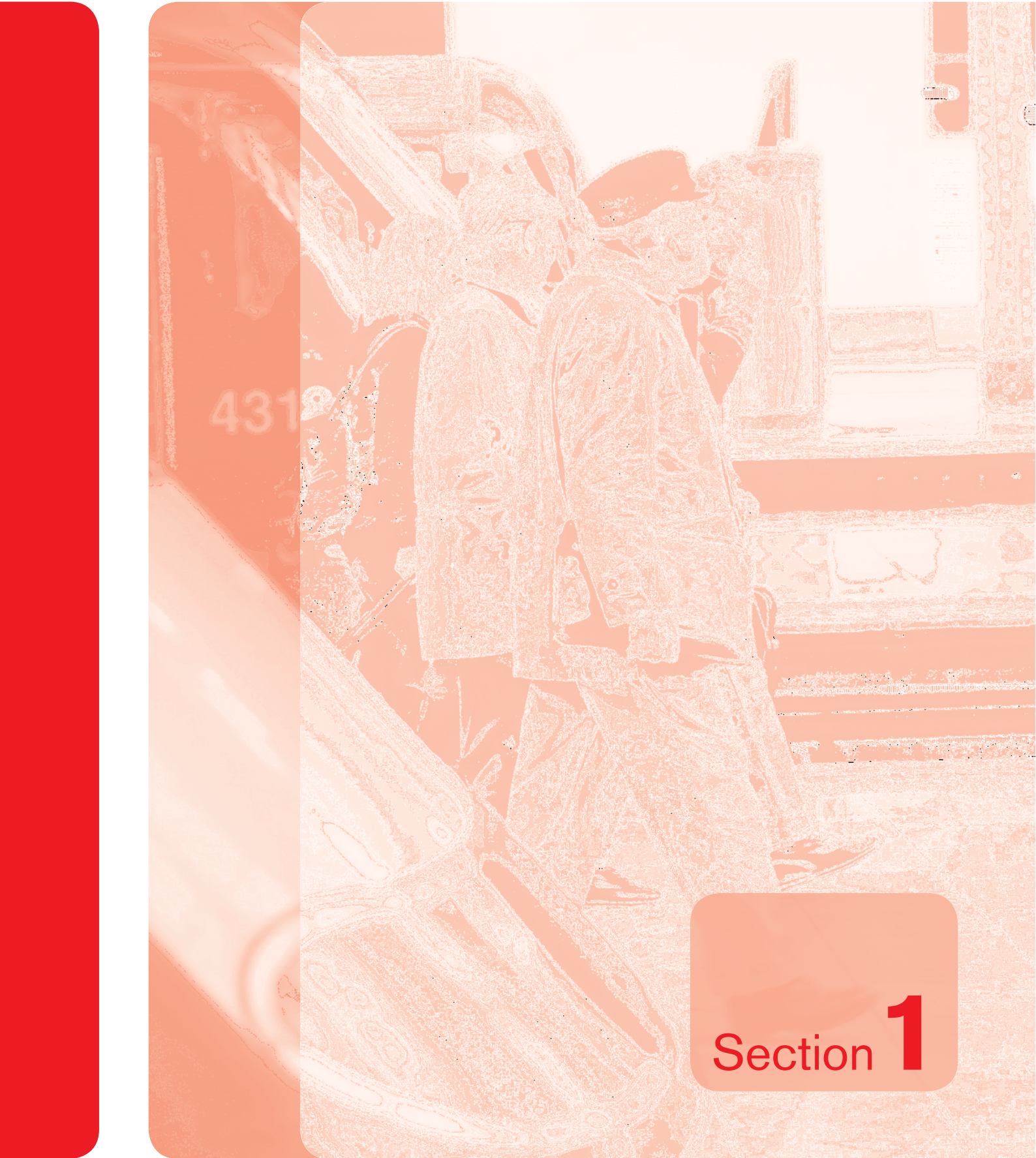
This will be demonstrated through our four core values, which are

- **independence** – we will be impartial, objective and fair when undertaking all of our activities
- **openness** – we will be accessible, available, transparent and approachable to rail passengers and other stakeholders
- **trust** – in order to be influential, we will demonstrate that we are respected, informed and credible. This will be achieved through using evidence and research to inform policy
- **engagement** – in order to campaign and lobby for changes, we will demonstrate that we are listening, understanding and responding to rail passengers and other stakeholders. We will achieve this through the various research and consultation projects that we undertake.

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Section **1**

Chairman's introduction

Chairman's introduction

Putting passengers first

This is Passenger Focus' first annual report, setting out eight months' activity. We were set up in July 2005 to be the new voice of all Britain's rail passengers. Creating a new organisation is always exciting and a challenge but in this case we were very conscious that we had a significant opportunity to put passengers at the heart of the railways. The railways in Britain have a long history of passenger representation but often it has seemed that the railways have been run for those who operate them. We were determined to see that change. So we adopted the title of Passenger Focus because it says what we want to do – and what we want the rail industry and government to do as well. And because we want them to put rail passengers first, we put those words alongside our name.

From the very start our board has been determined to ask passengers what experiences they have, what they need, and what they expect from their railways. We have committed ourselves to a research-based approach, and to react to what that tells us rather than the commonly received wisdom which is sometimes represented as consumer opinion. If we are to convince Government and the rail industry to follow our advice, then our arguments must be based on sound evidence and research. We will focus on the issues where we can really make a difference.

We have established ourselves on the principle of being a consumer organisation – of course we support the railways, but we're not here to represent the rail industry or to advise on how to run a railway. We're here to argue for the passenger – and what the passenger needs from a privately delivered, public service.

Twelve passenger link managers who live and work around Great Britain provide us with our regional reach. The full team was in place by 30 January 2006. They know what the passengers of the train companies are really experiencing and are quick to spot opportunities for change. We have set an ambitious target of at least 100 passenger improvements from local initiatives each year to show our commitment to changing things on the ground.

What do passengers say?

So what have passengers told us? It's clear that, on the whole, passengers are generally satisfied with their journeys – four out of five told us so in the National Passenger Survey, the largest published regular rail passenger survey in Europe, which we run on behalf of the Department for Transport. However, these overall figures mask big regional and route variations and also hide some real problem areas for the industry. It is always difficult to generalise about what remains a very individual experience – it is cold comfort to learn that most passengers are broadly happy when missing a connection by minutes, being stuck on a short-formed train, on a gloomy station or when being told that a cheap ticket quota has sold out.

Value for money sticks out as the Achilles' heel as national ratings for this aspect of travel lag behind other areas. Fares information on longer-distance journeys is becoming even more confusing. If you understand the system and can spend time hunting around, very good deals can be had. However, for a newcomer to the railways, the jargon jungle is getting thicker by the minute. We understand that there is a trade-off between choice and complexity but it will be interesting to see which train company can set the industry benchmark for clear ticketing information.

As a result of what passengers have told us, we have launched a debate on the future of fares and ticketing. We held a public conference to discuss the issues and the evidence from the first phase of a large piece of passenger research. As this year ends, our initial findings show that passengers find the fares system too complicated. Some who could use season tickets don't appear to understand the savings they could make by doing so or, if they do, can't afford to buy. Some worry about whether they have been sold a more expensive ticket than they needed. All of this shows that, at the very least, we need much better information about fares – and simpler fares. And while it seems some know how to use the fare system to get the best deals by booking ahead, we know that passengers as a whole want a railway they can decide to use without booking ahead and still get affordable fares.

The fares system determines what sort of railway we are going to have. A book-ahead railway would be likely to attract a different kind of passenger. If on-the-day travel is expensive – at the eye-watering levels we're now seeing for some peak hour journeys – some will find short notice rail travel prohibitive. On the other hand if book-ahead is to be the main way of selling fares, flexible travel may well become attractive to some who do not find rail travel value for money now, but may displace others who value flexibility. This is a key debate that must be had – we must not sleepwalk into a solely book-ahead, exorbitant walk-on fare railway. Access for all is more than a mantra – this is a public service.

The passenger challenge

When the railway was performing badly, the challenge was clear enough. In general trains are running more reliably and punctually than they have been for years and there is a danger that some may feel the railways have now been 'fixed'. While the basics of performance were not being delivered passenger attention was distracted. Meeting passenger priorities from now on poses some new – and in some ways more difficult – questions to answer.

This is our shopping list of questions, based on what passengers tell us. We'll be trying to get answers to them this year; Government and the industry need to address them.

Punctuality

Research shows that performance is still the number one passenger priority for improvement. Four out of five trains are regarded as on time (within five or ten minutes) but that means that nearly two trains in every ten run late. Late trains translate into millions of missed appointments, stress, frustration and inconvenience for passengers. So when can we expect that to improve or will it stick where it is because increasing capacity to make more trains run on time is too difficult?

Getting a seat

Rail travel is growing in popularity, overcrowding is already a problem and there are plans to improve capacity. But will it be enough and will there be a promise not to use fares as a means of rationing demand?

Information?

Getting information about using the railways often turns out to be hard work, especially when there are problems. Can't we do better this year and commit to clearer communications and information on fares and journeys?

A weekend railway

It's great that more of the infrastructure is being fixed but there is a danger that, because of the amount of engineering work planned, parts of the railway will only run five days a week. The railway must become better at handling the effect of engineering works. And why do passengers pay for a train then turn up to find they'll be taking a bus instead? Surely the tickets should be heavily discounted or at least accompanied by vouchers for future travel.

Still waiting

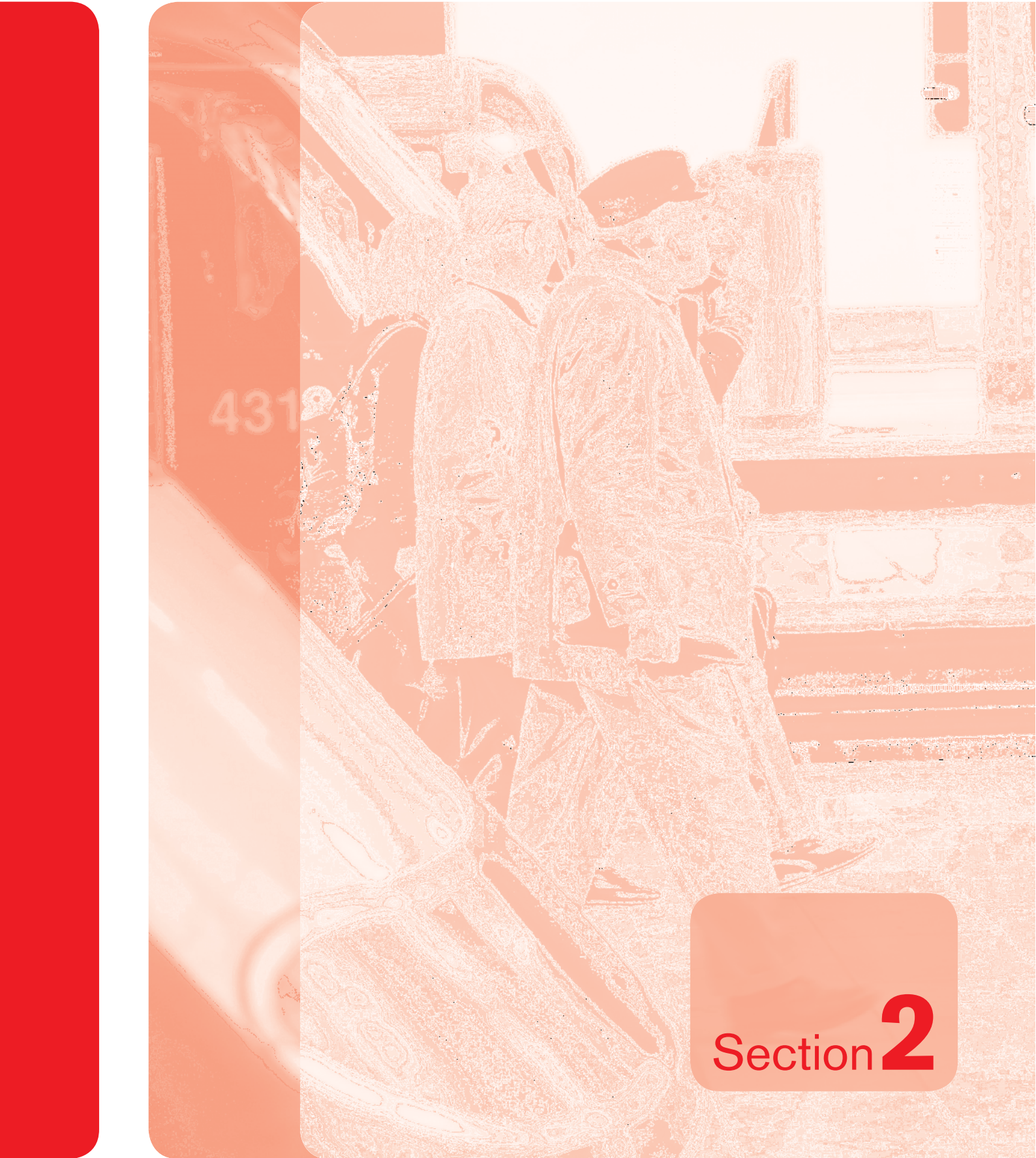
Passengers told us that that they find many stations unsatisfactory – dirty, rundown, and unpleasant places to be. Again and again passengers tell us they want to see more staff. Car parking, already a significant issue for many groups of passengers, is becoming an even bigger problem for long-distance rail users. Will a strategy be developed to make stations acceptable places to wait for a train, and can we, perhaps, put one person in charge of them all?

What next?

I suspect that passenger expectations have been ground down in the last few years. As a more acceptable level of performance is delivered, passenger expectations will rightly start to rise. I think that passengers are going to become much more demanding about all aspects of the industry. Passenger Focus will help set that demanding pace. The board of Passenger Focus and staff have done a great job in setting up and getting this organisation moving forward. Thank you. Next year we must really deliver and be seen to deliver on behalf of passengers.

**Colin Foxall CBE**

CHAIRMAN



Section **2**

Review of activities 2005–06

Review of activities 2005–06

2.1 Understanding the needs and experiences of rail passengers

Objective one

What we said we would do

- undertake and publish the Autumn 2005 wave of the National Passenger Survey (NPS)
- undertake the research for the Spring 2006 wave (published in June 2006).
- review the specification for the NPS ensuring it is fit for purpose and implement recommendations
- establish a NPS Stakeholder Advisory Group
- undertake a small number of large-scale research projects
- develop a range of channels to seek the views and opinions of rail passengers
- engage other passengers in Passenger Focus' work through consultation and other activities.

What we did

- all the NPS activities were carried out
- research projects were carried out or initiated on
 - quantitative and qualitative research on fares

- passenger priorities on various Central Trains routes (to inform the franchise re-mapping process)
- journey information following the 7 July bombs in London
- passenger reaction to the way Chiltern trains handled the aftermath of the Gerrards Cross tunnel collapse
- the availability of advance purchase tickets

- engaged with passengers through station events, set up email networks of passengers and carried out numerous snap opinion surveys.

What are we going to do in 2006–07?

- publish the Spring and Autumn NPS surveys
- undertake at least two major research projects
- engage at least 20,000 passengers in Passenger Focus' work
- start 'mystery shopping' type surveys.

Surveying the passenger landscape

The National Passenger Survey (NPS) is the largest published customer satisfaction survey of rail passengers in Europe. Following its transfer from the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA), the autumn 2005 wave of the survey was the first to be carried out by Passenger Focus.

Autumn 2005 saw the highest level ever recorded for the percentage of passengers satisfied with their journey overall, with four in five passengers (80%) very or fairly satisfied. This compared to 76% in autumn 2004. The issue of punctuality and

reliability, previously a major bugbear for passengers, also recorded a record high of 77% satisfied. But despite significant improvements in overall satisfaction ratings, only 45% of passengers were satisfied with the value for money offered for the price of their ticket.

1.1 – National National Passenger Survey Autumn 2004 – Spring 2005 results (combined), compared to Autumn 2005 – Spring 2006 results

	ALL PASSENGERS	
	2004-05	2005-06
Sample size	53670	54674
Overall satisfaction	76%	80%
STATION FACILITIES		
Ticket buying facilities	64%	64%
Provision of information about train times/platforms	74%	77%
The upkeep/repair of the station buildings/platforms	59%	61%
Cleanliness	64%	67%
The facilities and services	47%	51%
The attitudes and helpfulness of the staff	67%	69%
Connections with other forms of public transport	71%	73%
Facilities for car parking	44%	46%
Overall environment	59%	60%
Your personal security whilst using	56%	58%
The availability of staff	54%	56%
How request to station staff was handled	82%	82%
TRAIN FACILITIES		
The frequency of the trains on that route	73%	77%
Punctuality/reliability (i.e. the train arriving/departing on time)	73%	78%
The length of time the journey was scheduled to take (speed)	79%	82%
Connections with other train services	67%	69%
The value for money for the price of your ticket	43%	43%
Cleanliness of the train	64%	72%
Upkeep and repair of the train	61%	70%
The provision of information during the journey	57%	64%
The helpfulness and attitude of staff on train	55%	63%
The space for luggage	45%	49%
The toilet facilities	33%	39%
Sufficient room for all the passengers to sit/stand	60%	62%
The comfort of the seating area	61%	68%
The ease of being able to get on and off	74%	77%
Your personal security whilst on board	66%	69%
The cleanliness of the inside	63%	71%
The cleanliness of the outside	56%	65%
The availability of staff	35%	38%
How well train company dealt with delays	31%	34%

Bold, red figure denotes improvement compared to previous period

1.2 – National Passenger Survey data 200-2006

	Autumn 2001	Spring 2002	Autumn 2002	Spring 2003	Autumn 2003	Spring 2004	Autumn 2004	Spring 2005	Autumn 2005	Spring 2006
Overall opinion of journey	72	72	73	74	73	73	76	77	80	80
The value for money for the price of your ticket	42	42	43	43	43	42	44	41	45	41
Upkeep and repair of the train	52	51	51	52	53	53	59	64	71	70

1.3 – National Passenger Survey data showing overall satisfaction and value for money ratings 2001-2006**Overall satisfaction**

	Autumn 2001	Spring 2002	Autumn 2002	Spring 2003	Autumn 2003	Spring 2004	Autumn 2004	Spring 2005	Autumn 2005	Spring 2006
Commuters	62	62	64	63	64	65	66	68	72	72
Business travellers	72	74	73	76	73	75	81	79	82	82
Leisure travellers	84	83	83	84	82	82	85	85	88	88
Overall	72	72	73	74	73	73	76	77	80	80

Value for money for the price of your ticket

	Autumn 2001	Spring 2002	Autumn 2002	Spring 2003	Autumn 2003	Spring 2004	Autumn 2004	Spring 2005	Autumn 2005	Spring 2006
Commuters	27	27	29	28	28	28	29	27	30	27
Business travellers	42	40	42	45	43	43	46	43	48	41
Leisure travellers	60	60	60	59	59	59	60	58	61	58
Overall	42	42	43	43	43	42	44	41	45	41

Fares fair?

With so many different types of train tickets on sale and the annual fares increase kicking in from January 2006, it was no surprise that the value for money offered by train fares remained low down in the satisfaction ratings. Passenger Focus commissioned extensive research to explore passenger awareness and views on the range of tickets available, looking at what constitutes value for money and checking rail users' understanding, awareness of and attitudes towards Saver tickets and the ability to book tickets nine weeks in advance.



The results of 14 discussion groups involving passengers across Great Britain indicated that the rail fare structure is seen as complex and confusing, particularly for leisure and business passengers making longer journeys. Passengers are concerned that they may choose the wrong ticket and want help to ensure that they get the best deal. Affordable turn-up-and-go fares are valued by passengers who require flexibility in their journey arrangements and this is particularly the case for

those making day trips. Further research aimed at quantifying passenger views will report in August 2006.

What passengers really want

As part of building a national picture of what passengers want to see on their route, Passenger Focus commissioned a major piece of research on several key routes on the Central Trains franchise and routes within the Greater Anglia and Scottish route utilisation strategies (RUSs). The research asked who is using the services, why and what passengers' specific priorities were for each route. Passengers had to rate their expectations and experience of particular aspects of their journey and measured the level of importance they attach to each aspect.

The results show a large variance in priorities for improvements on a route-by-route basis, with issues such as ticket-buying facilities and provision of information being rated as some of the biggest issues. The results will shape Passenger Focus' aspirations for future franchises and RUSs and the same technique is now being used to inform passengers' priorities on the Cross Country franchise.



Ask the passengers

As part of a major change to the c2c timetable, Passenger Focus took to the platforms of Fenchurch Street, West Ham, Limehouse and Southend Central station over a week in March to highlight the proposals to passengers and to ask for their input before the changes take effect in December 2006. This exercise prompted a huge reaction from passengers with nearly 1900 responses received at our contact centre.



Passenger Focus teamed up with 'one' railway to test passengers' views about the timetabling of their services as part of a major timetable change proposed by the train company. Approximately 2,000 questionnaires were distributed to passengers along two of their major routes, covering almost every train in the timetable. The findings from this research are currently being used to inform discussion of future development of services.

Terrorist attacks in London

Following the tragic events of 7 July, Passenger Focus co-ordinated a research project on behalf of Network Rail to review how and where passengers found travel information in the aftermath of the bombings and the disruption to the public transport network in London. Research found that people who had made it to work mainly turned to websites to plan their journeys home. The most popular website was Transport for London (TfL), followed by the BBC and National Rail enquiries. Passenger Focus recommends that all organisations review the capacity of their websites to ensure that they can cope with high demand in emergencies.

2.2 Securing tangible, measurable improvements for rail passengers

Objective two

What we said we would do

- work to secure service improvements
- develop strong working relationships with the
 - Department for Transport
 - Scottish Executive
 - Welsh Assembly
 - Office of Rail Regulation
 - regional development agencies
 - regional assemblies
 - Network Rail
 - train operating companies.

What we did

- secured a number of service improvements
- strong relationships developed with key stakeholders
- Board meeting and parliamentary reception held in Scotland.

What we are going to do in 2006–07

- achieve at least 100 measurable improvements for passengers
- continue to build relationships with key stakeholders.

Passenger link managers have been using local knowledge and information gathered from research and passenger consultation to take up issues which affect passengers at regional and national levels, concentrating specifically on improvements to services. Some of the tangible benefits for passengers resulting from our work this year are highlighted below.

Station successes

- South Eastern Trains proposed a major change to ticket office opening hours across 187 stations earlier this year. There was concern that the proposed changes would be detrimental to passengers and that passenger views were being ignored. Passenger Focus and London TravelWatch mounted a campaign which involved gathering over 3000 passenger and stakeholder opinions, to form the basis of a joint submission to the Department for Transport. In November 2005, the Department for Transport refused South Eastern Trains' proposal and instead gave

GoVia (the incoming franchisee as of 1 April 2006) authority to review the proposals with Passenger Focus and London TravelWatch, with a view to making a new proposal, if required, by September 2006

- following Passenger Focus' discussions with First Great Western, fast ticket machines at Bristol Parkway station were upgraded to sell Saver tickets in advance of the Saver period (i.e. for passengers wanting to buy tickets in advance at the station for travel on later trains when Saver tickets were valid)
- in late 2005, Arriva Trains Wales stopped staffing Severn Tunnel Junction station on a permanent basis, making it difficult for passengers to buy tickets and plan journeys. Following Passenger Focus representation, the train company agreed to restore permanent staffing to this station.

Information

- the southbound platform at Congleton station used to display a Northern service timetable which was misleading passengers into believing that there were only limited services to/from Manchester with Northern and no other operators' services. Passenger Focus referred the issue to Northern and the incorrect timetable was replaced by a complete A–Z style timetable
- passenger criticism of the quality of information posters displayed at stations owned by Northern created an opportunity for joint working between Passenger Focus and the train company to draft new posters. These are currently being piloted at a range of stations across the network. The new posters will include better local maps, information on help in the case of delays/problems and some generic advice on fares.

On board

- Passenger Focus became aware of the restricted hygiene tank facilities at Carlisle station for Leeds–Settle–Carlisle trains, which usually meant no toilet facilities on medium-distance services. Liaison with Northern, the Friends of Carlisle–Settle Line and the station manager at Carlisle led to improved tanking facility for Northern services and thus better on-train facilities for passengers
- the introduction of fast services between Ashford and Brighton as part of Southern's original franchise commitment had previously led to a substantial reduction in services along the route. Passenger Focus took action on behalf of passengers, making a representation to the Department for Transport's consultation on Southern's timetable requirements. The result was an agreement to add an extra 22 stopping services into the timetable at the earliest opportunity
- the 17.00 Wessex departure from Cardiff Central to Exeter St Davids was regularly departing 15–30 minutes late, despite being in the station at departure time. The prolonged waiting time at the station of this key commuter service was causing knock-on disruption to a number of other services. Passenger Focus made the train company aware of the problem, which appeared to be linked in part to a crew change-over. Since Passenger Focus highlighted the issue, the timekeeping of this train has improved significantly.

Accessing the network

- After a sustained period of lobbying by Passenger Focus, the rear access to Bristol Temple Meads station was opened up and a ramp was installed to allow proper access out of the station into the new Temple Quay complex. This has improved access for all, especially for mobility-impaired passengers who previously could not use this entrance
- The introduction of Class 322s on the Edinburgh Waverley to North Berwick route led to a poorer service for disabled passengers, with no access ramps between platform and train. Following Passenger Focus' discussions with First ScotRail, ramps are now to be provided on all trains. This is due to secure storage space for such ramps now being identified as part of a refurbishment programme
- changes to the Crewe–Skegness service in December 2005 resulted in poor connections at Derby. Following Passenger Focus representations, Central Trains agreed to implement changes that will make it easier to catch connections at Derby from June 2006.

How much?

- Passenger Focus secured agreement from 'one' railway to correct an historic anomaly which meant passengers could not buy tickets when changing from the Southminster line to the c2c/London Tilbury Southend line, as no fare was in the system. This matter should be resolved in June 2006
- up until recently at Cambridge station, passengers were unable to purchase Saver tickets from fast ticket machines, even when services were within the qualifying time period. Passenger Focus took this issue to 'one' and the fault in the software was subsequently resolved with the machine supplier.
- in March, Passenger Focus also secured agreement from 'one' railway for season ticket holders to be provided with some form of *ex gratia* compensation in recognition of the disruption caused to their journeys in December 2005. A package, which is likely to consist of an off-peak free travel offer on the 'one' network, is currently being developed by the company.

Compensation

- having put forward a bespoke compensation package for passengers affected by the Gerrards Cross tunnel collapse, Chiltern Railways took on board the findings from Passenger Focus and London TravelWatch's research which looked at passenger satisfaction with the way the disruption was handled. Chiltern accepted the points made by Passenger Focus and acknowledge that they would take a different approach if faced with a similar issue again.



2.3 Empowering passengers with information, advice and advocacy

Objective three

What we said we would do

- develop and publish clear, comprehensive and useful information and advice for passengers
- work with other passenger groups to improve their ability to help passengers
- develop products to empower rail passengers
- continue to improve our complaints appeal service.

What we did

- dealt with 13,828 total contacts from passengers
- dealt with 1975 initial complaints
- dealt with 1580 appeal complaints

- helped a number of train companies, such as Virgin Trains, to set up passenger panels
- set up four meetings between rail user groups and train companies.

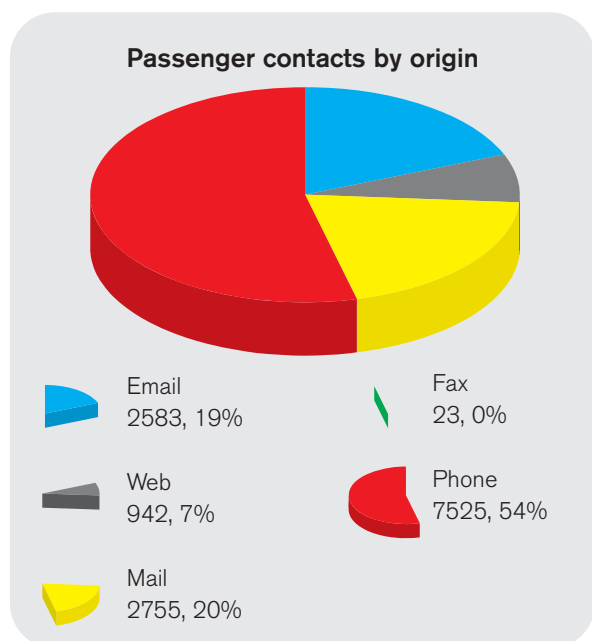
What we are going to do in 2006–07

- develop our website
- deal with all contacts and complaints from passengers, improving satisfaction with our service
- set up at least four meetings between rail user groups and train companies
- publish two leaflets: *just the ticket* and *get the best deal*.

1. Contacts to Passenger Focus' contact centre

A total of **13,828** passengers contacted Passenger Focus since the organisation was launched on 24 July 2005.

Contacts to Passenger Focus include contacts regarding initial and appeal complaints, requests for information, media enquiries, contacts from stakeholders, fulfilment requests and many enquiries, some of which are referred to London TravelWatch and other organisations.



2. In touch

Passenger Focus provided free and impartial information, advice and support through its mediation service for passengers who were unhappy with the way the rail industry had handled their complaint. By negotiating with rail service providers, Passenger Focus was able to bring thousands of passengers' complaints to a satisfactory conclusion.

Passenger Focus received a total of **3555** complaints (1975 initial complaints and 1580 appeals) between 24 July 2005 and 31 March 2006.

Initial complaints

Passengers who contact Passenger Focus with their complaint in the first instance are advised that the organisation can only become involved after they have allowed the service provider the opportunity to resolve the issue. Passenger Focus does however, offer advice on how best to pursue the complaint and offer guidance and support on passengers' rights. All of the issues raised by passengers during initial complaints are logged and used to help identify problem areas and opportunities for intervention and representation.

Appeal complaints

Passengers who have contacted their service provider but are unhappy with their response can ask Passenger Focus to review their complaint and mediate with the rail service provider on their behalf. Passenger Focus will establish whether it feels the complaint has been handled appropriately. If it feels that the service provider could do more for the passenger then it will ask them to review its handling of the complaint in order to bring the matter to a satisfactory conclusion.

London TravelWatch has the same role for complaints about national rail in the London area.

3. Appeal complaints received by Passenger Focus, broken down by train operator

This table does not show the appeal complaints received by London TravelWatch. Passengers travelling on train companies operating within the London area will have had recourse to London TravelWatch if the incident about which they are complaining occurred within London. Therefore there will be more complaints than those listed (right) for train companies who operate in and around London.



Service Provider

Arriva Trains Wales	89
c2c	11
Central Trains	121
Chiltern Railways	17
First Great Western	152
First Great Western Link	29
First ScotRail	68
First TransPennine Express	62
Gatwick Express	0
Great North Eastern Railway	187
Heathrow Express	1
Hull Trains	2
Merseyrail	18
Midland Mainline	37
Northern Rail	134
One	68
Serco Metrolink	3
Silverlink	7
South Eastern Trains	86
South West Trains	82
Southern Trains	54
Thameslink	2
Virgin Cross Country	87
Virgin West Coast	78
Wessex Trains	56
West Anglia Great Northern (WAGN)	25
Trainline	50
ATOC National Rail Enquiries	15
Network Rail	5
Other, Rail Industry	6
Eurostar	2
Central Parking System of UK Ltd	22
Other	4
ATOC Railcards	0

1580

4. Issues raised by passengers in complaints

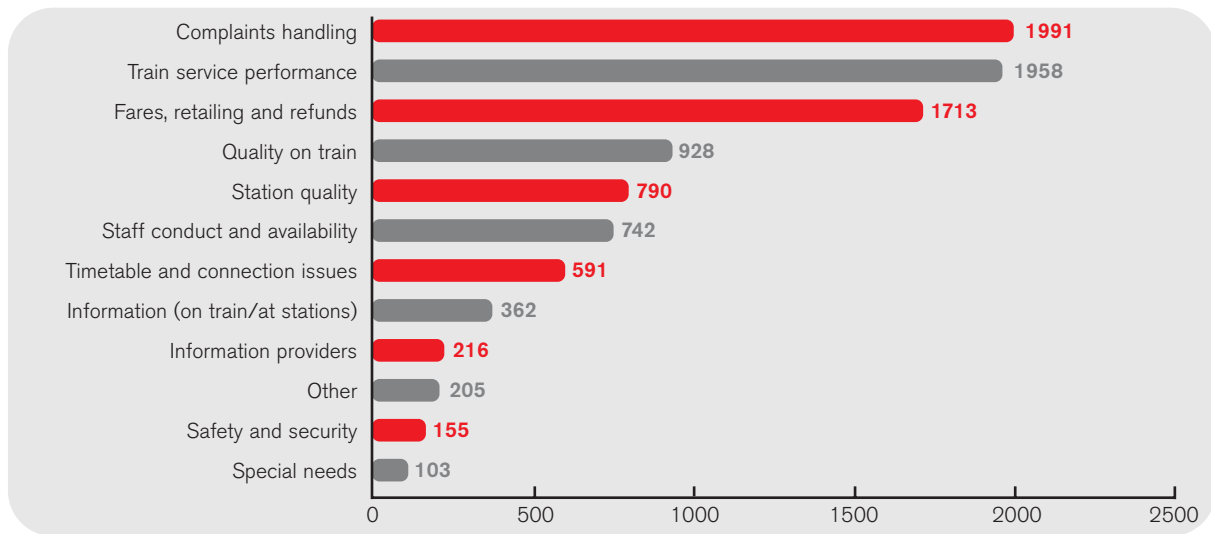
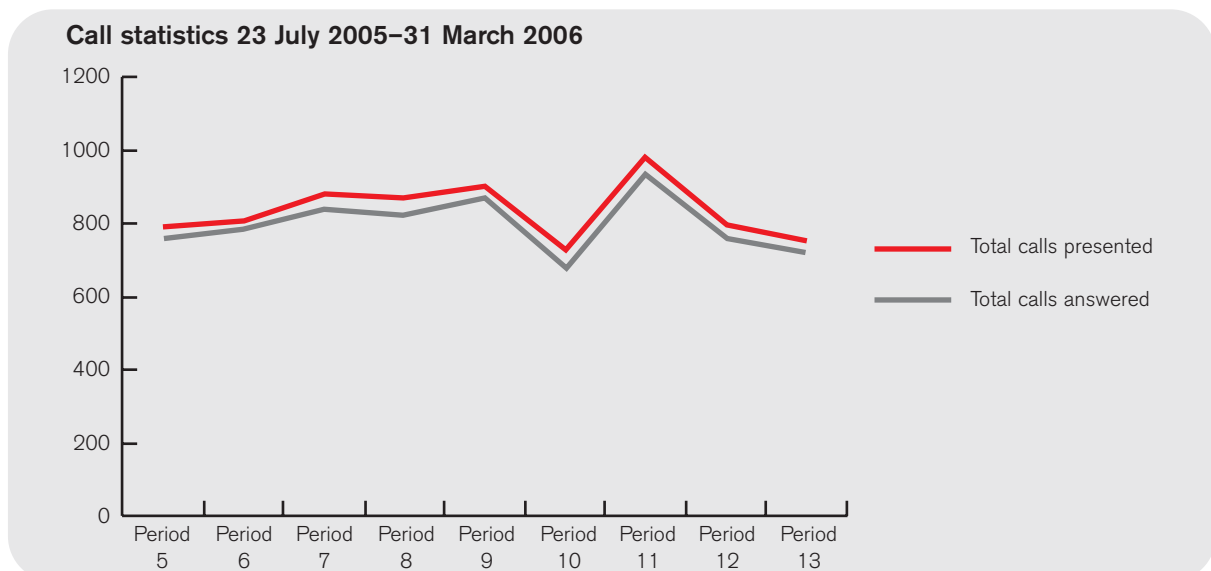


Table four shows the nature of the complaints received by Passenger Focus. Every complaint received is analysed and the issues raised by the passenger are logged as comments. One complaint can contain more than one comment, so the total volume of comments in this table differs to the actual physical volume of complaints received.

This year the main cause of passenger concern was the quality of complaint handling by train operators, responsible for 1991 comments, and poor train service performance, receiving 1958 comments. This was closely followed by comments about fares and retailing.

5. How did Passenger Focus do?



Passenger contact handling

Passenger Focus answered 95% of calls presented. It took an average of 10 seconds for a call to be answered. This is within the service level agreement specified by Passenger Focus.

Complaint handling

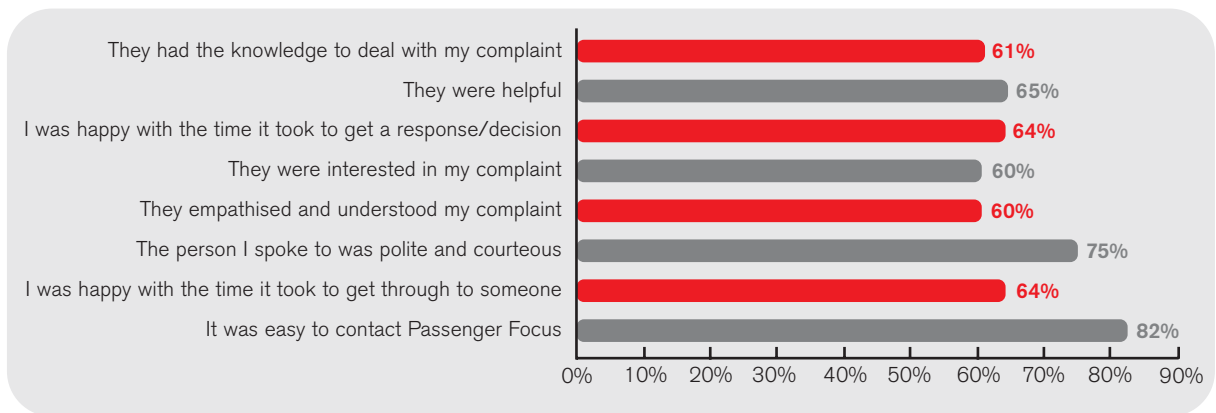
Passenger Focus' complaint handling team aims to resolve individual passenger issues and offer passengers information and consumer advice. The table below shows how the team performed against its complaint handling targets.

		Target	Result
Target 1	Complaints logged on the database on day of receipt	100%	62%
Target 2	Initial complaints acknowledged within 5 working days	100%	91%
Target 3	Appeal complaints acknowledged within 5 working days	100%	72%
Target 4	Initial complaints closed within 5 working days of receipt	100%	96%
Target 5	Appeal complaints closed within 35 working days of receipt	80%	87%

6. Passenger satisfaction

Passenger Focus surveys passengers who use its service to understand how they feel about the way their complaint was handled.

6.1 Satisfaction with contacting Passenger Focus



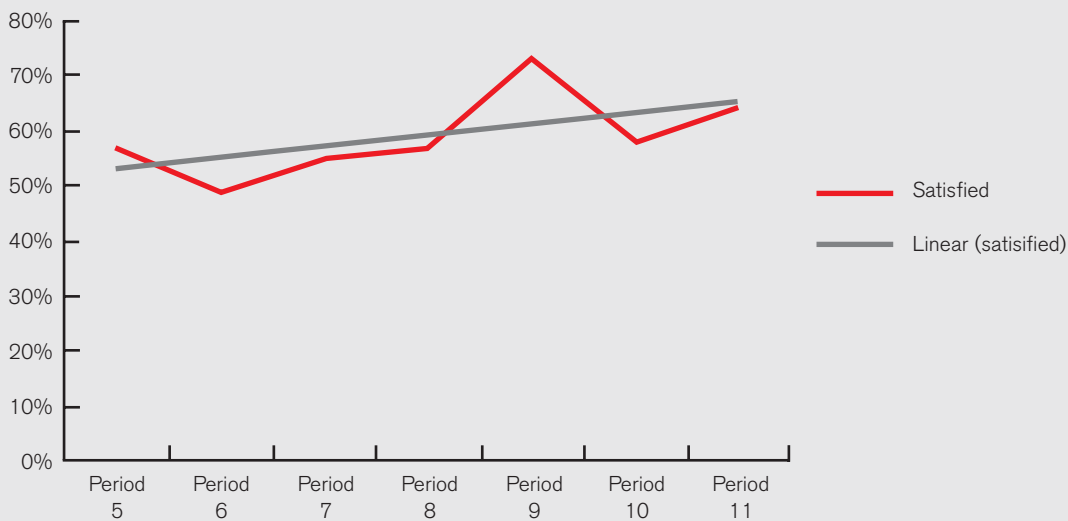
6.2 Satisfaction with complaint handling

Passengers are asked to disregard the outcome of their complaint and indicate how satisfied they were with the way in which it was handled.

The graph below shows the percentage of passengers who have indicated that they are satisfied or very satisfied each period of the year. The linear trend line demonstrates the steady increase in satisfaction levels.

Passenger satisfaction levels are heavily influenced by the outcome of the complaint. However, much of the time this is outside the direct control of the complaint handling team – whilst Passenger Focus can mediate, unless the service provider is in breach of its statutory obligations, then it is unable to compel them to resolve a complaint in a certain way. This can sometimes impact on the outcome of the complaint and passenger satisfaction.

Overall satisfaction with Passenger Focus' complaint handling



2.4 Influencing the major long-term decisions that affect passengers

Objective four

What we said we would do

- understand and report on passengers' views on fares
- understand and report on passenger priorities in the development of route utilisation strategies and during franchise replacement
- ensure passengers view are considered as part of the replacement process for high-speed trains
- campaign and lobby to raise the profile of passengers' priorities
- monitor developments on safety and European passenger issues.

What we did

- planned a major public conference on fares (held in April 2006) which saw the publication of the first stage of research commissioned in 2005–06

- commissioned a second, quantitative stage of research
- maintained a high media profile on the issue of fares
- worked on four route utilisation strategies and six franchise replacements
- gave evidence to three Transport Select Committees
- acted as a member of the Department for Transport-led high-speed train sponsorship board.

What we are going to do in 2006–07

- continue to campaign on fares
- work to boost the passenger benefit on eight route utilisation strategies and seven franchise replacements
- continue to monitor and influence developments on safety and at a European level.

Focus on franchises

2005–06 saw significant changes in the structure and ownership of train franchises, with Passenger Focus inputting into the development of three new franchises.

■ Thameslink/Great Northern

Passenger Focus set out its aspirations for the future of the Thameslink/Great Northern franchise and held meetings with all pre-qualified bidders to establish what each company was proposing. Once First Capital Connect, operated by First Group, had been awarded the franchise, Passenger Focus arranged a meeting with local authorities to

identify opportunities to deliver passenger benefits over and above those committed in the franchise.

Passenger Focus also worked with the new team to review their Passenger Charter following the introduction of a new '**delay-repay**' system of compensation. Passenger Focus pushed for a review in order to better protect season ticket holders who experience a series of delays under 30 minutes.

■ Greater Western

Bringing together inter-city, commuter and rural services, the new Greater Western franchise covers a huge stretch of the rail network. First

Group has committed to premium payments of £1.13 billion over the course of the franchise, prompting concern that fares will go up and services will be cut to enable First Great Western to meet its costs.

The start of the new franchise included consultation with Passenger Focus on the proposed timetable changes. First Great Western addressed some of the issues raised by Passenger Focus, resulting in some timetable improvements, and Passenger Focus continues to monitor the situation with regard to the proposed December 2006 timetable.

There are more new franchises in the pipeline, which gave Passenger Focus an opportunity to influence the debate at an early stage.

■ South Western franchise

January 2006 was the deadline for responses to the consultation on the new South Western franchise which combines previous South West Trains and Island Line services. Passenger Focus' submission focused on whether proposals within the franchise specification provided sufficient capacity to satisfy current and future demand. Part of the submission was based on views canvassed from local rail user groups, which identified frequency of services and station facilities as key elements for the new franchise.

■ Central Trains and Cross Country remapping

The Secretary of State announced the remapping of existing Central Trains services in October 2005. The proposals include three new franchises replacing the existing four (Central Trains, Midland Mainline, Virgin Cross Country and Silverlink County). They will be the East Midlands, West Midlands and a revised Cross Country franchise. There may also be a knock-on impact to other franchises.

Passenger Focus started discussions with the Department for Transport regarding the proposals and began its background research into the new franchises. This work included desk research, stakeholder consultation and establishing passengers' views and priorities through commissioned research.

Perfect planning

Network Rail's Route Utilisation Strategies (RUSs) have the potential to make a major impact to the level and quality of service experienced by passengers in the short to medium term. Decisions made in the RUS could influence such things as

- overcrowding
- frequency of services
- stopping patterns
- closure of stations
- performance levels.

RUSs are one of the key priorities for Passenger Focus and during this year, the organisation

- responded to the consultation on the South West Main Line RUS. As part of its submission, Passenger Focus canvassed the views of rail user groups, local authorities and MPs in the area. Following this focus group research was commissioned into passengers' propensity to travel in the early or shoulder peak into Waterloo
- responded to consultation on the Cross London RUS as part of a joint submission with London TravelWatch
- responded to the announcement on the Brighton Main Line RUS
- scoped research to inform our input into the Greater Anglia and Scottish RUSs

- established regular monthly bilateral meetings with Network Rail for more detailed updates and input.

Un-fare?

In September 2005, Passenger Focus submitted evidence to the Commons' Transport Committee enquiry into "How fair are the fares? Train fares and ticketing". Passenger Focus' evidence said that it believes that many rail fares are too high; that the fare structure is too complex and confusing and that the rail industry needs to exploit fares incentives to attract passengers to travel at times when there is greater capacity.



Safer railways

Passenger Focus has played an active part in representing the travelling public on a range of safety advisory groups and working parties, helping to shape the industry's strategy and to promote informed debate on rail safety trends and priorities. During 2005–06 Passenger Focus

- reported on passengers' perceptions of personal security (and means of enhancing it) as part of its input to the Government's review of the future of the British Transport Police and the Commons Transport Committee's scrutiny of public safety at stations
- worked with industry partners through the Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB) to commission research into the safety of station foot crossings; improving signage and controlling risk at stations
- provided an independent observer at the formal inquiry into the tragic death of two teenagers on the level crossing at Elsenham
- liaised closely with the Office of Rail Regulation on its plans for taking over responsibility for the work of HM Railway Inspectorate, which came into effect in April 2006
- presented a paper on 'Corporate killing : the passenger perspective' at a seminar for senior railway managers
- helped – successfully – to persuade the EU body responsible for drafting technical standards allowing trains to operate more freely across national frontiers to amend its proposals to take better account of British requirements
- provided an independent chairman for the Health and Safety Commission's Railway Industry Advisory Committee's annual public meeting in London at which the focus of the debate was around the safety risk associated with crowding on trains

- presented its findings of a study into the risks arising from crowding at stations, and means of controlling these, at a public meeting convened by the Health & Safety Commission. This study was co-sponsored by RSSB and the former RPC. A second phase of this research, investigating crowding on trains, is now underway.

Access for all

Passenger Focus interprets 'accessibility' as meaning everyone's ability to use the rail network. It made a detailed joint response with London TravelWatch on the Strategic Rail Authority's (SRA) **'Railways for All'** consultation, urging that any available funding be concentrated on improving access and should not be spent, for instance, on information technology which ought to be installed as a matter of course by the franchise operator. Passenger Focus is now represented on the industry steering group, looking at issues such as tactile paving, Access for All Small Schemes, improved ways of communicating station accessibility and developing a universally-understood definition of 'step-free'.

Passenger Focus is required to inspect each train company's Disabled Person's Protection Policy (DPPP) setting out its arrangements and facilities to assist disabled passengers, both on trains and at stations. During the course of the year, Passenger Focus had many of its recommendations taken on board by three franchised operators (First Capital Connect; First Great Western; South Eastern), one charter train operator, and a heritage railway operator.

In addition, Passenger Focus was invited by the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC) to contribute to the response to the EU Commission's consultation on *Accessibility for People with Reduced Mobility*. In its joint response with London TravelWatch, Passenger Focus



expressed concern at potential weakening of current statutory requirements in the development of accessible transport.

Book-ahead...if you can

Concerned that passengers find it difficult to get hold of advance purchase tickets, Passenger Focus continued its programme to monitor the dates on which bookings for quota-controlled tickets opened for the last 12 months. Passenger Focus carried out these checks at the two busiest times of year for advance purchase tickets – Christmas and Easter.

Checks showed that although train operating companies are getting better at releasing advance purchase tickets, there is still much room for



improvement to ensure that all advance purchase tickets are released as early as they possibly can be – nine weeks before travel.

Passenger Focus took up the matter directly with the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) and working with the ORR, Passenger Focus investigated availability for journeys drawing on ticket release data from the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC).

Passenger Focus also continues to press the train companies to be more transparent in releasing details of the quotas of tickets available in each price bracket so that passengers can find out how many tickets are still available for a specific train so they can plan their journeys in a more informed way.

Maindee Loop closure

In summer 2005, direct services between south west and north west England via south Wales were discontinued due to the decision to approve a proposal by Arriva Trains Wales to close the line between Maindee North Junction and Maindee East Junction (the Maindee Loop), near Newport, Gwent, to passenger services.

Formerly, one of Passenger Focus' duties was to investigate proposed closures and consider whether they would cause hardship. This involved conducting passenger counts and passenger perception surveys on the affected services during the week commencing 1 August. Of the 708 passengers counted, 587 completed questionnaires. This evidence base informed the subsequent assessment of hardship to passengers using the route and Passenger Focus' recommendations.

Passenger Focus' report found that the majority of passengers (86%) were travelling with some form of encumbrance such as luggage or a pushchair, and 8% stated they had a disability that affected their mobility. Over half of passengers (53%) considered the withdrawal of through-services an inconvenience.

However, having considered all of the evidence, the Department for Transport concluded that consent should be given to the closure, without conditions. Passenger Focus was disappointed with this outcome as it did not recognise the inconvenience experienced when having to change train, and hopes that the alternative services to be provided will be adequate for passengers travelling between the south west and north west England.

Scotland

With railway strategy and funding north of the border now in the control of the Scottish Executive and its delivery agency Transport Scotland, Passenger Focus took early steps to put in place effective working relationships with the Minister for Transport and his officials. At its February board meeting in Edinburgh, Passenger Focus reflected on the implications for passengers of a Scottish rail strategy which differs in some respects from the equivalents south of the border.

Passenger Focus contributed to the Scottish Executive's consultation on the formation of a Passenger Transport Users' Committee for Scotland, the aim of which is to provide an overarching representative body with a high-level advisory remit for passengers using rail, air, bus and ferry services. This body would work with existing bodies such as Passenger Focus.

The first 100 people signed up to the pilot of a Passenger Champions forum which is intended to provide a regular sounding board of passenger opinion across Scotland. Passenger Focus also formed working relationships with six newly-inaugurated regional transport partnerships which have taken over responsibility for creating regional transport strategies from local authorities.

Wales

1 April 2006 marked the start of the Welsh Assembly Government assuming responsibility for the majority of rail matters in Wales, including the management of the Arriva Trains Wales franchise. In the run-up to the shift in legislative powers, Passenger Focus invested considerable effort in meeting Assembly Members (AMs) to ensure that they were aware of issues facing passengers in Wales. This included a mailing to all AMs, presenting at a regional committee meeting, one-to-one meetings with members and responding to requests for information and assistance.

The changing transport landscape has also seen an increasingly important role for each of the four recently created regional transport consortia, who pull together representatives from all 22 of Wales' local authorities. Each of the consortia has been charged with creating a Regional Transport Plan (RTP) by 2008, so Passenger Focus has engaged in various consultation activities to ensure rail priorities are brought to the fore in these – drawing extensively on the former RPC's document – *'Local Transport Plans – From Strategy to Reality'*.

2.5 Being visible, accessible and understood by passengers

Objective five

What we said we would do

- develop and launch new website
- ensure passengers' views are heard in the media
- ensure articles about Passenger Focus feature in train companies' magazines
- publish first edition of a stakeholder bulletin.

What we did

- new website launched on 25 January 2006
- dealt with 553 requests from journalists and carried out 197 broadcast interviews
- ensured eight articles appeared about Passenger Focus in train company magazines

- published stakeholder bulletin
- held station events across the country.

What we are going to do in 2006-07

- deal with all media enquiries
- promote Passenger Focus on station posters and trains
- publish articles in every train company magazine
- publish four stakeholder bulletins
- further develop our website.

An effective consumer organisation must have a profile and be recognisable to the people whose interests it represents. In order to be influential in raising passenger issues, Passenger Focus is working to raise awareness and understanding of its role so that stakeholders understand its purpose and know how they can work with Passenger Focus to improve rail services for passengers.

online feedback, reflecting the way rail users want to be able to make contact with Passenger Focus at a time and in a manner convenient to them.

Passenger Focus is now working with the rail industry to ensure the passenger helpline contact details are easily available at stations, on trains and in train companies' own literature.

Passenger Voices

Passenger Focus' one-stop-shop service offering advice and information to passengers experienced another busy year. The national passenger helpline dealt with over 13,000 contacts since July, with 54% of these by telephone. Following training and staff development, the helpline is now well-resourced to deal with detailed enquiries from passengers on everything from tickets and timetables to assistance in finding lost property. The biggest growth has been in contact via email and

Station events

Views on the 'new' Birmingham New Street station were canvassed in March. Volunteers gave out postcards mocked up to feature Birmingham New Street station as it is now and with its new look for 2013, in support of plans to redevelop the station. The postcard asked passengers to tell us what they disliked about the current station and what they most want to see in the new station.



At the beginning of 2006, Passenger Focus held several station events throughout Great Britain to introduce the new organisation to passengers. At Manchester Piccadilly, Edinburgh Waverley and Glasgow Central stations, staff and members clad in branded sweatshirts gave out over 6,000 'Gimme 5' postcards, asking passengers to give five minutes of their time to answer five questions to be in with a chance of winning £50 in high street vouchers.



As part of a snapshot survey of passengers at Brighton station, 'wish you were here?' postcards were handed to passengers asking what three things they thought would most improve their rail journey. Half of the passengers said that they want to see cleaner trains, more luggage space and quiet coaches. Passengers also called for better technology on board trains and suggested that power sockets and wi-fi facilities would make their journey more enjoyable.

Live and online

January 2006 saw the launch of a new Passenger Focus website at www.passengerfocus.org.uk. The new site was developed to boost passenger contact with the organisation by developing a consumer-focused, interactive and accessible website. The site has been written to be easily understood and navigated and received RNIB 'see it right' accreditation, which represents a website's commitment to best practice accessibility. Feedback on the new site so far has been extremely positive and over 42,000 visitors used the site during March 2006 alone. The site currently receives over 1000 visits on any given day and the number of contacts from passengers through our website and by email has increased considerably since the site was launched.



Alongside the launch of the new website Passenger Focus ran a nationwide competition in the Metro series of newspapers asking passengers to say in less than 20 words why they should be chosen to write an online diary, or 'blog' for our website. The prize was a year's free rail travel. Passengers were able to enter the competition online through the Metro website or via a form on the Passenger Focus website. The competition was featured on the front page of all ten editions of the newspaper which distributes over a million free copies every day in 15 cities across Britain. The competition attracted considerable interest from passengers, with four lucky passengers from around the country chosen and their 'blog' can now be read on the Passenger Focus website at www.passengerfocus.org.uk

Hitting the headlines

Passenger Focus developed a good media profile during 2005–06, with 197 broadcast media interviews undertaken in eight months. This was largely due to the introduction of a dedicated press officer position, as well as passenger link managers who were able to provide the passenger voice on the ground.

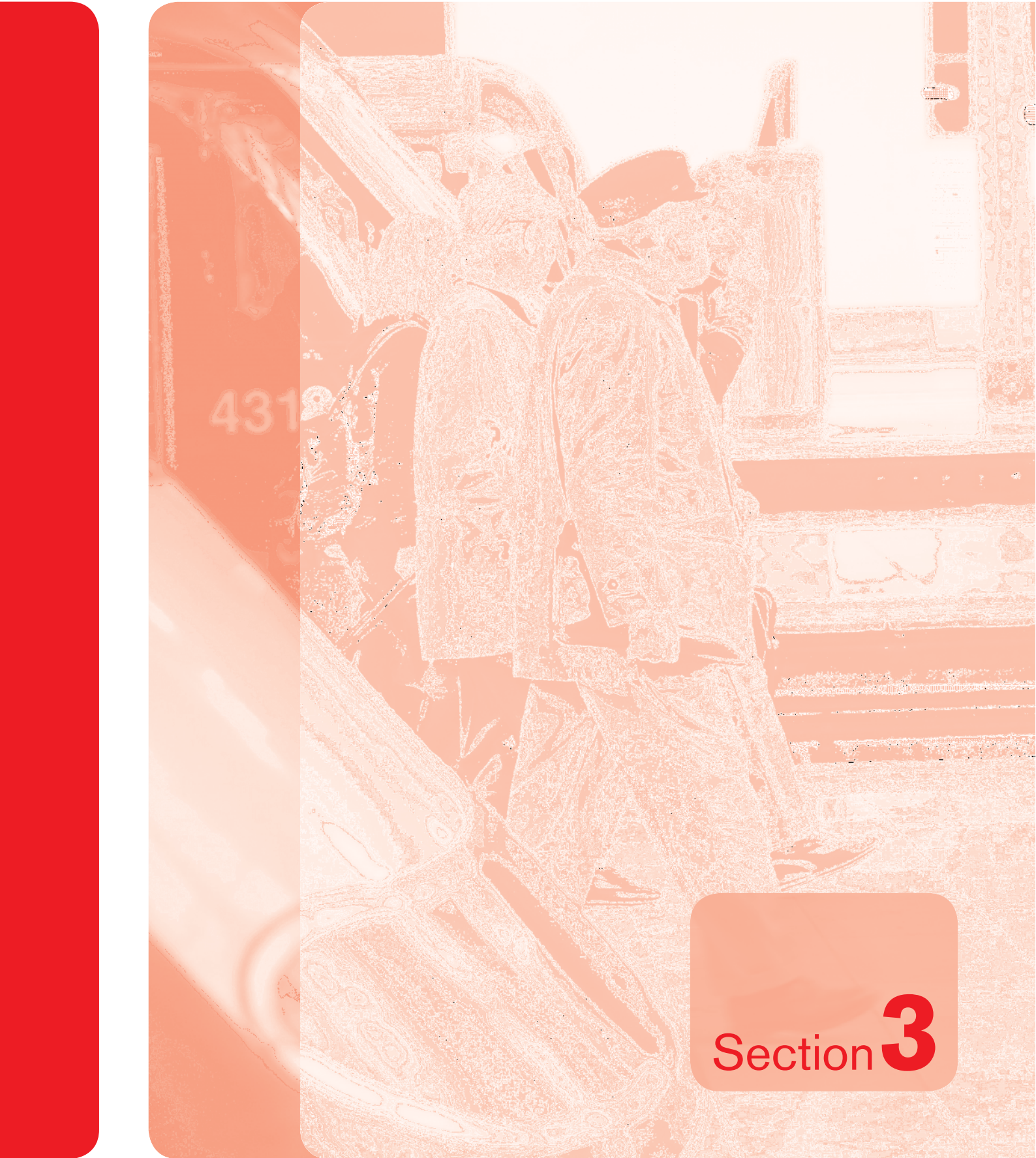
In particular, Passenger Focus developed good links with regional, local and consumer media, giving comments to media outlets as diverse as Computing magazine and the Morning Star. Issues making the headlines in 2005–06 included

- fares and value for money
- overcrowding
- safety and security at stations
- changes to timetables
- results of the National Passenger Survey
- engineering works, especially over holiday periods.

Speeches and events

Passenger Focus represented the passenger viewpoint at more than 25 events and conferences throughout 2005–06, including

- UK rail stations conference – 'what passengers want from stations'
- Involving passengers in train interior design – a presentation to the Railway Interiors Expo in Cologne
- North West Passenger Transport Users' Forum meeting – Passenger Focus and our new structure
- Railway Forum/Pinsent Masons seminar on the Railways Act 2005
- Delivering a Customer-Led Approach to Rail – Transport Planning Society North West
- Transport 2000 'Ground floor partners' conference
- The Community Rail Awards – Passenger Focus sponsored an award for rail staff achievements.



Section **3**

Appendices

Appendices

3.1 Appendix one Chief Executive's report

This is the first report and accounts for Passenger Focus, covering the period from 24 July 2005 to 31 March 2006. Although the organisation formally came into being in July, much of the year has been one of transition, establishing new ways of working and embarking on a major recruitment programme. It has also been a successful period, as the long list of achievements detailed in pages 12 to 34 demonstrate.

Nature of business

Passenger Focus is the operating name of the Rail Passengers Council, which was officially constituted on 24 July 2005 as a result of the Railways Act 2005. This legislation provided for the abolition of the previous Rail Passengers Council and eight regional committees which were sponsored as arms-length organisations by the Strategic Rail Authority. Passenger Focus was created as an executive, non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Transport. Passenger Focus operates from offices in Manchester and London, with remote workers liaising with individual train operating companies to secure improvements for passengers.

Finance

The organisation is funded through Grant in Aid from the Department for Transport and £4.1 million was received in 2005–06, of which £0.8 million was allocated for work on the National Passenger Survey and £0.2 million was transferred to the Government Grant Reserve against movements in fixed assets. Costs since formation have totalled £3.94 million, of which some £0.6 million has been for transition from the Strategic Rail Authority to the new structure.

The income and expenditure account shows a deficit of £102,000, primarily because the grant in aid is accounted for on a cash basis and the final Grant in Aid instalment of £95,000 in respect of 2005–06 was not claimed and received until after the period end.

Staff

The biggest change to the internal workings of Passenger Focus affected staff. We were sorry to see 35 staff leave as a result of the changes to the organisation's structure, although 25 staff were transferred to the new body following a job-matching exercise. Both the staff who remained with Passenger Focus during transition and those who left between July and December deserve considerable praise and thanks for their hard work, optimism and valuable contributions to the creation of a new organisation during a time of great upheaval. During the period, we also embarked on a major recruitment exercise which resulted in 17 new staff joining the organisation.

During the transition from the SRA we had a staff transition forum which provided means of maintaining constructive consultation with staff on the significant issues arising during a period of uncertainty. We have built on the success of the staff transition forum by holding elections for staff members to join a staff forum to take forward staff and business issues.

This year has seen the establishment of a new executive management board, with five members transferring via job-matching or internal applications for new roles, and one new member joining following open recruitment. Details of senior management remuneration during the period are set out in the remuneration report on pages 48 to 51.

Corporate governance

Passenger Focus also established a new board of non-executive members following a full competition process regulated by the Office for the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA). Their biographies are contained in appendix two. The board is responsible for setting the strategic direction and main policies of the organisation, and providing corporate governance and oversight of the finances and operations. The board and its committees are set out in the management commentary on pages 45 to 51.

Health and safety

It is our policy to provide a safe and healthy environment for our staff and visitors. Our two bases, in London and Manchester, have been refurbished to provide a modern working environment for staff.

Charitable and political donations

Passenger Focus did not make any political donations during the period. Following a charity pub quiz and raffle in March 2006, Passenger Focus raised £1108 for the Railway Children charity.

Disclosures to auditors

As Accounting Officer, so far as I am aware, there is no relevant audit information of which Passenger Focus' auditors are unaware. I have taken all reasonable steps to make myself aware of any relevant audit information and that Passenger Focus' auditors are aware of that information.



Anthony Smith

CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND ACCOUNTING OFFICER
23 JUNE 2006

3.2 Appendix two

Biographies of Passenger Focus board members

Colin Foxall CBE is chairman of Passenger Focus and is also a non-executive director of Radian Asset Assurance Ltd and a member of the British Transport Police Authority

Jessica Barrow was director of communications with Age Concern Scotland, and is currently on secondment to the Scottish Executive's Older People's Unit

David Burton was managing director of West Anglia Great Northern Railway from 1996–1999

Brian Cooke is currently chair of London TravelWatch. He was previously a member of the Rail Passengers Committee for Eastern England and a consultant in the travel industry
(*Appointed by the London Assembly*)

Philip Davis was chairman of the Rail Passengers Committee for the Midlands and was leader of Telford and Wrekin Unitary Council from 2000–2004

Kate Gordon CBE was a member of the Rail Passengers Committee for Eastern England and was previously a senior civil servant at the Health and Safety Executive

James King is a member of the British Transport Police Authority. After a successful career in the advertising industry James established his own strategic business and marketing consultancy in 1996, which he continues to run today
(*Appointed by Scottish Ministers*)

Christine Knights was chair of the Rail Passengers Committee for North East England. She is a member of the British Transport Police Authority and is experienced in the development of consumer organisations and consumer policy in Europe and the UK

Dr Derek Langslow CBE was chairman of the Rail Passengers Committee for Eastern England and was previously chief executive of English Nature. He holds a number of non-executive roles, including as a member of the British Waterways board and Chair of the East of England Tourist Board

Deryk Mead CBE was chief executive of NCH, the leading children's charity, from 1996 to 2004 after a career as a chief officer in local government

Bill Samuel was previously chief executive of the East of England Development Agency and chief executive of Peterborough City Council. He holds a number of non-executive positions and was a member of the former Rail Passengers Committee for Eastern England

Barbara Saunders OBE is an independent consumer consultant with experience of public policy in the UK and European Union. She has held a number of non-executive positions and previously chaired the Financial Services Consumer panel and Insurance Ombudsman Bureau.

Marc Seale is currently the chief executive and registrar of the Health Professions Council and was previously public interest director for the Centre for Rail Skills

Nigel Walmsley is chairman of Tourism South East and of the Broadcast Audience Research Board. He was formerly chairman of Carlton Television and, earlier, chief executive of Capital Radio Group

Note: Stella Mair Thomas was appointed as a board member of Passenger Focus on 8 May 2006, as the member appointed by the National Assembly for Wales.

3.3 Appendix three Staff

London

Chief executive's team

Chief executive – Anthony Smith

PA to chief executive and chairman
– Nicola Wilkie

Business planning manager – Kafil Badar

Communications team

Communications director – Caroline Jones

Communications officer – Pete Biggs

Press officer – Jane Cobell

Policy and research team

Policy & research director – Vinita Nawathe

Senior policy adviser – Mike Hewitson

Senior policy adviser – Philip Wilks

Passenger research manager – Peter Thompson

Policy & research adviser – Rachel King

Passenger researcher – David Greeno

Knowledge & data researcher – Andrew Regan

Policy team PA – Emma Brandon

Passenger link team – London

Passenger link director – Mark Woodbridge

Passenger link manager ('one' and GNER)
– Guy Dangerfield *

Passenger link manager (South West Trains)
– Jocelyn Pearson *

Passenger link manager (First Capital Connect and Silverlink) – Kerry Williamson *

Passenger link manager (First Great Western)
– Michael Greedy *

Passenger link manager (Southern)
– Sharon Hedges *

Passenger link manager (c2c and South Eastern) – Tunde Olatunji *

Project co-ordinator – Jasmin Matharu

Project co-ordinator – Sultana Idris

Passenger link PA – Rachel Ryall

Manchester

Resources team

Finance director – Nigel Holden

Premises & services co-ordinator
– Eamon Caughey

Finance & HR co-ordinator – Suzette McGhee

Finance adviser – Shahid Mohammed

Passenger link team – Manchester

Passenger link director – John Mooney

Passenger link manager (Central Trains and Midland Mainline) – Paul Fullwood *

Passenger link manager (Virgin West Coast) – Julie Warburton*

Passenger link manager (Northern, Merseyrail and Hull Trains) – David Sidebottom *

Passenger link manager (Arriva Trains Wales and Welsh issues) – Simon Pickering *

Passenger link manager (First ScotRail and Scottish issues) – Robert Samson *

Passenger link manager (Virgin Cross Country and TransPennine Express) – Susan Tibbett *

Project co-ordinator – John Sears

Project co-ordinator – Katie Springer

Passenger link PA – Beverley Wright

Communications team

Passenger contact manager – Ashley Grumble

Passenger contact adviser – Clare Morris

Passenger contact adviser – Fiona Stenhouse

Passenger contact adviser – Kyle Yeldon

Passenger adviser – Liz Wilkinson

Passenger adviser – Catherine Lee

* based in various locations

3.4 Appendix four

List of all publications 2005–06

July 2005

- 'State of the railways' MORI/Passenger Focus research into current perceptions of the railways

August 2005

- 'T-12 fares and ticket availability' – project report

November 2005

- 'How Fair Are Fares?' – evidence given to Transport Select Committee

January 2006

- National Passenger Survey – Autumn 2005 wave
- 'Putting rail passengers first' – information leaflet
- Corporate Plan 2006–9 – draft for consultation

February 2006

- South West Franchise and Route Utilisation Strategy consultation responses – summary
- South Western Franchise – consultation response
- South West Mainline – response to Network Rail Route Utilisation Strategy consultation
- 'Gimme 5' postcard – '5 minutes of your time to answer 5 questions'
- 'What Passengers Want from Stations' – evidence given to Transport Select Committee

March 2006

- 'The Brighton mainline Route Utilisation Strategy – making it work for passengers'
- Brighton postcard
- Birmingham postcard – 'Wish you weren't here?'

3.5 Appendix five

List of consultations responded to 2005–06

Passenger Focus is regularly asked to contribute to industry consultations to present the passenger's perspective on proposed changes or developments to services.

Consultations that Passenger Focus has responded to over the last year are:

Document	Issuing organisation
Guidance to Local Authorities seeking DfT funding for Major Schemes	DfT
Financial planning guidelines for LTPs	DfT
How fair are fares? Train fares and ticketing	Transport Committee
TWA 1992: Consultation exercise on improving the TWA process	DfT
Accessibility for People with Reduced Mobility – RPC response to DfT's invitation to comment on EU Technical Specification for Interoperability	DfT
DTI Consumer Protection Co-operation	DTI
EU Regulation on Consumer Protection	EU
2006 Strategic Safety Plan – framework	RSSB
Abandoning of existing schemes through lack of communication for proposals under ROTS	HSE
2006 Strategic Safety Plan – draft 1	RSSB
Technical Specification for Interoperability: Safety in Railway Tunnels – draft C	AEIF
HSE contribution to ORR's Health and Safety Strategy	HSE
Amendment of Railway Group Standards Code	RSSB
Exemption from RSR regarding operation of Mark 1 stock on Lymington branch	HSE
Review of consultation register for RGS	RSSB
Merger of ORR and HSE Rail websites	HSE/ORR
Research into signage and wayfinding at stations: current practice and stakeholder consultation	RSSB
Research into signage and wayfinding at stations: assessment of potential for change	RSSB
Health and Safety Enforcement Policy Statement	ORR
Railway Interoperability – Consolidated Regulations and the Interface with Railway Safety Legislation – consultation document	DfT
RSSB Draft Business Plan 2006–09	RSSB
RSSB Draft Budget 2006–07	RSSB
Draft Health and Safety (Enforcing Authority for Railways and Other Guided Transport Systems) Regulations	DfT

Document	Issuing organisation
Draft Railway Safety Levy Regulations	DfT
South West Main Line Route Utilisation Strategy	Network Rail
South West Franchise Consultation Document	DfT
Cross London Route Utilisation Strategy (joint with LTW)	Network Rail
Community Line designation for Island Line	DfT
Updated criteria for approval of track access contracts	ORR
Enforcing licences and imposing financial penalties	ORR
<i>Amendment of Rule Book (investigation of reported AWS/TPWS faults, use of position-light signals, the stopping of other trains where it is necessary for drivers to walk on running lines, and action to be taken when level crossing gates are observed to have been left open)</i>	RSSB
Licence Application – First GNTL	ORR
Licence application – Greater Western	ORR
Licence application – London and South East	ORR
ECML Capacity Consultation	Network Rail
EU Public Passenger Transport Services by Rail and Road	DfT
Land Sale – Chard Junction	BRB
Track Access – ATW 10th supplementary	ORR
Track Access – ATW 12th supplementary	ORR
Withdrawal of RGS on Provision, Review and Risk Assessment of Level Crossings (and associated Guidance Note)	RSSB
Minimisation of Accidents at the Platform Interface : Preliminary Technical Report – draft	RSSB
Wayfinding at Stations: A Good Practice Guide (draft)	RSSB
Reappointment of Non-executive Director to RSSB Board	RSSB
Updating our Corporate Strategy – consultation	ORR
Track access – Cotswold Rail	ORR
Track access – West Coast Railway	ORR
Closure Guidance: DfT and Scottish Executive	DfT/Scottish Executive
Rule Book Amendments Module Consultation	RSSB
Minimisation of Accidents at the Platform Train Interface – Review of Safety Principles & Guidance, Railway Group Standards, other supporting documentation and European TSIs (draft)	RSSB
Transportation of Railway Safety Directive to the Channel Tunnel	DfT
Review of British Transport Police	DfT
The Railways and Other Guided Transport Systems (Safety) Regulations 2006: Guidance on Regulations	HSE
Unfair Commercial Practices Directive	DTI
Glasgow Airport Rail Link	Scottish Executive
Personal Security – Transport Select Committee	Transport Committee
Track Access – Chiltern 22nd agreement	ORR
Track Access – Southern 7th supplementary agreement	ORR
Track Access – Wessex 10th	ORR
Scotland's Transport Future: Draft Guidance on Regional Transport Strategies	Scottish Executive
Scotland's Transport: Proposals For A Public Transport Users' Committee	Scottish Executive
A New Approach to Delivering Public Transport Developments	Scottish Executive

Document	Issuing organisation
Consultation on Network Rail's proposed land disposal at Bridgwater	ORR
Track Access – Chiltern 19th agreement	ORR
Consultation on the Wales and West Passenger Trains Limited – 10th supplemental agreement	ORR
Consultation on Network Rail's proposed land disposal at Bridgwater	ORR
Consultation on the proposed 9th SG Supplemental Agreement to the Track Access Agreement between Network Rail Infrastructure Limited and First Great Western Link Limited	ORR
Land sale proposal at Yatton, Land on south side of railway	PRG
Land sale proposal at Melksham	PRG
Land sale proposal at Plymouth, Marshall Road Former Sidings	PRG
Land sale proposal at Westerleigh, Land by Oil Terminal	PRG
Land sale proposal at Theale, Land North of Station by A4	PRG
Land sale proposal at Hungerford, Land beyond Station Car Park	PRG
Land sale proposal at Swindon, Former Sidings	PRG
Public Consultation – First Great Western Timetable Response	First Great Western
Land sale proposal at Chard Junction, Part of Former Goods Yard	PRG
Land sale proposal at Cholsey, Coal Yard	PRG
Land sale proposal at Alloa	PRG
Land sale proposal at Blaenau Ffestiniog	PRG
Land sale proposal at Boston	PRG
Land sale proposal at Carnforth	PRG
Land sale proposal at Coleshill	PRG
Land sale proposal at Fishguard	PRG
Land sale proposal at Godley	PRG
Land sale proposal at Law	PRG
Land sale proposal at Leamington Spa	PRG
Land sale proposal at Lenzie	PRG
Land sale proposal at Market Harborough	PRG
Land sale proposal at Stafford	PRG
Land sale proposal at Stapleford	PRG
Land sale proposal at Sunderland	PRG
Land sale proposal at Wilnecote	PRG
Minor Closure Application – Cycle Facilities Redruth Station	Wessex Trains
Consultation on Network Rail's Proposed Land Disposal at Bridgwater	ORR
Committee on Rail Infrastructure and Improved Passenger Services	National Assembly for Wales
West Coast Fares Consultation – timetable changes	Virgin Trains
Anticipated acquisition by National Express Group Plc of the Thameslink and Great Northern franchise	Competition Commission
Land sale proposal at Whittlesea, August 2005	BRB (Residuary) Ltd
Land sale proposal at Wymondham, August 2005	BRB (Residuary) Ltd
January 2006 fares proposal	c2c
Proposed Thameslink/Great Northern track access contract (Schedule 5)	ORR
Penalty Fares Scheme: Ipswich-Norwich Extension Proposal	one

Document	Issuing organisation
Track Access Applications on ECML, GNER, Hull Trains, Grand Central "minded to approve" decision	ORR
Revisions to Complaints Handling Procedure	one
Proposed Passenger's Charter for First Capital Connect	FirstGroup
Proposed Complaints Handling Procedure for First Capital Connect	FirstGroup
New range of Advance Purchase fares	one
Land sale proposal at Alresford, March 2006	BRB (Residuary) Ltd
Proposed Penalty Fares scheme for First Capital Connect, March 2006	FirstGroup
A Transport Strategy for Mid Suffolk, March 2006	Mid Suffolk District Council
Passenger issues relating to trains stranded in hot conditions without functioning air conditioning, March 2006	RSSB
Railways for All	SRA
Impact of Lowestoft town centre regeneration on railway station, March 2006	1st East Waterfront Regeneration Company
Consultation on Disabled People's Protection Policy (DPPP) – Southeastern	DfT
Consultation on Disabled People's Protection Policy (DPPP) – First Capital Connect	DfT
Consultation on Disabled People's Protection Policy (DPPP) – First Great Western	DfT
Consultation on Disabled People's Protection Policy (DPPP) – Advenza Freight	DfT
Consultation on Disabled People's Protection Policy – North Yorkshire Moors Railway	DfT
Consultation on Passenger's Charter – Southeastern	DfT
Consultation on Passenger's Charter – First Capital Connect	DfT
Consultation on Passenger's Charter – First Great Western	DfT
Consultation on Passenger's Charter – Advenza Freight	DfT
Consultation on Passenger's Charter – North Yorkshire Moors Railway	DfT

Glossary of issuing organisations

AEIF	– European Association for Railway Interoperability
BRB	– British Railway Board
BTP	– British Transport Police
DfT	– Department for Transport
DTI	– Department for Trade and Industry
EU	– European Union
Govt	– Government
HSE	– Health & Safety Executive
OFT	– Office of Fair Trading
ORR	– Office of Rail Regulator
RAIB	– Rail Accident Investigation Board
RSSB	– Rail Safety and Standards Board
PRG	– Property Review Group
SRA	– Strategic Rail Authority

3.6 Appendix six Management Commentary

Nature of business

Passenger Focus is the operating name of the Rail Passengers Council which was established on 24 July 2005 by the Railways Act 2005. Passenger Focus represents the interests of rail passengers in England, Scotland and Wales.

Passenger Focus is a non-departmental public body (NDPB) and is sponsored and funded by Grant in Aid from the Department for Transport.

Board

Non-executive board members are appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport (chair and no more than 12 members), the National Assembly for Wales (one member), Scottish Ministers (one member) and the London Assembly (one member) in line with the Code of Practice issued by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments. Members are listed below:

	Date appointment commenced	Board	Audit Committee	Remuneration Committee
C Foxall (Chairman)*	23 September 2005	✓		
J K Barrow	24 July 2005	✓	✓	
D H Burton	24 July 2005	✓	✓	
B Cooke	24 July 2005	✓		
P M Davis	24 July 2005	✓		
K Gordon	24 July 2005	✓		✓
C E Knights	24 July 2005	✓		
J A King	24 July 2005	✓		
D Langslow (Chairman of Audit Committee)	24 July 2005	✓	✓	
D Mead	24 July 2005	✓	✓	
W E Samuel	24 July 2005	✓		
B Saunders	24 July 2005	✓		
M J Seale	24 July 2005	✓		✓
N Walmsley (Chairman of Remuneration Committee)	24 July 2005	✓		✓

*The chairman was appointed as interim chairman from 24 July 2005. Following a recruitment and selection process he was appointed as chairman from 23 September 2005. His membership of the board was suspended during the period he held the appointment of interim chairman and following his appointment as chairman, he resigned as a board member.

The board has corporate responsibility for ensuring that Passenger Focus fulfils the aims and objectives agreed with the Secretary of State and for promoting the efficient and effective use of staff and other resources by Passenger Focus.

The primary purpose of the audit committee is to support Passenger Focus on all matters relating to corporate governance, financial management and to oversee the process of internal and external audit (including the Statement on Systems of Internal

Control). This will entail providing advice, guidance and support to the chief executive in discharging the role of Accounting Officer.

The primary purpose of the remuneration committee is to support Passenger Focus on all matters relating to pay and grading policy and terms of employment.

Current year

Prior to 24 July 2005 Passenger Focus was treated as a department of the Strategic Rail Authority, and was included in their accounts up to that date. Since its formation as a non-departmental public body (NDPB), Passenger Focus has set up its own procedures and accounting systems.

As at 24 July 2005 the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) transferred the depreciated capital value of leasehold improvements for premises in London and Manchester to Passenger Focus together with debtors for staff season ticket advances. No other assets or liabilities were transferred to Passenger Focus.

The assets were transferred to Passenger Focus at a value of £103,000, which was the net book value of the assets at 24 July 2005 as shown in the accounts of the Strategic Rail Authority.

The improvements to leasehold premises were surplus to requirements at 31 March 2006 and have been written off.

As highlighted in the chief executive's report, the organisation incurred costs of £3.94 million in the eight-month period since July 2005, of which some £0.6 million has been for the transition to the new structure. The costs have been funded through Grant in Aid received from the Department for Transport who sponsor Passenger Focus.

Staff

During the period 25 staff were transferred from the Strategic Rail Authority following a job matching exercise and a further 17 staff were recruited.

During the transition from the SRA there was a staff transition forum which was used as a consultative forum with staff on the main issues arising from the transition programme. This forum approach has been continued into the new organisation, with elections taking place for staff members to join a staff forum to take forward staff and organisational issues.

We are committed to equality of opportunity for all our staff, and do not condone discrimination on the grounds of gender, race or national origin, colour, religious belief, disability, marital status, age or sexual orientation.

We are keen to provide our staff with a range of training and development opportunities to ensure they have the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out their responsibilities effectively. During the period we have spent £109,000 to support improved staff performance.

Resources

The key strength of the organisation is the influence it is able to exert through the knowledge and expertise gained from targeted passenger research, and by working closely with key stakeholders in the rail industry.

Passenger Focus' main asset is its staff and for the coming year we will continue to work closely with staff representatives to improve the frameworks in place to ensure we continue to have the right skills and expertise to meet the future corporate plan objectives.

Future years

The corporate plan sets out Passenger Focus' future plans to deliver our mission of 'getting a better deal for rail passengers'.

The organisation has agreed funding of £5.5 million for 2006–07 and £5.3 million for 2007–08 from the Department for Transport and will submit updated plans to support funding requirements for future periods.

Social and environmental issues

As explained in the chief executive's report, the organisation does not make financial donations to charities, but during the year surplus office supplies were donated to not-for-profit organisations for use in the UK and abroad.

Passenger Focus encourages staff to use public transport wherever possible when undertaking official business, and is working with staff representatives to encourage recycling in the offices.

Essential contractual arrangements

The primary contractual arrangements for the organisation are for rail passenger research, including the National Passenger Survey (NPS), and the passenger advice provided through the outsourced call centre.

Existing contracts for the NPS and outsourced call centre were transferred from the Strategic Rail Authority and are managed through regular reports on performance against service levels and have been reviewed in the year to ensure they remain appropriate for the new organisation. The contracts will be retendered when they reach the end of their current term.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The work of Passenger Focus relies heavily on its credibility and the primary risk is that the reputation of the organisation is not maintained, which will reduce its ability to influence key stakeholders to secure improvements for rail passengers. To mitigate this risk the organisation has established an enterprise risk model which, amongst other things, is used to identify whether a project or piece of work will jeopardise the reputation of Passenger Focus.

Financial structure of business

Passenger Focus is funded by Grant in Aid from the Department for Transport. An initial payment was made to provide the organisation with working capital. Subsequent monthly payments have been made by the Department based upon actual expenditure in the previous month, and forecast future requirements. As reported above, Passenger Focus has agreed its funding requirements with the DfT for the next two years and during the course of the next twelve months will submit outline plans for future funding requirements.

Going concern

The accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis notwithstanding the net current liabilities of £94,000 shown on the balance sheet at 31 March 2006, because the liabilities will be financed by Grant in Aid received after the year end.

3.6.1

Remuneration Report for the period ended 31 March 2006

The members of the remuneration committee are N Walmsley (chairman), K Gordon and M J Seale.

The remuneration committee considers

- the overall pay and grading structure for the employees of Passenger Focus
- annual cost of living and performance pay increments
- any proposed changes to the terms of conditions of employment of Passenger Focus employees
- any proposed changes to the occupational pension arrangements
- the broad policy for the remuneration of executive level staff
- individual remuneration arrangements for executive level staff, and approves any proposals for subsequent changes to those arrangements
- the level and structure of remuneration for executive level staff.

Any annual increase in the remuneration of board members is agreed between the chairman of the board and the Department for Transport. There have been no changes in board members' remuneration in the period.

The members of the executive management board are employees of Passenger Focus and hold continuing contracts of employment. The arrangements for changes to the remuneration of executive management board members are the same as for other employees of the organisation.

No additional pay has been awarded to any employees or members of the management board in the period since the organisation was formed on 24 July 2005.

Board members

Remuneration paid to the non-executive board members from their date of appointment to 31 March 2006 is set out opposite.

	Board fees paid in the period ended 31 March 2006 £000s	Date appointment commenced	Appointment expiry date
C Foxall (chairman) ¹	17	23 September 2005	22 September 2009
J K Barrow	10	24 July 2005	23 July 2008
D H Burton	10	24 July 2005	23 July 2008
B Cooke ²	–	24 July 2005	30 September 2008
P M Davis	10	24 July 2005	23 July 2008
K Gordon	10	24 July 2005	23 July 2009
C E Knights	10	24 July 2005	23 July 2008
J A King	10	24 July 2005	23 July 2009
D Langslow (audit committee chairman)	10	24 July 2005	23 July 2008
D Mead	10	24 July 2005	23 July 2009
W E Samuel	10	24 July 2005	23 July 2009
B Saunders	10	24 July 2005	23 July 2009
M J Seale	10	24 July 2005	23 July 2008
N Walmsley (remuneration committee chairman)	10	24 July 2005	23 July 2009

1 Mr C Foxall was appointed as interim chairman from 24 July 2005. Following a recruitment and selection process he was appointed as chairman from 23 September 2005

2 Mr B Cooke is appointed by the London Assembly and does not receive any fees from Passenger Focus for this appointment

The remuneration shown in the table excludes Employers National Insurance Contributions payable by Passenger Focus in respect of these appointments.

Passenger Focus does not make any pension provision for board members, and no other taxable benefits were provided for board members in the period.

All the board members have a three-month notice period, and no compensation terms for early termination in their contracts.

Executive management board

The remuneration paid to the executive management board together with their pension benefits, is set out below.

Name and title	Start date	2005-06 Salary in £5,000 bands (£000s)	2005-06 Full Year Equivalent Salary in £5,000 bands (£000s)	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at age 60 (bands of £2,500) £000s	Total accrued pension at age 60 at 31 March 2006 and related lump sum (bands of £2,500) £000s	Cash Equivalent Transfer Value at 31 March 2006 £000s	Cash Equivalent Transfer Value at Start Date (nearest £000s)	Real increase in Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (nearest £000s)
A Smith Chief Executive	25 July 2005	55-60	80-85	0-2.5 (N/A)	7.5-10 (N/A)	125	93	12
C Jones Communications Director	25 July 2005	35-40	50-55	0-2.5 (N/A)	5-7.5 (N/A)	45	25	12
N R Holden Finance Director	7 Sept 2005	30-35	50-55	0-2.5 (N/A)	0-2.5 (N/A)	7	-	6
J Mooney Passenger Link Director	25 July 2005	35-40	50-55	0-2.5 (N/A)	0-2.5 (N/A)	18	11	8
V Nawathe Policy and Research Director ¹	25 July 2005	25-30	40-45	0-2.5 (0-2.5)	2.5-5.0 (12.5-15.0)	60	39	9
M Woodbridge Passenger Link Director	25 July 2005	35-40	50-55	0-2.5 (N/A)	0-2.5 (N/A)	21	10	7

1 V Nawathe works part time (four days per week)

'Salary' includes gross salary; performance pay or bonuses; overtime; reserved rights to London weighting or London allowances; recruitment and retention allowances; private office allowances and any other allowance to the extent that is subject to UK taxation.

There were no benefits in kind or non-cash benefits received by the executive management board during the period.

All the directors are members of the Classic, Premium or Classic Plus Pension Schemes, the main provisions of which are set out below.

Pension

Pension benefits are provided through the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) arrangements. From 1 October 2002, civil servants may be in one of three statutory based 'final salary' defined benefit schemes (Classic, Premium and Classic Plus). The schemes are unfunded with the cost of benefits met by monies voted by Parliament each year. Pensions payable under Classic, Premium and Classic Plus are increased annually in line with changes in the Retail Price Index. New entrants from 1 October 2002 may choose between membership

of Premium or joining a good quality 'money purchase' stakeholder arrangement with a significant employer contribution (Partnership pension account).

Employee contributions are set at the rate of 1.5% of pensionable earnings for Classic and 3.5% for Premium and Classic Plus. Benefits in Classic accrue at the rate of 1/80th of pensionable salary for each year of service. In addition, a lump sum equivalent to three year's pension is payable on retirement. For Premium, benefits accrue at the rate of 1/60th of final pensionable earnings for each year of service. Unlike Classic, there is no automatic lump sum (but members may give up (commute) some of their pension to provide a lump sum). Classic Plus is essentially a variation of Premium, but with benefits in respects of service before 1 October 2002 calculated broadly as per Classic.

The Partnership pension account is a stakeholder pension arrangement. The employer makes a basic contribution of between 3% and 12.5% (depending on the age of the member) into a stakeholder pension product chosen by the employee. The employee does not have to contribute but where they do make contributions, the employer will match these up to a limit of 3% of pensionable salary (in addition to the employer's basic contribution). Employers also contribute a further 0.8% of pensionable salary to cover the cost of centrally provided risk benefit over (death in service and ill health retirement).

Further details about the PCSPS arrangements can be found at the website www.civilservice-pensions.gov.uk

Cash Equivalent Transfer Value

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV

is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in the former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies.

The CETV figures, and from 2003–2004 the other pension details, include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement which the individual has transferred to the PCSPS arrangements and for which the Civil Service Vote has received a transfer payment commensurate to the additional pension liabilities being assumed. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their purchasing additional years of pension service in the scheme at their own cost. CETV's are calculated within the guidelines and framework prescribed by the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries.

Real Increase in CETV

This reflects the increase in CETV effectively funded by the employer. It takes account of the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market factors for the start and end of the period.



Anthony Smith

CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND ACCOUNTING OFFICER
23 JUNE 2006

3.6.2

Statement of Accounting Officer's responsibilities

Under paragraph 8(2) Schedule 5 of the Railways Act 2005 the Secretary of State, with the approval of the Treasury, has directed Passenger Focus to prepare a statement of account for each financial year in the form and on the basis set out in the Accounts Direction. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of Passenger Focus' state of affairs at the year-end and of its income and expenditure and total recognised gains and losses and cash flows for the financial period.

In preparing the accounts, Passenger Focus is required to comply with the requirements of HM Treasury's Financial Reporting Manual and in particular to

- observe the Accounts Direction issued by the Secretary of State, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis
- make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis

- state whether applicable accounting standards as set out in HM Treasury's Financial Reporting Manual have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume Passenger Focus will continue in operation.

The Director General Rail, as Additional Accounting Officer for the Department for Transport, has designated the Chief Executive of Passenger Focus as Accounting Officer. His relevant responsibilities as Accounting Officer, including responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which the Accounting Officer is responsible and for keeping proper records and safeguarding Passenger Focus' assets, are set out in the Accounting Officers' Memorandum issued by the Treasury and published in 'Government Accounting'.

Accounting Officer's Statement on Systems of Internal Control

Scope of responsibility

As Accounting Officer I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal control which supports the achievement of organisational policies, aims and objectives as set by the Management Statement and Financial Memorandum whilst safeguarding the public funds and organisational assets for which I am personally responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me in Government Accounting. I am responsible to one of the Department for Transport's Additional Accounting Officers and to Parliament for ensuring value for money, regularity and propriety in deploying all the organisations resources.

Passenger Focus is supported by board members who are responsible for

- setting the organisation's strategies and enabling frameworks
- monitoring performance against annual workplan objectives and targets
- identifying the central activities required to support delivery of the corporate plan and approving the annual budget
- evaluating the impact of emerging issues or significant divergences from corporate and workplan delivery

The board is chaired by a non-executive appointee and comprises 13 non-executive members. An audit committee has been established to support the chief executive through monitoring and reviewing

the adequacy and effectiveness within the organisation of

- corporate governance arrangements
- processes for managing risks
- internal audit and related activity
- management responses to the recommendations resulting from internal audit work
- Accounting Officer statements on internal control.

The chief executive and Passenger Focus' senior managers meet with senior officials from the Department for Transport at regular intervals. These meetings usually occur on a quarterly basis and issues discussed include performance against operational plans, financial expenditure and policy development. In addition, Passenger Focus' chairman regularly meets with Ministers.

The purpose of the system of internal control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of organisational policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. Whilst Passenger Focus became operational from 25 July 2005 with a number of interim and permanent staff using existing systems at the old Rail Passengers Council offices, it was not until the latter part of the financial year 2005–06 that it began to develop its own internal control processes, including the putting in place of

control and assurance standards. These processes are being embedded and will be further reviewed and refined over the 2006–07 financial year to ensure that they fully meet the control requirements by 31 March 2007.

Capacity to handle risk

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for reviewing our capacity to handle risk. To effect this Passenger Focus has developed and is implementing the following

- a risk management policy reflecting the purpose and underlying approach to risk management and the role of the staff and senior management team, which will be made available to all staff on the intranet
- an organisational risk register that identifies the main operational risks assigned to individual risk owners. The risk register Passenger Focus has implemented includes mitigating actions to eliminate or reduce this risk and is reviewed periodically for effectiveness
- risk awareness training for senior management team and the development of a strategic risk register.

The risk and control framework

The Passenger Focus risk management framework takes account of the Code of Good Practice on Corporate Governance in Central Government Departments issued by HM Treasury, and is put into practice through

Board

The board consists of a non-executive chairman and thirteen non-executive members and met seven times during the period to

- consider and approve the Passenger Focus workplans for the period including the allocation of resources to deliver those plans
- monitor progress against the workplans for the period through regular reports from the management board
- consider regular financial reports
- consider and approve policies and procedures to be adopted by Passenger Focus
- consider and approve expenditure in accordance with the procurement policy adopted by Passenger Focus.

The audit committee

The audit committee consists of four non-executive members and met three times during the period to consider

- the quarterly financial reports
- the policies and procedures to be implemented by Passenger Focus
- the planned activity and results of the external and internal audit and other bodies
- the adequacy of management response to issues identified by audit and other review bodies on a quarterly basis.

The chairman of the audit committee provided the board with regular reports on the audit committee's activities and any findings concerning internal control.

Internal audit

The internal auditors report to the audit committee and agree a rolling programme of audit for each forthcoming year according to the board's priorities. Regular audit reports are made, along with the end of year internal audit annual report, as defined by the Government Internal Audit Standards. This

includes an independent opinion by the internal auditors on the adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's system of internal control.

The internal auditors provided a substantial assurance that Passenger Focus had made significant progress to establish sound risk management, control and governance arrangements. The opinion was supported by the further work planned to embed risk management processes across the organisation and enhance the controls to reduce exposure to particular risks.

Risk management

The risk management framework, in addition to the organisational risk register, is informed by the following process

- periodic reviews of the risk register
- identification of key risks when issues are submitted to the board for consideration
- inclusion of risk management as a regular item on the audit committee agenda
- a management board which meets regularly to consider the operational plans and strategic direction of the organisation
- ensuring Passenger Focus' operations and system of internal control comply with the principal recommendations from the government departments such as the Cabinet Office and Office of Government Commerce (OGC) with regards to best practice.

Review of effectiveness

As Accounting Officer I have responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. My review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of the internal auditors and the executive managers within the organisation who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework, and comments which will be made by the external auditors in their management letter and other reports. I have been advised on the implications of the result of my review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control by the audit committee and a plan to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.



Anthony Smith

CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND ACCOUNTING OFFICER

23 JUNE 2006

Certificate of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the Houses of Parliament

I have audited the financial statements of Passenger Focus (the operating name for the Rail Passengers Council) for the period ended 31 March 2006 under the Railways Act 2005. These comprise the Income and Expenditure Account, the Balance Sheet and the Cashflow Statement and the related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out within them.

Respective responsibilities of Passenger Focus's Accounting Officer and Auditor

The Accounting Officer is responsible for preparing the Annual Report, the Remuneration Report and the financial statements in accordance with the Railways Act 2005 and the Department for Transport's directions made thereunder and for ensuring the regularity of financial transactions. These responsibilities are set out in the Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities.

My responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements, and with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

I report to you my opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and whether the financial statements and the part of the remuneration report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with the Railways Act 2005 and directions made thereunder. I also report whether in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them. I also report to you if, in my opinion, the annual report is not consistent with the financial statements, if Passenger Focus has not kept proper accounting records, if I have not received all the information and explanations I require for my audit,

or if information specified by relevant authorities regarding remuneration and other transactions is not disclosed.

I review whether the statement on pages 53 to 55 reflects Passenger Focus's compliance with HM Treasury's guidance on the Statement on Internal Control, and I report if it does not. I am not required to consider whether the Accounting Officer's statements on internal control cover all risks and controls, or form an opinion on the effectiveness of Passenger Focus' corporate governance procedures or its risk and control procedures.

I read the other information contained in the Annual Report and consider whether it is consistent with the audited financial statements. This other information comprises only the unaudited part of the Remuneration Report and the Management Commentary and the Chief Executive's Report. I consider the implications for my report if I become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the financial statements. My responsibilities do not extend to any other information.

Basis of audit opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board. My audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts, disclosures and regularity of financial transactions included in the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgments made by Passenger Focus and the Accounting Officer in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are most appropriate to Passenger Focus' circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

I planned and performed my audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which I considered necessary in order to provide me with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error and that in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them. In forming my opinion I also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited.

Opinions

In my opinion

- the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with the Railways Act 2005 and directions made thereunder by the Department for Transport, of the state of Passenger Focus's affairs as at 31 March 2006 and of its deficit for the year then ended
- the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with the Railways Act 2005 and the Department for Transport's directions made thereunder and
- in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

I have no observations to make on these financial statements

John Bourn
Comptroller and Auditor General
National Audit Office
157–197 Buckingham Palace Road
Victoria
London
SW1W 9SP
26 June 2006

Income and expenditure account

For the period ended 31 March 2006

	Notes	2005-06	
		£000s	£000s
Income			
Department for Transport Grant in Aid	2		3,912
Expenditure			
Staff costs	3	1,187	
Other administrative costs	4	2,755	
			<u>3,942</u>
Operating deficit			(30)
Leasehold improvements written off			<u>(72)</u>
Deficit after exceptional items			(102)
Notional cost of capital	5		<u>(11)</u>
Deficit on operating activities			(113)
Add back notional cost of capital			<u>11</u>
Deficit transferred to Income and Expenditure Reserve			<u>(102)</u>

All amounts relate to continuing activities.

Passenger Focus has no other recognised gains or losses for the period apart from the reported deficit.

The accounting policies and notes on pages 61 to 66 form part of these accounts.

Balance Sheet

For the period ended 31 March 2006

	Notes	2005-06	
		£000s	£000s
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets	6		269
Current Assets			
Debtors (due within one year)	7	135	
Cash at bank	9	648	
		<hr/>	
		783	
Total assets			
Creditors – amounts falling due within one year	8	877	
		<hr/>	(94)
Total assets less current liabilities			175
Creditors – amounts falling due after more than one year			–
			<hr/>
Total assets less total liabilities			175
Tax payers equity:			
Income and Expenditure Reserve	10		(94)
Government Grant Reserve	11		269
			<hr/>
			175

The accounting policies and notes on pages 61 to 66 form part of these accounts



Anthony Smith

CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND ACCOUNTING OFFICER

23 JUNE 2006

Cashflow Statement

For the period ended 31 March 2006

	Notes	2005-06 £000s
Net cash inflow from operating activities		909
Capital expenditure		
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(269)
Financing		
Recovery of season ticket loans transferred from the SRA		8
Increase in cash		<u>648</u>
Reconciliation of operating deficit to operating cash flows		
Operating deficit after exceptional item		(113)
Notional cost of capital		11
Depreciation		23
Permanent diminution in value		72
(Increase) in debtors		(135)
Increase in creditors		877
Transfer from Government Grant Reserve		269
Transfer to Government Grant Reserve		(95)
Net cash inflow from operating activities		<u>909</u>
Reconciliation of net cash flow to movements in net funds		
Funds at 25 July 2005		-
Increase in cash in the period		648
Funds at 31 March 2006	9	<u>648</u>

The accounting policies and notes on pages 61 to 66 form part of these accounts

Notes to the Financial Statements

1. Statement of accounting policies

Passenger Focus is the operating name of the Rail Passengers Council which was formed as a non-departmental public body on 24 July 2005 under the Railways Act 2005.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Acts, HM Treasury's Financial Reporting Manual, except as explained in note 19 on Merger Accounting, and financial reporting standards issued or adopted by the Accounting Standards Board, and are in accordance with the Accounts Direction issued by the Secretary of State for Transport on 24 March 2006.

The particular accounting policies adopted by Passenger Focus are described below. They have been consistently applied in dealing with items considered material to the financial statements.

1.1 Accounting conventions

These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of fixed assets at their value to the business by reference to their current costs.

1.2 Tangible fixed assets

Expenditure on tangible fixed assets is capitalised. The minimum level for the capitalisation of tangible fixed assets is £2,500. Assets are revalued annually using indices provided by the Office of National Statistics.

1.3 Depreciation/amortisation

Depreciation/amortisation is provided on all fixed assets, at rates calculated to write off the cost or valuation of each asset, less any estimated residual value, evenly over its expected useful life. The expected useful lives of the principal categories are:

- Furniture and fittings 5 years
- Computer equipment 3 years
- Other equipment 4 years
- Leasehold Improvements remaining length of lease

1.4 Government grants

The Department for Transport provides Grant in Aid to meet Passenger Focus' cash payments falling due within the financial year. Passenger Focus accounts for its expenditure on an accruals basis, thus incurring liabilities during a year which may not need to be satisfied by cash payments until future financial years.

Grant in Aid used to purchase, enhance or create fixed assets is held on the Balance Sheet within the Government Grant Reserve and is released to the Income and Expenditure Account as the assets are depreciated.

1.5 Pension costs

Employees are covered by the provisions of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) in respect of their pensions. The PCSPS is an unfunded multi-employer defined benefit scheme but Passenger Focus is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities. A full actuarial valuation was carried out as at 31 March 2003. Details can be found in the resource accounts of the Cabinet Office: Civil Superannuation (www.civilservice-pensions.gov.uk). Passenger Focus makes payments to the PCSPS of amounts to cover the accruing liabilities of the Treasury in respect of Superannuation benefits for persons who have been employed in the funded operations, and in respect of the administrative expenses attributable to the liabilities and their discharge.

1.6 Operating leases

Rental payments due under operating leases are charged to the Income and Expenditure Account on the basis of actual rentals payable which fairly reflects usage.

1.7 Capital charge

A charge, reflecting the cost of capital utilised by Passenger Focus, is included in the Income and Expenditure account. The charge is calculated at the Government's standard rate of 3.5 per cent per annum for the period ended 31 March 2006, on the average carrying value of all assets less all liabilities.

1.8 Taxation

Passenger Focus is not liable for corporation tax or other taxes.

1.9 Intra-Government balances

Intra-Government debtors and creditors have been analysed in accordance with the HM Treasury's Financial Reporting Manual.

2. Grant in aid

	2005-06 £000s
Amount received and released :	
Department for Transport (DfT)	4,086
Transfer to Government Grant Reserve (Note 11)	(269)
Transfer from Government Grant Reserve (Note 11)	95
Grant-in-aid released to the income and expenditure account	<u>3,912</u>

3. Analysis of staff costs and numbers

	2005-06 £000s
Total staff costs including the chief executive were :	
Salaries and wages	908
Social Security costs	83
Pension costs (see below)	174
	<u>1,165</u>
Agency staff	22
	<u>1,187</u>

The Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme is an unfunded multi-employer defined benefit scheme but Passenger Focus is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities. The scheme actuary valued the scheme as at 31 March 2003. You can find details in the resource accounts of the Cabinet Office: Civil Superannuation at the website www.civilservice-pensions.gov.uk

For 2005–06, employers' contributions of £174,000 were payable to the PCSPS at one of four rates in the range 16.2 to 24.6 per cent of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. The Scheme Actuary reviews employer contributions every four years following a full scheme valuation. From 2006–2007, the salary bands will be revised and the rates will be in a range between 17.1 and 25.5 per cent. The contribution rates reflect benefits as they accrue, not the costs as they are actually incurred, and reflect past experience of the scheme.

	2005–06 £000s
Average number of staff	
Staff permanently employed	34
Others	1
	<hr/> 35 <hr/>

Remuneration details for non-executive board members and executive management board members are set out in the remuneration report on pages 48 to 51.

4. Administration costs and other expenditure

	2005–06 £000s
Administration costs	
Board remuneration	153
Travel and subsistence, room hire and recruitment	389
Training and development	109
Rent, rates and utilities	195
Printing, postage and office costs	102
Information technology support and maintenance	274
Telecommunication costs	60
External services and support	503
Passenger research	912
Depreciation	23
External audit fee	35
	<hr/> 2,755 <hr/>

Costs relating to the period before 25 July 2005 totalling £73,008 have been paid by Passenger Focus, and are included in the above expenditure. In addition the SRA have paid rent, rates and service charges totalling £62,000 for the two months after 24 July 2005 in respect of offices occupied by Passenger Focus. These costs have been excluded from the above expenditure. The grant received from the Department for Transport in the period has been adjusted to reflect these items.

5. Notional cost of capital

	2005–06 £000s
At 3.5% per annum on average of total assets less total liabilities for the period	<hr/> 11 <hr/>

6. Tangible fixed assets

	Leasehold Improvements £000s
Cost or valuation	
Transferred from the Strategic Rail Authority	95
Additions	269
Amounts written off	(95)
As at 31 March 2006	<u>269</u>
Depreciation	
Charge for the period	23
Amounts written off	(23)
As at 31 March 2006	<u>-</u>
Net Book Value	
As at 31 March 2006	<u>269</u>
As at 25 July 2005	<u>95</u>

Additions in the period represent improvements to leasehold premises. These have not been revalued at 31 March 2006 because the works were undertaken at the end of the financial period, consequently the above costs are considered to represent the current replacement value.

The leasehold improvements transferred from the SRA have been written off at the year end because they were surplus to requirements.

7. Debtors

	2005-06 £000s
Other debtors	11
Prepayments	124
	<u>135</u>

Other debtors include season ticket loans to four staff totalling £3,321.

Amounts in the above figures due from other entities included in the Whole of Government Accounts:

Balances with other central Government bodies	-
Balances with local authorities	18
Balances with NHS Trusts	-
Balances with public corporations and trading funds	80

8. Creditors

	2005–06 £000s
Trade creditors	268
Social security and other taxes	56
Pension contributions payable	31
Sundry creditors	13
Accruals	509
	<hr/> 877 <hr/>

Amounts in the above figures due to other entities included in the Whole of Government Accounts:

Balances with other Central Government bodies	133
Balances with local authorities	–
Balances with NHS Trusts	–
Balances with public corporations and trading funds	5

9. Cash at bank and in hand

	2005–06 £000s
Balance as at 25 July 2005	–
Net cash inflow	648
Balance as at 31 March 2006	<hr/> 648 <hr/>

The bank balance is held at a commercial bank.

10. Income and Expenditure Reserve

	2005–06 £000s
Balance at 25 July 2005	–
Staff loans transferred from the Strategic Rail Authority (note 19)	8
Deficit for the period	(102)
Balance at 31 March 2006	<hr/> (94) <hr/>

11. Government Grant Reserve

	2005–06 £000s
Assets transferred from the Strategic Rail Authority (note 19)	95
Amount used to purchase fixed assets	269
Less: Transfer to the Income and Expenditure Account	(95)
As at 31 March 2006	<hr/> 269 <hr/>

12. Obligations under operating leases

The minimum lease payments to which Passenger Focus is committed under non-cancellable operating leases for the coming year are:

	Property £000s	Other £000s	2005–06 Total
Within one year	157	6	163
Between two and five years	529	15	544
After five years	–	–	–

Passenger Focus has a licence to occupy offices in London which has been included as a lease obligation because it has similar terms and conditions.

13. Capital commitments

There were no capital commitments at 31 March 2006.

14. Related party transactions

Passenger Focus is an executive non-departmental public body sponsored by the DfT and is regarded as a related party. Although Passenger Focus works with train operating companies (TOCs) to deliver improvements for passengers, TOCs are not considered to be related parties.

None of the board members or key management staff has undertaken any material transactions with Passenger Focus, other than their remuneration, or its related parties during the period and none has a financial interest in the TOCs such as to influence their work with Passenger Focus.

15. Contingent liabilities, contingent assets and provisions

There were no reportable contingent liabilities, contingent assets or provisions at 31 March 2006.

16. Post balance sheet events

There are no reportable post balance sheet events to the date of the audit certificate.

17. Financial targets

There were no financial targets set by the DfT during the period because it was a transitional period.

18. Financial instruments

Passenger Focus has no borrowings and relies primarily on departmental grants for its cash requirements, and is therefore not exposed to liquidity risks. It has no material deposits, and all material assets and liabilities are denominated in sterling so it is not exposed to interest rate risk or currency risk. However, as permitted under the FRS 13 this disclosure excludes short term debtors and creditors which would become payable from the balance sheet date and there is no material difference between the book value and fair value of assets and liabilities at 31 March 2006.

19. Formation of Passenger Focus

These accounts follow the requirements of HM Treasury's Financial Reporting Manual, except where this guidance requires the use of merger accounting for Machinery of Government changes. Using merger accounting for the creation of Passenger Focus as a separate function would have been inappropriate as it would have had the effect of removing Passenger Focus from the Strategic Rail Authority's financial history and incorrectly stating the Whole of Government Accounts.

The assets transferred from the Strategic Rail Authority on 25 July 2005 are summarised below:

	£000s
Leasehold premises improvements	95
Season ticket loans to staff	8
	<hr/> 103 <hr/>

Notes

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Notes



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