

Staffing options for personal security on public transport - Guidelines for operators

Introduction

These guidelines are for transport operators, to assist them in setting up, delivering and evaluating effective staffing initiatives for the safety and security of their passengers.

Government research has shown a significant potential for more public transport travel if people felt more secure, and that one of the main concerns centres on the availability and visibility of appropriately trained staff. There are a number of initiatives now in place that contribute to improving personal security on public transport and along the 'whole journey'. Such initiatives include providing staff to patrol and represent a reassuring presence through a specialist staff team.

These guidelines draw on the transferable lessons from an evaluation undertaken in 2007 of nine different types of staffing initiative, across different modes, operating environments and parts of the country. The evaluation included reference to comparators with similar demographic, social and operational characteristics.

Setting up a successful initiative

Defining objectives and matching the approach

One feature of a successful initiative is that it has a clear vision of its aims and objectives and how this relates to the organisation's overall strategy. In particular, there should be clarity about the extent to which the initiative's aim is to provide *reassurance* to passengers (addressing fear of crime) and the extent to which its aim is that of *enforcement* (addressing crime and anti social behaviour). Issues such as the appropriate powers and training that staff should be given can only be decided within this context.

If staff are to have a predominantly enforcement role they are most effectively deployed at times and in locations where crime and anti social behaviour is a problem, and this is likely to change as problems are dealt with in one location and emerge elsewhere. If they are to have a predominantly reassuring role they are most effectively deployed at off-peak times and in more isolated locations, and their impact is likely to be enhanced by the fact that their presence is predictable to passengers. In either case, passengers using other parts of the service may be unaware of their existence.

Southeastern Railway Enforcement Officers (REOs)

Southeastern was clear at the outset that the REO's principle role was that of enforcement, and everything about their role is consistent with this. They are consequently empowered to issue penalty notices for a range of offences and undertake a training and formal accreditation process to ensure that they are capable of handling risky situations. They are trained in the exercise of citizen's powers of arrest and can confiscate alcohol. Southeastern takes action against offenders through private prosecutions or referral to British Transport Police. During 2006/07 the REOs made over 33,000 pro-active intervention, including issuing 25 Penalty Notices for Disorder and almost 15,000 penalty fares.

Hatfield College learning mentors

The learning mentors at Hatfield College are employed to engage with young people on the school buses rather than to act as a guard. The aim is to prevent anti social behaviour by encouraging a calm, positive state of mind. The training provided is part of the 'Behaviour Improvement Programme'¹. Staff retention is good and behaviour on the buses is said to have improved. When the scheme was introduced there were eight to ten incidents a week, and after nine months complaints about student behaviour reduced 'to zero'.

Powers and authority

Enforcement and penalties are important to any scheme that is intended to reduce crime and anti social behaviour. It is important that the appropriate penalties are in place, that staff have the appropriate powers and authority to impose them, and that a framework is in place to see penalties through to completion. Without the appropriate powers to do the job, both staff and passengers are likely to feel that the initiative is to some extent undermined. Staff training should reflect their enforcement role, including the fact that it is likely to put them into situations of potential conflict.

Merseyrail Security Officers

Merseyrail's Byelaw Enforcement Team is comprised of security officers and ticket inspectors. Members of the team were initially registered with the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA) and received guidance on issuing penalties within rail station car parks. The enforcement of railway byelaws regarding feet on seats and smoking were subsequently added to their remit. The team are trained in both the Police and Criminal Evidence Act and 'control and restraint' procedures to assist them in carrying out their role. Merseyrail takes action against offenders through private prosecutions.

Direct or contracted staff

Staffing initiatives can be delivered through employing your own staff or contracting with a security company. Both approaches have their strengths and weaknesses. Operators who employ the staff themselves welcome the direct control over deployment that it gives them, including using them for revenue protection purposes. However, certain management arrangements may need to be made in order to smoothly integrate new teams into the operation, for example who the new staff should report to in the management chain and where they will be based. Operators who contract with security companies find this gives them more flexibility of resources and the ability to set firm performance targets. However, operators who employ their own staff believe this enables the staff to feel more engaged in the business as a whole and that they gain more variety of experience in working in a transport environment.

Operators who contract with security companies emphasise the importance of having carefully defined contract terms which require a dedicated resource; offering training to enhance the contracted staff's awareness of the transport environment; setting targets and putting in place the arrangements necessary to monitor performance.

Merseyrail Security Officers

Merseyrail contracts with a private company to provide security officers. The contract enables Merseyrail to set stringent performance targets (including a 19 minute response time). Monthly contractual meetings are held, also attended by the British

¹ This is a Government initiative - more information can be found at www.dfes.gov.uk/behaviourimprovement

Transport Police (BTP). Merseyrail finds that the contract gives them control over how the security officers are used, ensuring that their time is spent on issues of concern to Merseyrail rather than being drawn away to address BTP priorities.

Southeastern Railway Enforcement Officers (REOs)

Southeastern directly employs the REOs because it believes that the best staff are typically those with continuity of experience of working in the rail industry. They are able to develop a better understanding of the potentially dangerous environment they work in and the imperative to protect public safety. They understand the restrictions of operating on trains in terms of accessing safety equipment and the risk that other passengers will become involved. They also appreciate the importance to the operator of keeping the system on the move, avoiding delays to services where possible, and relate well to other rail staff.

Selection and training of staff

The security role is a difficult job with a level of risk and can be stressful. Both the reassurance and security roles require good interpersonal skills to engage effectively with the public. However, both roles may at times require mainly routine patrolling, staff may encounter little activity, and they may be required to work unsocial hours. Operators should ensure that recruitment advertisements and job descriptions accurately reflect the reality of the work, and that selection processes test for aptitude for the tasks involved.

Transport for London Transport Police Community Support Officers

The TPCSOs receive training in the range of powers available to them, including issuing Fixed Penalty Notices, detaining suspects for up to 30 minutes, using reasonable force to detain, carrying out road checks under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act, stop and search of vehicles, and confiscating alcohol. In addition to this they receive conflict management training in recognition of the potential consequences of using such powers. Staff retention is reasonably high and a significant proportion of those TPCSOs who do leave move on to become police officers.

St Albans Taxi Marshals

In order to disperse people as quickly and quietly from the taxi rank as possible, a major part of the taxi marshal's role is conflict management, in a context where people have been drinking alcohol and their behaviour may be volatile. There is a requirement in the contract with the supplier that the marshals are trained in conflict management to Security Industry Authority (SIA) standards. At the time of the scheme's evaluation there had been no assaults on staff, which was attributed at least in part to this.

Visibility and uniform

The uniform needs to be such that the staff are easily seen, so that the public are aware of and reassured by their presence, and potential offenders are deterred. Successful schemes with an enforcement role have found that a more official 'police type' uniform is preferable for staff whose tasks involve issuing penalties or arrest.

Meadowhall Interchange Customer Service Officers

The overall objective of the scheme is to have a customer-focussed presence to promote customer perceptions of safety. They wear high visibility jackets with 'Travel South Yorkshire – Here to Help' printed on the back, thus reinforcing the customer service rather than security function. At night the Customer Service Officers patrol

the parameters of the Interchange, which has microchips at strategic points to be swiped in order to register that the area has been patrolled.



Partnership working

Successful staffing schemes are often built on an effective partnership, particularly between the operator and the police. Partnership works well when there is clarity of the roles and responsibilities of the different partners.

Transport for London's Transport Police Community Support Officers (TPCSOs)

The TPCSOs are employed by the Metropolitan Police Service through a partnership arrangement with Transport for London (TfL). They are part of the Transport Operational Command Unit (TOCU), managed by a Chief Superintendent. Monitoring of the effectiveness of TOCU is undertaken by a Combined Advisory Committee, set up as part of the service agreement with TfL. TfL is able to influence the planning and performance associated with the performance of staff, but the Metropolitan Police Service is responsible for organising the daily deployment of TPCSOs.

Portsmouth Night Runner bus service

The Night Runner is a late night service running buses from the city centre with on-bus security staff on Friday and Saturday nights. It was developed by the Safer Portsmouth Partnership working closely with the Evening and Late Night Economy Partnership, Stagecoach and a number of licensees in the area. The service is run on a wholly commercial basis by Stagecoach with the finance raised through licensees committed to the provision of security staff for the service.

Incorporating monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation should be incorporated into the management of schemes from the outset to ensure that they are being delivered as intended. Key

performance indicators should be identified (such as the number of incidents and public perceptions) and baseline measurements of these should be made prior to the scheme starting up. These can be monitored over time to measure achievement against stated objectives, and which can in turn lead to changes in operational practice so as to improve performance. Where there are positive outcomes, these can be used as evidence to support the case for continued funding.

Leeds bus station Customer Care Officers and PCSOs

West Yorkshire PTE (Metro), who manages Leeds bus station, has put in place effective systems to monitor incidents of crime and anti social behaviour. These are used to measure performance and to inform the management of the scheme. There is also a tracking survey which asks users about their perceptions of personal security and the helpfulness and courtesy of staff.

Use of technology as a complementary measure

There is strong evidence to suggest that staffing initiatives work well when linked to other security arrangements such as CCTV and radio links to provide back-up support. A comprehensive network of cameras with 24 hour coverage can provide evidence for enforcement activities. CCTV that is linked to a control room can enable staff to be more responsive, and provide passengers with reassurance. In planning staffing initiatives consideration should be given to the role of technology (including CCTV surveillance) for enhancing the effectiveness of staff and providing them with support.

Leeds bus station Customer Care Officers and PCSOs

Comprehensive CCTV coverage is linked to a central control room. There are radio links between staff and the control room, and plasma screens to demonstrate that security is in operation.

Merseyrail Security Officers

The security officers on Merseyrail have head-mounted cameras to assist in the collection of evidence against people who contravene the byelaws.

Publicity

Publicising initiatives for enhancing personal security is a difficult issue that needs to be considered holistically. In some cases it is felt that publicising the presence of staff for security may in itself raise alarm amongst passengers. In others it can contribute to reassuring them. In planning a staffing and security initiative the issue of publicity should always be considered. The aim should be to strike a balance between raising awareness, providing information and reassuring passengers on one hand, with raising concerns about why security is needed on the other. Staff may be used as part of a publicity initiative, engaging with passengers in order to raise their awareness and inform them of the positive steps that are being taken for their security.

Merseyrail Byelaw Enforcement Team

When Merseyrail introduced their Byelaw Enforcement Team, initially to address illegal parking in station car parks, they had a three week advertising campaign to notify customers of the initiative. In addition, £30,000 was spent on updating signage and painting new yellow lines to ensure that it was clear to passengers how they should use the station car parks.

Delivering a successful initiative

Managing staff

Supporting and valuing staff in their high visibility role improves their morale and has been found to impact on staff retention. For example, where a scheme has been successful in reducing levels of disorder this should be fed back to staff. Effective team management is crucial both to staff morale and performance.

Intelligence led operations

Successful schemes deploy their staff on the basis of sound intelligence about the nature and location of the problem. This includes the use of incident data and other sources of intelligence to target hotspots, times of day and routes. Initiatives have also applied the police National Intelligence Model for monitoring anti social behaviour and targeting known offenders.

South West Trains TravelSafe Officers (TSOs)

TSOs are co-located with BTP officers and receive daily briefings from the BTP TravelSafe coordinating officer. Tasking is determined by the police National Intelligence Model and by the railway industry Safety Management Information System. Tasking decisions are relayed to all station and train managers so that they are aware of the TSO movements and activities.

Transport for London's Transport Police Community Support Officers (TPCSOs)

The TPCSOs work in shifts, usually in pairs, between 07.00 and 15.00, and 11.00 19.00. This is based on an assessment of the intelligence, which indicates that the key hours for bus related crime are between 15.00 when children leave school until 19.30, the end of the commuter peak.

Avoiding displacement

Targeted operations to deal with crime and anti social behaviour may merely move the problem on to another location. Such an approach may be valid if the solution is seen as diffusion or dispersal – for example, this is the strategy underpinning the deployment of night bus and taxi marshal initiatives. However, in other situations it is important to consider the risk of dispersal when planning an operation or initiative, and ensure that those responsible for public safety and security in the wider environment are aware of the risk.

Combining staffing and situational measures for crowd control

Where large numbers of people need to queue to board public transport it is essential that appropriate barriers, waiting areas and shelter is provided, and if necessary staff, to ensure order. Barriers help to keep people in an orderly queue, and waiting areas with shelters can keep the safe, dry and therefore calmer while waiting for transport. The presence of staff contributes to maintaining a more organised and peaceful waiting environment.

St Albans Taxi Marshals

There is a shelter and the marshals use umbrellas when it is raining so that the queues of people are kept dry and in good humour while waiting for taxis.

Hatfield College learning mentors

The presence of barriers as well as staff helps to keep the young people in an orderly queue before they board the bus, thus maintaining a more peaceful and organised crowd.

Benchmarking as a tool for measuring performance

The following table summarises the indicators (quantitative and qualitative) that have been identified through the research as the most appropriate and realistic for benchmarking staffing initiatives, to assist with comparative evaluation. These can also be used by organisations as a framework for internal evaluation.

Delivering the initiative	Indicators
<i>Objectives for the initiative</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the objectives for the initiative in place? • Are staff deployed on the initiative fully aware of its objectives?
<i>Staff authority and powers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do staff have the authority and powers appropriate to the objectives?
<i>Training</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is induction and refresher training in place for staff delivering the initiative? • Is a distinction made between daytime and after dark roles? • Where applicable, is a distinction made between enforcement and reassuring roles?
<i>Targeting and deployment of staff</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the numbers of staff deployed, when and where, time working? • Are staff deployed at times and locations wanted by passengers and/or at crime hotspots? • Is deployment consistent with the objectives?
<i>Passenger awareness and staff engagement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the measure of awareness and engagement? • Are staff accessible and engaged with passengers?
<i>Formal opportunities for liaison</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there regular and formal opportunities for the staff to liaise with those from other relevant agencies? • Are formal mechanisms in place for data exchange?
<i>Human resources</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the company identified a discrete budget and objectives for this role? • What are the figures for staff turnover and absenteeism? • Are systems in place for two-way feedback between staff and management on how the initiative is progressing?
Outcomes of the initiative	Indicators
<i>Enhancing personal security</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are passenger/public experiences and perceptions of personal security measured, by day and after dark and by respondent profile? • What is the incidence of passenger assaults? • How are staff experiences and perceptions of personal security measured, by day and after dark and by respondent profile? • What is the incidence of staff assaults?
<i>Reducing incidents of crime and anti social behaviour</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are incidents of reported crime and anti social behaviour recorded and monitored?
<i>Reducing incidents of</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are incidents of criminal damage (including graffiti) and

<i>criminal damage, including graffiti</i>	their associated costs of repair and replacement recorded and monitored?
<i>Maximising revenue</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the initiative have a role in relation to fare evasion? • Is there a measure for fare evasion? • Are increases in patronage and revenue measured?

Further information

If you would like to receive a copy of the full evaluation report on staffing options, please contact John Smith on 020 7944 5222, john.smith@dft.gsi.gov.uk