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Neil Scales to step down as RTIG Chair

As well as his "day job" as Director General and Chief Executive at Merseytravel, Neil Scales has chaired RTIG for almost four years. Unfortunately Neil will be moving to Australia in the Spring, to take up post as Chief Executive of TransLink, the public transport authority in Brisbane.

As it happens, we will be launching the AGM process in a week or so, with a call for nominations. For the Committee this is generally straightforward: we tend to have a reasonable amount of continuity, and look to get a representative balance anyway. But the role of Chair is a unique and critical one.

We are very grateful for the qualities of leadership, vision and drive which Neil has brought to the role. Whoever takes up the mantle will, similarly, have a major influence over what RTIG becomes. In accordance with our Constitution, members will of course decide – the Chair is an elected post – but at this stage we are particularly keen to encourage high-quality nominations.

If you have any thoughts about this and want to chat informally, do feel free to contact us.

Neil, from all of us – best of luck Down Under. And thanks again.

Better Bus Area Fund

On 8 December, Transport Minister Norman Baker announced the Better Bus Area Fund. This new initiative provides £50M for “bus operators working in partnership with local authorities to increase passenger numbers”. DfT Guidance to Bidders (available at <http://www.dft.gov.uk/publications/better-bus-areas-fund>) provides more specific suggestions on the type of project that is envisaged, though “this list is not exclusive”:

bus priority schemes;

marketing and information schemes (including provision of fares and real - time information);

development of smart and/or multi-operator ticketing schemes;

enhancement of bus infrastructure: stops and stations;

elimination of pinch points that significantly affect bus punctuality.

The deadline for local authority bids is 24 February.

NB: The BBA is complementary to the Local Sustainable Transport Fund previously announced, and authorities may bid for both so long as the connection between the two bids is explained.

Competition Commission report on local bus services

On 20 December, the Competition Commission published the final report of its Local Bus Services Market Investigation, which was begun early in 2010.

The report has been widely reported and commented on by both public and private sectors, often quite negatively, and there is only one clear outcome: the CC will produce an Order during Spring 2012 “requiring local bus operators that manage bus station to provide access to bus stations for rival operators on fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory terms...”.

Apart from this, however, there are a number of “recommendations” for public authorities, centrally and locally. Two of these are very much in the RTIG space, and as they already align well with stated Government policy – and funding initiatives – these may well get some traction in the marketplace.

We...recommend that...LTAs consider the potential for tailoring partnerships...with the following characteristics...: (a) partnerships which have the effect of improving the quality of information provided to passengers, thereby increasing passenger demand for bus services and making passengers more responsive to changes in operators’ offerings... (Figure 15.6; see also paras 15.374-422)

We...recommend that, as part of its current review of BSOG in England, the DfT considers ways of incentivizing the...development of, and participation in, effective multi-operator ticketing schemes; compliance with competition law and the Code of Conduct; and investments through partnership arrangements aimed at growing passenger demand including, in particular, investments to improve the quality of information provided to passengers. The Scottish and Welsh Governments may wish to have regard to this recommendation in any future review of BSOG in Scotland and Wales. (Figure 15.7; see also paras 15.424-432)

The CC report, and other documents associated with its investigation, are available at <http://www.competition-commission.org.uk/inquiries/ref2010/localbus/index.htm>.

UTMC future confirmed

Many of you will be aware of the UTMC initiative, which provides an independent central service to maintain and support national specifications for traffic management systems. Like RTIG, this has historically operated through the joint sponsorship of subscribing members and central government funding, with some additional resources raised through events.

During early 2011 it became clear that Government financial support would be withdrawn. The UTMC Development Group (UDG) therefore initiated a radical review of its future, including a public consultation, with all options open. This review, and subsequent strategic development discussions with outside parties, concluded at the end of November and the strategy announced early in December. The upshot is that:

- There is near-universal support for UTMC, from both public and private sectors
- The UDG remains the most capable and most credible group to manage it – there is no advantage in “shuffling the deckchairs”
- The loss of government funding will inevitably have an impact on how well the UDG can sustain UTMC development, but
- The UDG remains committed to doing the best it can with limited resources

RTIG warmly welcomes this confirmation that UTMC has a stable (if lean) future. We wish our friends in the UDG all the best, and look forward to continued close cooperation through the Joint Chairs Group.

Contact: www.utmc.uk.com.

Management Committee Members

The Management Committee for the year 2011-12 is as follows:

Chair:

Neil Scales (Merseytravel)

Local Authority Members:

Ian Mathie (SESTRAN)

Tim Rivett (SYPTTE) – *deputy chair*

Consultant Members:

Miles Robinson (Atkins)

Transport Operator Members:

Paul Clear (First)

Roy Jeffries (Stagecoach)

Jason Webb (NRE)

System Supplier Members:

Russell Gard (Connexionz)

Doug Gilmour (Mobius)

Brian Higbee (Trapeze ITS)

Current Working Groups

The following Working Groups are currently active.

If you don't yet participate in one of these groups but would like to do so, please contact us at secretariat@rtig.org.uk.

- **Passenger Transport Information Co-ordination (PTIC) Group** – PTIC met on 12 October to discuss the current work in Traveline collating national datasets, and the latest from European standardisation. The next meeting will be in January 2012, and will include a presentation from Traveline's new mapping data providers.
- **Bus-Rail Technology Alignment Group (BRTAG)** – BRTAG had its latest regular meeting on 26 September; its next meeting will be on 19 January 2012.
- **Information for disabled travellers** – the work on updating the RTIG Guidance document is now well advanced, and we expect to publish it shortly. The changes in this revision are relatively minor.
- **Information during disruptions** – a "scoping" document has been produced, and is now published on the RTIG website. Future steps in this area are being discussed for this year and next.

Keeping in touch with you

As well as keeping you up-to-date with all the latest news from RTIG-INFORM, this newsletter aims to provide a community forum for members. We are therefore offering RTIG-INFORM members the opportunity to submit a short article here on any issue or innovation that might be of interest to the community.

There are two ways of becoming involved in this. Either you can email pieces to us when you have them – press release format is fine and pictures are welcome. Alternatively, you can nominate a marketing contact who will be included in the editor's monthly process of 'chivvying'.

This month's image has been supplied by Vix Technology.

MEMBERS' NEWS

[Transperth and Vix Technology make it easier for people to use public transport](#) [RSL and City of York Council create a virtual street](#)

Transperth and Vix Technology make it easier for people to use public transport

Transperth, a division of the Western Australia Public Transport Authority, is implementing a system to allow contracted bus operators to better manage and deliver services. The introduction of the system will assist the PTA and its operators to improve the services and information they provide to existing passengers, as well as encourage increased patronage of the Transperth bus network. Vix, which has a large presence in Perth, has had global experience with the technology to be used in the Perth trial, which will last 12 months and involve 80 buses operating out of Perth's Karrinyup depot.

The WA State Government has recently committed to a significant redevelopment project in the Perth Central Business District, aimed at improving linkages and reconnecting the city centre with Northbridge, one of Perth's major cultural and entertainment precincts. The primary focus of this project is to remove the existing physical barrier created by the 'at grade' Fremantle Train Line and replace it with a below ground rail line. A key component of the public transport works includes the construction of a new underground bus station that will both significantly reduce the facility's footprint and maximise the number of available bus stands, passenger amenities and terminal efficiency.

Real-time vehicle tracking and management on the bus network is critical to the new bus station's successful operation.

www.acis.uk.com

RSL and City of York Council create a virtual street

When City of York Council wanted to find a way to quickly and easily share transport information with passengers in the city centre, it turned to RSL to help them find a solution. York has no main bus station, so needed to find a different way to develop a comprehensive transport information network, which would complement the city. RSL worked closely with City of York Council to implement an innovative solution – the virtual street.

The virtual street means that the public can access up-to-date information and news through screens, controlled by a central management system. RSL designed the system for the virtual street, providing the hardware and software. Most public transport in York is by bus and the city council also operates a successful park and ride system. The historic nature of the city means that York has four main bus interchange points for passengers travelling to and from the city and the council wanted to improve the way it provided information at these points.

RSL worked with the city council to deliver full colour screens at key locations around the city, as well as additional screens at the park and ride. All the screens are controlled, managed and maintained with RSL's Electronic Passenger Information (EPI) system. This combination of hardware and software effectively created a virtual street, allowing the council to target real-time information at passengers who need it.

www.rslkiosks.co.uk

CALENDAR AND CONTACTS

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Forthcoming Events

The calendar below shows our initial planning for next year's events – please note that these are tentative at this stage. For further details of RTIG events please contact secretariat@rtig.org.uk.

Date	Event	Location
January 10 th 2012	BRTAG	London
January 11 th 2012	Management Committee	London
January 16 th 2012	PTIC	London
January 17 th 2012	CEN-IEC liaison meeting	Brussels
February 8 th 2012	Management Committee	London
February 8 th 2012	Joint Chairs Group	London
March 14 th 2012	AGM and Spring Meeting	London
May 2 nd 2012 *	Management Committee	London *
May 2 nd 2012 *	Joint Chairs Group	London *
June 2012 *	Workshop (disruption)	London *
June 27 th 2012 *	Management Committee	London *
September 5 th 2012 *	Management Committee	London *
September 5 th 2012 *	Joint Chairs Group	London *
September 2012 *	Workshop (smart+integrated ticketing)	Sheffield *
November 7 th 2012 *	Management Committee	London *
November 7 th /8 th 2012 *	Travel 2020	London *
December 5 th 2012 *	Joint Chairs Group	London *
January 9 th 2013 *	Management Committee	London *
January 2013 *	Workshop (open data services)	Manchester *
February 6 th 2013 *	Management Committee	London *
February 6 th 2013 *	Joint Chairs Group	London *

* = To be confirmed

Get in touch

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