Scottish Transport Statistics - User Consultation April 2014

Outline

In the most recent Scottish Transport Statistics (STS) publication, changes were made to a number of chapters and a new chapter was introduced. A user consultation was carried out to get feedback on these changes and other improvements that we could make to the publication, dissemination methods and outputs. The consultation was set up using Questback and a request for responses was sent out on the day of the STS publication in February 2014. Users were given until the end of April to respond, with several reminder emails being sent out to ScotStat Users in between.

Respondents

9 out of the 10 responses obtained were as individuals rather than on behalf of an organisation. Three were from Central Government, two from Other Public Sector Bodies, two from Transport Consultancies, and one from each of Local Government, RTP, and Business Network.

Use of Transport Statistics

The most common use of Transport Scotland (TS) statistical data was for Research (six out of ten), followed by Performance Monitoring at five, and Policy making at three out of ten. One respondent mentioned using it for calibrating Transport Models.

Table 1 shows what transport and travel topic areas the ten respondents are interested in. Seven were interested in Road network and Road traffic statistics, six in Road accidents and Rail services, and five in Environment, and Personal and Cross-modal travel. The least popular section was International comparisons at one.

Table 1: Which Transport and Travel topics are you interested in?

Topic Area	Number interested
Road accidents	6
Road transport vehicles	3
Freight	2
Road network	7
Road traffic	7
Bus and coach travel	4
Rail services	6
Air transport	2
Water transport	2
Personal and cross-modal travel	5
International comparisons	1
Environment	5
No. of respondents to this question	*10*

Use of STS Publication

Of the nine respondents who said they used STS, the most commonly used methods to access the publication were the HTML web pages, online pdf document and data spreadsheets. Six of the nine never used the hard copy and seven never printed out from the website.

All of those who used the publication used the tables, with six out of nine using background/methodology/sources and only three using the commentary.

All nine respondents thought the level of detail on the publication was 'about right'.

All nine respondents were happy for the publication to continue to be published in February.

Table 2 shows what chapters they said they use. The most commonly used chapters in STS were Road network and Road traffic (six out of nine), with five using the Summary, Rail services and Environment and Emissions chapters. The least used chapters were Water transport and International comparisons with two users out of nine.

Table 2: Which chapters of Scottish Transport Statistics do you use?

STS Chapter	Number who use chapter
Summary	5
Road transport vehicles	4
Bus and coach travel	4
Freight	4
Road network	6
Road traffic	6
Injury road accidents	6
Rail services	5
Air transport	3
Water transport	2
Finance	3
Personal and cross-modal travel	4
International Comparisons	2
Environment and Emissions	5
No. of respondents to this question	*9*

Bus and Coach

Of the four respondents who used this chapter, all were happy with the merging of Bus and Coach Statistics with STS. Three thought the 2013 changes provided some improvement to the chapter and one thought no change.

Freight

Of the four respondents who used the Freight chapter, one thought it was significantly improved by the 2013 changes, and three thought there was some improvement.

Water Transport

Of the two respondents who used this chapter, one thought there had been some improvement with the 2013 changes and the other no change.

Environment and Emissions

Of the five respondents who used this chapter, three found it very useful and two quite useful.

Summary

All three respondents who said they used this chapter found it quite useful. One respondent wrote:

'*I speculate that the document is daunting for any casual user and the summary chapter is likely to be very welcome.*'

Rail

All five respondents who used this chapter found the content quite useful. Some suggested improvements to the chapter included:

'*Greater range / timeline of passengers stats for key stations across network - although this is easily available from ORR, so not critical.*'

'*Improving the freight / CV carryings on ferry services data would be of more value to us.*'

'*The new ScotRail franchise will place added requirements on the rail data for performance monitoring & KPI's - in particular, it would be good if you could provide something better than Reduced Price' ticket sales for identifying/monitoring lightly-used rail services, particularly since the rules governing peak and off-peak tickets are not very clear and may change under the new franchise. Use of mobile phone tracking data may be useful here (i.e. if you can establish the relationship between the number of (tracked) phones and the number of passengers on different services.*'

'*More detailed information at a local authority level*'

Personal and Cross-modal Travel

Three of the four respondents who used this chapter found it very useful and the other quite useful. Some suggested improvements to the chapter included:

'Generally like the chapter to keep an eye out for possible changing of habits - e.g. purchase of hybrids/fuel cells, any growth in car clubs - and to react to these if they become significant shifts.'

'Table 11.1 and 11.2 are particularly useful - please keep them!'

'Has the team cracked the various problems relating to the monitoring of cycling which were identified and discussed in the excellent report which MVA Consultancy produced for Cycling Scotland last year?'

General Comments

'Don't stop issuing the hard-copy (at least to those who ask nicely for it!)'

Key Transport Statistics Card

Six out of ten respondents were aware of the card, of which only one used it. They used the hard copy format and found it quite useful. A suggested improvement to the card was:

'Active travel 'highlights' - e.g. how often walked in past week for transport purposes SHS; concessionary travel - e.g. NEC card possession or usage in past month'

Transport Statistics Team - Comments

'You are all doing a great job - keep it up!'

Susan Roseburgh
Transport Analytical Services
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