

Sir Michael Scholar KCB
Chair
UK Statistics Authority
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Our Ref Let1462/AS/ad

Dear Sir Michael

Passenger Focus and Official Statistics

Passenger Focus was designated as a provider of Official Statistics in The Official Statistics Order 2009 dated 19th March 2009. Passenger Focus was not consulted on the impact the changes would have to the organisation or the resulting implications required to change our practices. We were unaware that the order would name Passenger Focus as an official statistics provider as opposed to just the National Passenger Survey. Already the administrative burden imposed through compliance is too resource intensive for a small organisation like ours.

Passenger Focus is an executive non departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Transport. Passenger Focus's mission is to help rail and bus passengers get the best deal – we are a consumer organisation. We base our influencing work on research. The main rail passenger research in the National Passenger Survey. This major piece of attitudinal research forms the core of our work – every year over 50,000 passengers take part. A copy of the most recent wave is enclosed. In addition we carry out a lot of research on individual passenger issues such as fares and ticketing and information during disruption. Again all this qualitative and quantitative research is attitudinal research not pure statistics as such. On the bus side we have just taken over the DfT's Bus Passenger Mystery traveller survey and, next year, will take over the National Bus Passenger Survey. Again both these pieces of work are attitudinal surveys.

Passenger Focus' sole reason for existing is to the bring about positive change for passengers. We do this through exerting our influence based on robust quality research. We make extensive use of the media to get our messages across and can be described as a lobbying organisation. Adherence to the code is going to cause us severe operational difficulties. While we fully understand and agree with the rationale behind the official statistics legislation we do not believe it was every intended that our type of organisation would be covered – we are not a publisher of official type statistics.



We would very much appreciate an opportunity to discuss these matters with you.

Yours sincerely,

A. J.

Anthony Smith
Chief Executive