

Confidence in transport and policing

Summary of the workshop
on 8th March 2016



Summary

On 8th March 2016, University College London's Transport Institute (UCLTI) and Transport for London (TfL) jointly held a workshop with the aim to build a network of researchers and practitioners with a focus on developing a shared knowledge base for increasing public confidence, and exploring how this can be applied to a transport environment.

The day started with talks by academics and practitioners to share their knowledge on measuring confidence and identifying the key drivers behind it. Speakers were encouraged to consider how current knowledge on confidence in policing could be applied to the transport network, and especially how TfL could best make use of non-police frontline staff who work within the Enforcement and On-Street Operations Directorate, and interact with its customers every day.

The second part of the day consisted of small-group workshops that brought together the diverse knowledge of all participants, in order to share experiences with problem-solving approaches for increasing confidence in policing, and possible applications of these approaches to a transport setting. The groups set out some proposed methods for increasing confidence based on their own experiences, combined with what they heard during the morning session.

Key themes:

- Feedback, engagement, and communication with community is vital
- We answer to many publics with diverse needs
- Officers can take advantage of teachable moments when they interact with public
- It is important to share results of what works
- Small tweaks or nudges can have large effects
- Different features of engagement all important (timing, message content, means of delivery)

This document summarises the key themes which emerged from the workshop. It is intended to provide a platform to enable the sharing of information as well as to make some recommendations for next steps towards improving confidence whilst travelling on London's transport network.



The talks

Graham Daly, Head of Operations, Enforcement and On-Street Operations, Transport for London

TfL’s performance is measured in terms of customer service. It has 500+ frontline staff who are currently measured on the *volume* of interaction; this should shift to incorporate the *quality* of the interaction – confidence is a big part of this. **Question for the day:** What can TfL do, given these resources, to increase customers’ confidence in our service?

Inspector Mark Cooper, West Midlands Police (WMP) & Professor Kevin Morrell, Warwick Business School

WMP identified a disconnect between the police’s day-to-day activity and the needs of their communities. To address this they conducted a two-year experiment in addressing community needs, acting on them, and feeding this back, called “You said – We listened – We did”. A major part of this was a mass communications approach where WMP were “blogging what we’re doing” using targeted modes e.g.: Twitter or leaflets as appropriate. Kevin Morrell then carried out an analysis of this approach and identified the importance of ‘many publics’ – that different groups have different confidence needs. For example, those who never interact with the police are different from victims. These different publics have different concerns and need different messages.

Dr Ben Bradford, Lecturer, Centre for Criminology, University of Oxford

Trust refers to the expectations and evaluations that people have concerning an organisation, while *confidence* is a more general attitude. Because confidence is so complex, a single-item measure does not capture it accurately. Instead we need to measure all its facets. It is a valuable aim in itself to increase people’s confidence, but improving confidence can also have positive knock-on effects. The factors that influence people’s confidence can be broken into three groups:

1. Those we can change: interactions between police and public – “teachable moments”, which are situations where police engage with public and can take this opportunity to increase confidence. To do this, engagement needs to be fair and effective. People need to see respectful, just, and decent treatment, along with transparent and fair decision-making.
2. Those we may be able to change: disorder and perception of crime have been linked with confidence. Whilst police can act on anti-social behaviour (ASB) and disorder, this needs to target illegal activity and *not* single out people/ behaviours that are not illegal.
3. Those out of our control: inherent attitudes or effect of media (although these relationships are not necessarily as strong or in the direction we would sometimes think).



Joanne Reinhard, Senior Advisor on Organisational Behaviour, Behavioural Insights Team

The Behavioural Insights Team works to encourage uptake of compliant behaviours through small tweaks known as nudges, rather than by changing legislation. They use the EAST framework (Easy, Attractive, Social, Timely) to develop these nudges. For example, you can make something easy by harnessing the power of defaults, reducing the hassle, and simplifying the message. To develop these solutions, they use the TEST framework (Target, Explore, Solution, Trial). This approach was used in the example of changing the wording of an email to reduce affinity bias (showing a preference to interviewees similar to the interviewers), and increase the pass rate of BAME applicants on a police recruitment test. It is very important to evaluate the impact of the solutions over the long term and share these – what works but also what doesn't.

Sarah Tucker, Research Associate, Universities' Police Science Institute, Cardiff

Sarah presented work on field experiments designed to establish what does and what doesn't work in spreading crime prevention messages, and what are possible unintended consequences, such as increasing fear through "scary" communications, or what is the best time for the engagement, as well as what is the best medium, and best message. It is important to build this evidence base, so all organisations who use similar approaches can know what is best approach, and what approach to not use. All messaging in these communications are real cases or police press releases; no stories are made up, as authenticity is very important.



Discussion

The following points emerged from discussions and the Q&A following the talks:

- Street-level officers need to have buy-in for the engagement to work; they must be motivated because the quality of engagement is so important
- It is important to address all of the ‘different publics’ differently, and apply some weighting – those who suffer serious harassment require a different response from those who never see police or disorder, but the current performance measure is one global satisfaction score – different needs should be considered
- Teachable moments occur frequently in transport settings but these are under-utilised and this could change, eg getting frontline staff to engage, or BTP staff to announce why they are in the area
- There is a need to continue evaluations of interventions in the long term, to see if there is a long-lasting effect, law of diminishing returns, etc. There is also a need for replication of results
- It is possible that, in combination, a set of small nudges can lead to a significant change in the long term but the ethics of nudging people need to be considered in order to enable informed decision making
- Behavioural insight measures could be used to highlight the “humanity” of TfL operations in order to increase confidence: possible to use a hand-written letter as a nudge to assure people that a decision made on an appeal has been reached by someone putting personal thought into the process, to reduce appeals? All nudges should be based on finding the source of the behaviour at first (so in this case is it the belief that the decision was not result of personal involvement that makes people re-appeal?)

Recommendations

- Emphasis on the *quality* of interaction with the public - research shows that the way people are treated influences their satisfaction very strongly
 - “Good engagement” needs to be defined
 - Operational staff should be rewarded for good-quality interactions, and for this to happen the details of interactions need to be accurately captured.
- Create “neighbourhood policing teams” for “transport neighbourhoods” who follow a “You said- We did” approach - research points to good local policing and quality of service, including problem-solving that is responsive to the needs and concerns of local people.
 - Also evaluate this approach to determine what works
- Focus on measuring the drivers of confidence that *can* be changed (such as quality of interaction with public)
- Best ways to disseminate comms to many publics to be identified and trialled
- KPIs should reflect the different needs of the many publics, and should be measured in a way that addresses this diversity of demands
- An evaluation of Operation Safeway to be carried out in a collaboration between UCL and TfL
- More information sharing and collaboration between organisations (eg West Midlands Safer Travel Partnership looking to TfL’s experiences when considering the introduction of Bylaws across the bus network).



Contact

Réka Solymosi

Transport Policing & Enforcement Analyst, Intelligence & Analysis Team, Enforcement and On-Street Operations, Transport for London

9th Floor, 197 Blackfriars Rd, Southwark, London, SE1 8NJ

Email: RekaSolymosi@tfl.gov.uk

Auto: 64821 Tel: 020 7126 4821



UCL Transport Institute has been set up to promote cross-disciplinary transport research and to increase the policy impact of transport research.
www.ucl.ac.uk/transport-institute
transport-institute@ucl.ac.uk



EVERY JOURNEY MATTERS