RTIG INFORM

improving public transport through technology

What's on

The calendar below shows key events over the next few months, from RTIG and our associates. For further details of RTIG events please contact secretariat@rtig.org.uk

RTIG Committee Meetings
21 May 2020, Virtual

RTIG Workshop
Virtual events to be announced

PTIC
18 June 2020, London or virtual

Conferences

Smart Transport,
15 September 2020, Manchester

Intelligent Transport,
11-12 November 2020, London

In this issue:

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Newsletter Frequency and Email Alerts

The newsletters are produced on a monthly cycle.

They will be posted on the RTIG website and emailed out to the newsletter contact list.

If you think a colleague or contact would benefit from receiving the RTIG newsletter then please ask them to fill out the form on the website or use the QR Code.

RTIG on Twitter

RTIG is now on twitter as @RtigInform

https://twitter.com/RtigInform

Photo Library

To help liven up RTIG printed and digital outputs we are interested in receiving any images of public transport information real time or otherwise that you would be happy for us to use.

We will of course credit the appropriate source if published.

If you have any material you would be able to let us have access to please contact Tim tim.rivett@rtig.org.uk

NEWS AND EVENTS

Working Groups

The working groups for the 2020-21 will be being setup up shortly.

If anyone wants to become involved in any of the work packages in the business plan then please feel free to discuss or commit by getting in contact with Tim tim.rivett@rtig.org.uk .

Virtual AGM

We held our AGM online on 30th April, thank you to those who took the time to attend – it was good to see you all.

The presentation is available on the documents section of the website when logged in.

The business plan was agreed and is now published online for all to see.

The Committee was agreed and is as follows:

Authorities:
    Andrew Wilson (Hants), Graham Davies (WYCA),
Suppliers
    Russell Gard (React Accessibility), Darren Maher (21st Century / Journeo)
Consultants
    Tony Brown (Atkins)
Operators
    Chas Allen (Stagecoach), Simon Gold (Reading Buses)
and DfT:
    Meera Nayyar (DfT)

We did not have a proposal for a Chair, so the role remains unfilled. If you have any suggestions for someone who may be willing to fill this role which is not time consuming, then please get in touch.

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Webinars

With the inability to physically meet for the foreseeable future we will be running some webinars instead. These will be shorter than a workshop but take the same approach to content.

The first few will be linked to current areas of interest from those at the AGM:

• Providing vehicle occupancy level
• SIRI SX profile and Transport for the North disruptions project
• Location Data for BODS and the SIRI VM Profile

Look out for the invitations.

If you have any topics you would like to see covered or would like to present a webinar for RTIG members, then please let us know.

Exchange of Disruption Information using SIRI-SX

Following an extended period of review and updates to reflect the Transport for the North beta release of disruption information (see the later announcement) we have released our new technical document:

RTIGT038-1.1 - Exchange of Disruption Information using SIRI SX

This is a public specification document as we want to make sure as many people as possible get to understand how to use SIRI-SX and the Transport for the North profile.

If you would like to have access to data from the TfN Disruption information project, which is currently allowing selected people access then then you can register at: https://opendata.transportforthenorth.com/

There is also more about this later in this newsletter.

RTIG Disruption Guidance

As services and frequencies are reduced there is an increased need to provide high quality information in the event of any disruption to the remaining journeys.

Passengers understand that sometimes disruption will occur, but they need some information to help them.

Our previous work on disruptions showed that customers want to know 5 key things:

- the scale of the problem: how much of the network is affected? Is it just a route or even only a few stops, or is the disruption more widespread?
- anticipated duration: services affected, with dates and times. For instance, if services will be running a different schedule to allow for a clean-up operation, when can they expect service to return to normal?
- the problem, or what is happening: potentially including both the incident itself and the management actions being taken; this can influence what they do as a result. It shouldn't be assumed that the passenger will have "figured it out".
- an estimated impact on journey time: passengers accept that this may not be precise but would like to be told when they receive information which is only approximate.
- the alternatives: – alternative stops or route numbers. Bus stops which are out of use should be well signed at the stop to avoid confusion and directions to any temporary stops should be clear. Passengers also want brief details about any changes to the route (which roads, stops or whole route numbers are out of use). For instance, a diversion the driver will take to avoid a flooded area or congestion around a road accident, or details of an alternative bus to relieve a faulty vehicle.

Our work on disruptions can be found in the documents section on our website:

- Managing Disruptions: the issues involved
- Managing Disruptions: position paper
- SIRI-SX best practice

Updating Real Time System Data

Making sure that a real time system has the latest timetable and operational data to provide accurate information to the public is always a challenge. Over the last couple of months there have been more service changes than some systems will have seen over years. The ability to be able to update data easily and rapidly is becoming more visible to public with a number of local newspapers having comments from bus operators and local authorities along the lines of:

> *"Our teams have also provided up to date PDF timetables for every route so customers can still access accurate information when real-time data is being updated"*

Making sure that the customer has up to date information in any format is challenging enough at the moment, lags in updating real time systems risks reducing customer trust in the systems.

> *"reminds customers to refrain from all but essential travel and to look at website for up-to-date timetables before travelling as journey planner and real-time information displays may show incorrect information for a while."*

We are interested in talking to operators, authorities and suppliers to find out how you are managing data updates to identify any general lessons to learn that we can use to help the whole sector as services start to ramp back up as the current crisis reduces.

If you think you have anything to share then please get in touch with Tim tim.rivett@rtig.org.uk

Location Data Profile

As you will have read previously we are working with the Department for Transport to develop a location data profile for the Bus Open Data Service (BODS).

Location data will be required to be provided to BODS as a SIRI–VM feed as well as being available from BODS in the same way. A profile is being developed to provide clarity on the data that is needed and will be provided.

There are a series of consultative discussions being held by the DfT / KPMG to identify the requirement for data and the ability of supplying systems to provide that data.

If you are not already involved in this work and have a view on what should be included in the SIRI-VM profile and what information will be helpful to support implementation then please do get in touch.

COVID-19: How can RTIG Help?

As you face the challenges that COVID-19 are bringing you, what are the areas and things you would think RTIG could help you with?

Would some new guidance on a particular area help?

Would an online session of a particular topic be useful?

Please do get in touch with Tim with any ideas
tim.rivett@rtig.org.uk

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Bus Open Data Service – providing up to date schedule information

Covid-19 has brought many challenges to the industry, amongst them the requirement for substantial timetable changes in response to the changing situation.

Due to social distancing requirements, bus use has understandably fallen dramatically amongst the public as a result. However, for those who are still using bus services, their importance has never been greater – as these individuals tend to be key workers. As such, the need for accurate and timely service information reaching these passengers has also never been greater.

We're delighted to see BODS coming into its own in facilitating this data pipeline; during Covid-19 many operators, such as Arriva, have stepped up their efforts to publish more data on the service, which is in turn supporting consumers having direct and instantaneous access to it. This has dramatically reduced the latency period to get data out to passengers through journey planning apps and the likes of Google and Apple. It's great to see this use case becoming a reality at such a pivotal time for the industry and its ridership, and we thank those operators who have been able to invest time and attention to this during these challenging times.

The BODS project team is keen to support operators not yet using the service in this way; for those who are interested to learn more please contact us on BusOpenData@dft.gov.uk

Timetable Data Update

The Bus Open Data regulations are placing a requirement on operators to produce timetable data files using the TransXChange (TXC) data standard. Whilst TXC has been around for many years now, and is a mature standard, there are large variety of ways in which data can be constructed within the standard. Some of these are more concise than others, and some inadvertently hide simple data in complex constructs. This makes it hard to interpret data, and users have to be able to interpret the full

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standard in order to accommodate the different ways that data may be written.

Additionally, the continued reliance by the industry on TXC v2.1 has led to a number of errors which are more avoidable if later versions are used. During the 2018 public consultation, DfT was asked to provide clear leadership on data standards to be used by operators to publish datasets. Consistently the lack of an agreed version of TXC that is mandated for use has been cited as a barrier to driving greater standardisation of datasets. Therefore, as part of the Bus Open Data (BOD) programme, the Department for Transport (DfT) has sponsored the creation of a TXC profile to support the adoption of the Bus Open Data Service and compliance with the BOD.

The aim of this profile is to specify a consistent use of elements and a consistent way of writing TXC that will be used within BODS and which will lead to a higher quality data set and, at the same time, lower the barriers to entry by users new to TXC. This profile was developed in partnership with the industry during 2019 and a conceptual slide deck was shared with the sector towards the end of 2019. Since then, the TXC Data Standards Lead, Stuart Reynolds to whom we're very grateful for his contributions, has been developing the technical documentation.

Because it has a wider applicability than simply the BOD programme, the profile is being referred to as the Public Transport Information profile or the TXC-PTI profile. The technical documentation is available to download for information and to support integration with your products and services, for operators and technology suppliers.

https://bit.ly/3aQHHWj

The profile will be mandated in the regulations from early 2021 however we have collectively agreed with the sector that enforcement of the regulations will only be enacted towards the end of 2021, with the focus during 2021 being upon the Driver Vehicles and Standards Agency examiners offering education and support to operators to comply with the regulations and fulfil their new requirements. During 2020, any major version of TXC (2.1, 2.4, 2.5) will continue to be accepted however the service will later be aligned to accept the PTI profile only.

The TXC tool has been launched and currently exports 2.1. however a TXC 2.4 export aligned to the profile will be launched during Spring/Summer 20. If you require support creating

TransXChange files for your services, to be uploaded onto BODS, please do email us at busopendata@dft.gov.uk and use the subject header CREATION OF TXC FILES

BODS Business Change update

We have put in place contingency plans to continue our business change engagement to support Bus Open Data Service adoption. We want to do everything we can to support you through this transitional year for the publication of timetable data, despite social, distancing measures being in place.

What are we doing?

- All regional workshops and stakeholder's engagement will now be conducted remotely using WebEx video conferencing solution and follow Government advice on Coronavirus (COVID-19).
- Bus Open Data interviews on the development of enhancements for the timetables service, such as agent mode and data quality service enhancements, will be conducted by telephone and MS Teams.
- We have put in place contingency plans to ramp up the delivery of Bus Open Data webinars monthly focusing on technical issues on publishing, data quality reports, data standards, implementation guide and TransXChange to support end to end optimum utilization of the service and reinforce knowledge. Watch out for forthcoming dates for these webinars and sign up for them.
- If you are a small operator (operating forty services or fewer) and require asssitance creating TransXChange files, do please email BusOpenData@dft.gov.uk
- The team also hosted an online webinar on 13 March 2020, where we demonstrated how to use the service and TransXChange tool.

Location Data Update

To inform future policy regarding the SIRI-VM schema that operators will be required to align to when supplying data to the Publish Bus Open Data Service, the Bus Open Data Service team have been conducting research to understand the value of each field within the schema to the data consumer. The team have been working with data consumers, bus operators and technology

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suppliers to understand what fields are required, not required and what fields currently are not provided but would be useful.

What did we learn?

Unique identifiers were desirable by all consumers to enable matching of the planned timetables (TransXchange) to the location data (SIRI-VM). This is reflected in the higher number of consumers who required 'VehicleJourneyRef', 'Line ref', and 'Direction ref'. New fields requested by data consumers are: Speed, 'Bearing' and 'Block ref'. 'VehicleJourneyRef' can be used by operators to optionally supply 'Block ref. However, Block ref was explicitly requested as an independent field by three large and three small data consumers. They explained this was to improve their ability to match between static and real time data. Fields proposed to be included in the profile

None of the existing BODS schema fields were requested to be removed, though some fields, such as Origin name and OriginAimedDepartureTime were voted for scarcely. Fields to be include in the final profile are as follows:
- Producer Ref;
- Vehicle Ref;
- Vehicle Journey Ref;
- Operator Ref;
- Published Line Name;
- Line Ref;
- Direction Ref;
- Origin Ref;
- Origin Name;
- Origin Aimed Departure Time;
- Destination Ref;
- Destination Name;
- Destination Aimed Arrival Time;
- Vehicle Location and
- Recorded At (GPS timestamp).

Access to SIRI VM Feeds

The DfT team are currently looking for bus operators and location data/electronic ticket machine (ETMs) suppliers from across the country to take part in the Beta phase of the project to develop location data publishing functionality onto the Bus Open Data Service.

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This is vital in ensuring that the Bus Open Data Service can integrate with a range of technology products to ingest SIRI VM feeds.

At this stage, the feeds can be provided using a range of profiles as long as it is a SIRI VM feed. This is your chance to share invaluable operational insight that will shape the design of our service and become early publishers of location data in a supported manner.

In particular, we'd like to work with operators who are currently using **Parkeon-Flowbird** ETMs. Anyone interested in participating should email busopendata@dft.gov.uk and use the subject header ACCESS TO SIRI VM FEEDS

TfN Open Data Hub and Disruption Messaging Tool – now live!

In another exciting milestone for the programme, we are pleased to announce that our Disruption Messaging Tool and Open Data Hub are now live. The Disruption Tool allows our local authority partners to share messaging about planned and unplanned disruptions to local transport services across their customer facing channels and to publish these messages as SIRI SX-standard open data. The Open Data Hub then provides developers and other data-driven-businesses with a central source to access this disruptions data which they can use to enhance their journey planning apps and other digital mobility information services.

Transport for Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire Combined Authority are the first authorities in the North to adopt these tools. Other city-region authorities are also scheduled to start using them over the coming months.

An initial select group of developers have been granted early access to the Hub to test the first samples of disruption data before it is opened to everyone. Fares data will also be made available via the Hub later in the year.
More information about the Open Data Hub and the Disruption Messaging Tool's full go-live schedule can be found on Transport for the North's website https://transportforthenorth.com/ist/open-data-hub/

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Look out for further updates from Transport for the North on this launch soon.

Transport Simulator

With little in the news on real time recently, and being stuck indoors wondering what to do now you have completed all those DIY tasks?

We thought it was time we explored pretend worlds rather than the real world and pretend to run a transport network for fun rather than real!

Simutrans is a freeware and open-source transportation simulator. Your goal is to establish a successful transport company. Transport passengers, mail and goods by rail, road, ship, and even air. Interconnect districts, cities, public buildings, industries and tourist attractions by building a transport network you always dreamed of.

It is much harder than it sounds, as any transport professional would know…

https://www.simutrans.com/en/

MEMBERS NEWS

Keeping in touch with you

As well as keeping you up to date with all the latest news from RTIG, this newsletter aims to provide a community forum for members. We therefore offer RTIG 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:

▶ Email pieces to us when you have them – press release format is fine, and pictures are welcome.

▶ Nominate a marketing contact who will be included in the editor's monthly process of 'chivvying'.

Buchanan Bus Station have unveiled their new 75" TFT passenger information displays manufactured and installed by the Trueform.

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Epaper RTI displays arrive in Portsmouth

A battery powered Epaper display project has been successfully completed in Portsmouth by Vix Technology in partnership with manufacturer Axentia Technologies AB and installation contractor EXTERNITURE LIMITED.

The hassle free solution has a quick installation time, with no need for power works, electrical testing or solar panels.

The display is simple to maintain and has a 3 year battery guarantee making this one of the most efficient displays deployed in the U.K.. It has been designed to suit Portsmouth's branding requirements.

Please get in touch if you have similar requirements or to find out more about the wide range of displays available from Vix Technology

Ticketer received the Queen's award for Enterprise: Innovation 2020

Ticketer is honoured to be one of just 66 organisations nationally to be awarded a prestigious Queen's Awards for Enterprise: Innovation 2020. Announced 21st April, Ticketer has been recognised for its corporate excellence and innovation.

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John Clarfelt, Ticketer's CEO, comments: "This really has been a tremendous team effort, not just from the Ticketer Team, but from our customers, suppliers, and friends across the industry. I really feel incredibly humbled to receive such a prestigious award. All we have done is bring alive what bus operators have asked the industry to deliver, and so we are proud to accept this achievement on behalf of our amazing friends and colleagues in the sector, who have been loyal supporters, and with us every step of the way."

John continues: "It really is a bitter-sweet moment, to be recognised for success at such a challenging time for us all – and yet precisely because of those challenges, I hope that in some way it will be particularly encouraging for our industry to be acknowledged in this way during these extraordinary times. Between us we have done it before, and I know that together we will do it all over again once we are back to near normality." Now in its 54th year, the Queen's Awards for Enterprise are the most esteemed business awards in the country, with winning businesses able to use the admired Queen's Awards emblem for the next five years. Under normal circumstances, Ticketer would be celebrating its award during a royal reception for Queen's Awards winners in the summer but will now await further guidance on what may be feasible this year.

Applications for Queen's Awards for Enterprise 2021 open on the 1st May 2020. For more information, visit https://www.gov.uk/queens-awards-for-enterprise

Ticketer and Passenger join forces to provide bus tracking to keep the country moving

In a UK-wide collaboration, transport technology companies Ticketer and Passenger are working together to ensure that UK bus operators are able to deliver the most accurate information possible for their passengers during times of extreme change and uncertainty.

Ticketer reports that buses are still transporting 11%[1] of their usual traveller numbers – including key workers, key worker's children and those who require public transport to travel to shops and medical appointments.

To help bus users over the coming weeks, Ticketer, the UK's leading smart ticketing systems supplier and Passenger, the UK's

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top-rated public transport app provider will roll out Passenger's Live Buses capability to all its operator customers. Live vehicle tracking on Passenger apps and websites will show travellers exactly where buses are on interactive maps, as operators continue to adjust timetables around key worker needs.

Ticketer will help automate the process by enabling vehicle monitoring (SIRI-VM) feeds for operators who would otherwise use a combination of timetable data and bus stop monitoring to update their feeds. "We are delighted to work with our industry colleagues at Passenger to make this happen. Now, more than ever, it's important for key industry alliances to form, to work together to put the needs of our operators first. Allowing operators to show bus locations on their apps will help key workers and those making essential journeys during these difficult times" said John Clarfelt, CEO at Ticketer.

Secretary of State for Transport, Grant Shapps' recent letter to the Association of Local Bus Company Managers (ALBUM) made it clear that the government understood the importance of bus services to communities, key workers and people taking essential journeys. Rt Hon Shapps wrote: "I cannot stress enough the importance of first class communication to passengers and local authorities, so that those for whom travel remains essential are absolutely clear about what buses will be running where and when."[2]

INIT receives European patent for innovative passenger guidance system

After being patented in the US in 2019, INIT's system for passenger guidance has now also been granted a European patent. MOBILEguide provides information about the expected number of free seats on a rail car from the platform of highly frequented trains (underground, suburban train, metro).

This allows passengers to position themselves before the train arrives in those waiting areas of cars where free seats are to be expected. This not only makes traveling safer and more comfortable, but also reduces the trains' waiting times at stations due to shorter boarding and alighting times. As a result, transport companies can achieve savings in the millions by using the existing rail infrastructure in the best possible way.

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MOBILEguide not only can be used for trains, but also for buses. The information about the occupancy rate of individual trips or sections of trips can help eliminate overcrowding thereby contributing to a safer and more even passenger load.

Avoiding overcrowded public transport vehicles will not at least play a major role in the attempts to deal with the current COVID-19 pandemic as well as with its aftermaths.

Thursdays to get their own tailored message of thanks

Responding to the quickly evolving Covid-19 crisis, 21st Century Passenger Systems, a Journeo company, is focussing on getting key messages out to passengers on behalf of local authorities and PTEs. With major disruption as a result of COVID-19 and bus operators amending timetables to reflect their reduced services, team members from the passenger information specialist are working around the clock to get as much reliable information to passengers as possible.

Saff Riaz, National Sales Manager for 21st Century Passenger Systems, comments: "As many of the UK's key workers rely on public transport to get them where they need to be, it is vital that the transport information available to them is relevant and accurate. Which is why we are supporting with media content updates during the lockdown to help keep people safe while travelling, free of charge."

Customers have used Journeo's Content Management System (CMS), EPI to provide information of timetable disruption and COVID-19 public health information, reinforcing Government guidelines on when it is appropriate to use public transport and giving those who need it access to the latest available information. The company is also providing free webinars to customers on how to control messaging and advertising campaigns during the pandemic.

One of the first authorities to make use of the updates was Worcestershire County Council.

ADMIN

Management Committee Members

The Management Committee for the year 2020-2021 was appointed at the AGM on 30 April 2020. Membership is currently as follows:

Chair:

Members: Andrew Wilson (Hants), Graham Davies (WYCA), Russell Gard (React Accessibility), Darren Maher (21st Century), Tony Brown (Atkins), Chas Allen (Stagecoach), Simon Gold (Reading Buses), Meera Nayyar (DfT)

Contact us

Best by email: secretariat@rtig.org.uk.

https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8557065

Next issue

Issue 130 – Monday 1st June 2020.

Please send all contributions to secretariat@rtig.org.uk at any time up to Wednesday 27th May 2020.

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