



BRITISH  
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POLICE

# London North Passenger Forum Newsletter February 2010

## In this issue

- **Chairman's update**  
Page 1
- **London North hosts first Passenger Forum meeting**  
Page 2
- **Forum meeting feedback**  
Page 3

## Chairman's update

Dear members

Welcome to the first Passenger Forum newsletter of 2010. December saw my officers educate and liaise with rail staff and passengers about travel safety and staff assaults. And in the New Year, we hosted the first London North Passenger Forum meeting to great acclaim.

At the end of 2009, London North conducted a proactive operation to clamp down on antisocial behaviour and support rail staff to carry out their work without being assaulted.

Operation Lockstock, which was rolled-out across the Force from November 2009 to early-January 2010, saw uniformed officers across the Area engage and distribute Christmas cards to rail staff and postcards to passengers, driving home the message, *'Don't forget we'll be around this Christmas'*.

Op Lockstock has been running for four years now and was established because we recognised that with more people out and about and using the railways, the fear of assault rises for rail staff.

The majority of passengers using the railway are in good spirits over the Christmas and New Year period but there is the potential for frontline staff to bear the brunt of customers' short-temper. This can typically escalate from low-level crime, like being rude to a barrier guard.

Op Lockstock was initiated to reduce these incidents by educating frontline staff in conflict management and increasing the confidence of rail staff in the BTP and the Criminal Justice System.

Several locations, including St Pancras International, also used Bluetooth technology in respect of messaging customers around the need

to 'Respect' both the railway station and front-line staff.

In addition, if someone did assault a member of staff, officers used a positive arrest policy, and made sure the Criminal Justice System were provided with the necessary evidence in a timely manner to make sure offenders were promptly dealt with.

At the end of this year's operation, London North recorded a 59 per cent detection rate when offences were passed onto BTP on the same day or day after the offence.

In my eyes this year's operation was a great success and staff that feel better protected will in-turn provide a better service to rail passengers.

And in the New Year, we hosted the first Passenger Forum meeting at BTP Force Headquarters, in Camden. This was the first-ever event of this nature within BTP and I am extremely pleased with the turn-out and feedback we got from those that attended.

As the Area Commander for London North, I want to hear what our Forum members and other passengers think about crime and security on the railways. BTP is there to protect rail passengers and staff and I see meetings like the one in January, regular newsletters and receiving your feedback as an integral part in trying to reduce crime and consequently improve security and safety on the railways.

All members should feel free to email in their thoughts and opinions about safety and security, which I can assure you will be passed directly to me.

**Area Commander London North  
Chief Superintendent Mark Newton**

## London North hosts first Passenger Forum meeting



Area Commander Mark Newton fields some questions

This month saw Area Commander, Chief Superintendent Mark Newton, host for the first time a London North Passenger Forum meeting.

The Forum was officially established last October and was created to give rail passengers the opportunity to discuss with BTP the issues that matter to them most when it comes to crime and security on the railways.

"I established the London North Passenger Forum because I wanted to engage with members of the public in an informal setting," said Chief Supt Newton.

"On the night there were some lively and engaging discussions and I have certainly been given some food for thought."

On Thursday 21 January, Forum members were invited to BTP Force Headquarters, in Camden, to listen to presentations from some of the Area's officers and give feedback on BTP.

Those that attended were given a talk by Chairman of the Forum, Chief Supt Newton, who gave an introduction on BTP, London North and

what the Passenger Forum is trying to achieve.

Also on the night, Forum members heard from Sergeant Matt Ashby, who presented Neighbourhood Policing Team tactics on Area, as well as Detective Inspector Terry Pearce, who outlined the work of the detective teams and how they make an impact on crime and security on the railways.



Detective Inspector Terry Pearce talks about the Legrave investigation

Chief Supt Newton said that the evening was a great success and that he hopes to organise more Forum meetings in the future.

Chief Supt Newton added: "Making sure that people feel safe on the railways is a key priority for me and tonight gave me the opportunity to hear what the public think about crime and security on the railways."



Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant, Matt Ashby

## Forum meeting feedback

At the first ever Passenger Forum meeting on Thursday 21 January, many issues were raised on the night.

This section will summarise some of the important issues that were raised on the night

In some cases, the questions asked were very in-depth and needed to be explored. We will cover these issues in the section below with more considered responses.

### **Q: What is the deal around extra funding from TOCs, as they say they pay more for certain policing?**

The BTP, and by extension London North, is funded by the Train Operating Companies (TOCs), Network Rail and Transport for London, who are required to do so as part of their franchise agreements with the Department for Transport. Funding has increased in the past few years and has allowed the Force to strengthen its response when dealing with counter-terrorism and major crime investigations.

In addition to the agreed funding, BTP London North's industry partners provide additional funding in support of new initiatives, such as the FCC dedicated police team that patrols north and south of the Thames.

### **Q: How much pressure do East Coast Mainline - and other TOCs in general - put on you to keep the line moving?**

BTP and London North have a duty to investigate crime and manage incidents to the satisfaction of the courts, coroners officer, local community and importantly, the victims involved

At London North, we pride ourselves on our approach and how we effect minimal disruption to both passengers and the TOCs. For example, when you look at our response to fatalities on the railways compared to road traffic incidents; we clear the scene and get the trains moving in an average of 78 minutes. This starts when receive the call, through to running the line again.

Despite the pressures of resuming the train service, our officers are always aware of the need to preserve the dignity of the deceased, whilst preserving evidence and serving the requirements of the coroner's office.

### **Q: Is there someone monitoring CCTV 24/7?**

CCTV cameras are extremely vital in the fight against crime on the railways. They are an essential tool and help to contribute to London North's high detection rates. However, BTP do not own or operate CCTV cameras. The costs are covered by the TOCs and Network Rail.

Most of the stations and trains on our patch have CCTV but it is nearly impossible for someone to monitor the screens all of the time. Initiatives such as the FCC-sponsored CCTV centre in Edmonton have helped to detect offences but for this system to be replicated on other lines, it is down to the agreements between the TOCs and the DfT.

## LN Inside News

London North produces a monthly newsletter that we send out to our industry partners, police officers and staff.

The latest edition is available and to view, click [here](#).

**Questions or comments? Call Steven Fifer, Forum Secretary, on 0207 391 8279 or email him at [steven.fifer@btp.pnn.police.uk](mailto:steven.fifer@btp.pnn.police.uk)**