

JOURNEY COUNT AUDIT SURVEYS A COST EFFECTIVE APPROACH



Start by assuming no problems exist (“Green” status) but carry out random, on-bus counts and compare with ETM (or other) data to identify problems

Sufficient surveys should be carried out within a 1-month period to establish whether or not there is a journey recording issue with any operator receiving more than £10,000 per annum from the scheme (£10,000 should be interpreted sensibly). The survey checks at this stage do not need to be statistically significant, they are simply indicative.

The survey results should be compared with operator data for the same journeys surveyed and for those same journeys one week before and one week after. Care must be taken to ensure that any external factors (weather, events, holidays, etc) do not influence the week before/week after comparison. This analysis must be completed within 4 weeks of the end of the month in which the surveys for a given operator were completed.

If this analysis shows reasonable accuracy or under-counting, the operator checklist flag should be set to “Green”. No further surveys should be undertaken for this operator until the next survey cycle (6 months?).

If the analysis suggests an over-counting problem, the operator checklist flag should be set to “Amber”.

If problems are found (“Amber” status), a more intensive programme of repeat checks must be undertaken to establish if the problem is recurrent over a period of time

These checks must be carried out as soon as possible after the initial, random checks.

The analysis process will be the same but sampling of the operator must be such that statistically significant results are obtained which demonstrate that the problem persists over a 2-month period (see the commitment in the Arrangements for Reimbursement).

If these further checks show that there is an over-counting issue for the operator concerned over a 2-month period, the operator checklist flag should be set to “Red”

If the problem is recurrent (“Red” status), undertake covert and/or other checks and establish a statistically significant set of results to discuss with the operator

The surveys will need to be tailored to the operator and the circumstances. Any such surveys must be agreed with the Client Authority (and TCAs) in advance as they will be contentious and will also lead to additional work charges.

If the results confirm a systemic problem, the operator should first of all be encouraged to take management action or, if he feels he cannot, is asked to accept a factoring of his journey data, based upon the survey results.

Other Information to be collected as a second priority

The count checks are the absolute priority and no other survey activity should detract from this.

However, it will be useful to undertake a number of sample interviews to establish the relative incidence of trips being made by local passholders (ie those from the area in question or neighbouring authority areas) and visitors (ie those from further afield). It would also be useful in these cases to obtain trip purpose, origin and destination information from which journey values can be derived.