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The work of Welsh Government funded Community Support Officers

Appendix G - British Transport Police in Wales Force Area Report

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1 Introduction

This Force Area Report explores both the process of implementation and impacts associated with the Welsh Government's programme to fund additional Community Support Officers (CSOs) within the British Transport Police (BTP) in Wales.

Because the BTP in Wales operates as a sub-division of a UK-wide force, analysis at the 'force' level was considered to be sufficient to explore the detail of policy implementation and the equivalent of a Case Study Area (CSA) within the Wales-only forces. The research design did not, therefore, include selection of a CSA at a smaller geography within the force for focused investigation; instead it was intended to obtain a high level overview of policy implementation and outcomes within the BTP in Wales at the national level.

Some difficulties were encountered in obtaining access to the BTP in Wales in the early stages of the study and, when limited access was eventually obtained, no formal data sharing agreement was obtained. This, together with a lack of publicly available information on BTP and CSOs specific to Wales, means that there is less data presented here than for the other Welsh forces.

The analyses bring together different sources of data to report where possible on the underlying recruitment, deployment and activities of Community Support Officers (CSOs) within the rail network of Wales.

Empirical qualitative data was obtained from a single interview with a member of the senior management team of BTP Wales and the report includes reference to administrative data obtained from reports from BTP to Welsh Government's Public Transport Division over the time period of additional CSO investment under this policy.

Public perception data from the National Rail Passenger Survey (NRPS) is used for Arriva Trains Wales services to consider how far we can infer that there has been change in public opinion coinciding with the period of Welsh Government investment. However, as this survey does not ask the public directly about CSOs, it is not possible to attribute any change directly to their activities or presence on the rail network.

This report, together with those for the four Welsh police forces, is presented as an appendix to the research project's final report¹ wherein data are brought together for analysis and discussion at an All-Wales level

1.1 About the British Transport Police in Wales

The British Transport Police (BTP) is Great Britain's national police force for the railways, providing a service to rail operators, their staff and passengers across the country. Wales is managed as a sub-division of the force and its Neighbourhood Policing function currently operates under a tripartite funding arrangement between BTP, the Welsh Government's Public Transport Division and Arriva Trains Wales established in 2006. Three Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs) are based at key stations as well as individual officers at other locations, all of whom report into a single Neighbourhood Policing Inspector based in Cardiff.

The policing plan produced by the British Transport Police Authority² for 2013/14 cites the Wales and Western area as increasing officer numbers by ten through new recruitment. It lists 39 PCSOs in post at NPT Wales.

Performance headlines over the last year for Wales & Western Area are:

- 7 percent reduction in Crime.
- Live Cable Theft down 43 percent.
- 10 percent reduction in Violence, Sexual & Robbery Offences.
- 11 percent increase in offenders dealt with for Anti-Social Behaviour.

Community Support Officers working for the BTP patrol the railway alongside police officers. Unlike their counterparts in Welsh forces, however, BTP CSOs have specific powers under railway byelaws.³ CSOs also have the power to deal with issues that do not always require the presence of a Police Officer, such as confiscating alcohol or tobacco from young people, enforcing cordon areas and detaining or ejecting suspects in certain situations.

¹ Final Report: 'The work of Welsh Government-funded Community Support Officers', Universities' Police Science Institute, February 2015 (ISBN 978-1-4734-2962-8).

² <http://btpa.police.uk/livesite/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/BTPA-National-and-Area-Policing-Plan-2013-14.pdf>

³ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/4202/railway-byelaws.pdf

1.2 The Introduction of Welsh Government funded CSOs to the British Transport Police in Wales

Figure 1.2 shows that nationally deployment of the Welsh Government funded CSOs (WG-CSOs) began in January 2012 and the full complement of 500 were recruited by October 2013. The timing of this process varied markedly between Welsh forces. BTP was one of the last to begin deployment in July 2012 and it took four months to complete.

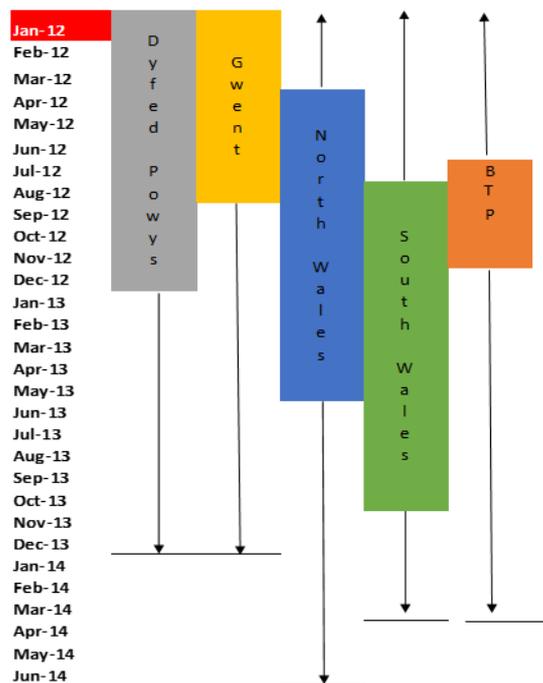


Figure 1.1 The Phased Deployment of Welsh Government-funded Community Support Officers across Wales

The available data on WG-CSOs at BTP in Wales are grouped according to whether they seek to address questions of Implementation or Impact around the work of CSOs.

Implementation: How was the additional CSO resource integrated and used?

- Who are the new CSOs?
- Where are they deployed and why?
- What are they doing?

For BTP, these questions are addressed using available administrative data and an in-depth interview with a senior member of the management team for Wales.

Impact: What changed as a result of this extra resource?

To assess any change over the appraisal period that may be attributable to the Welsh Government investment in additional CSOs on the rail network of Wales, the following are reported on:

- Publicly available statistics from BTP on crimes reported on trains or at stations in Wales during this time.
- Public perceptions and trends around personal security and awareness of BTP during this time from the National Rail Passenger survey⁴.

⁴ Analysis was based on open source tables, not raw data and the survey does not ask passengers directly about CSOs.

2 Key Findings

2.1 Who are the British Transport Police WG-CSOs in Wales?

This question was addressed by the analysis of administrative data in the form of monthly monitoring returns provided by the Welsh Government.

2.1.1 Recruitment

The BTP in Wales were allocated 18 WG-CSO posts at the commencement of the project. Recruitment began in the second quarter of 2012 based on general selection and force recruitment procedures. The BTP CSO role profile⁵ states the main purpose of the role to be:

‘To patrol area for which responsible, working in partnership with the community, railway companies and other agencies to ensure railway community safety and crime reduction and provide a visible, accessible and familiar community presence’

It was intended that all 18 posts would be filled and new officers trained in one intake. As it was, 17 posts were filled and training commenced in May 2012 with those officers deployed in July 2012. The remaining vacant post was filled that September and the officer deployed, after training, in November 2012⁶.

2.1.2 Demographics

The WG-CSOs within BTP in Wales are heavily male dominated. Of the 18 WG-CSOs recruited by the BTP in Wales, 17 were male and one female. None were from a minority ethnic background⁷.

⁵ British Transport Police Neighbourhood Policing Welsh Sector: Report to the Welsh Government Public Transport Division, March 2014. Appendix B: BTP Community Support Officer Role Profile.

⁶ Welsh Government Funded Community Support Officers Annual Report 2012-2013.

⁷ CSO Monitoring Report: Position as at 30th April 2013.

2.1.3 Churn

In common with the terrestrial Welsh forces, BTP policy is to recruit police officers only from the CSO pool. Since the beginning of the tripartite funding arrangement in 2006, nine CSOs who commenced their service within the sub-division have successfully moved on to become warranted officers, six retained within BTP Wales and three within other forces⁸. Senior management acknowledge that the strategy of recruiting officers from amongst good CSOs is a successful one in terms of obtaining quality police officers, it does leave a turnover issue to be addressed;

'We're recruiting them, training them, were liking what we see and then of course were able to cherry pick the best ones to become the cops of the future....[so] we're the ones who have created the situation ... we've got to accept that quick turnover and that big turnover'
[SMT6]

Unlike the other forces however, BTP CSOs are also inclined to move onto other roles with partnership organisations, most notably the train operators:

'Train companies are recruiting, train drivers are better paid jobs than PCSOs, because regrettably we've lost some good ones to become train drivers because there's such a massive hike in pay and no career path in the PCSO world. We've lost two who have doubled their wage overnight.'
[SMT6]

Turnover among the additional WG-CSO cohort, whilst slow to start with, has now begun to materialise with three lost to this route since July 2014⁹.

2.2 Where are the British Transport Police WG-CSOs in Wales?

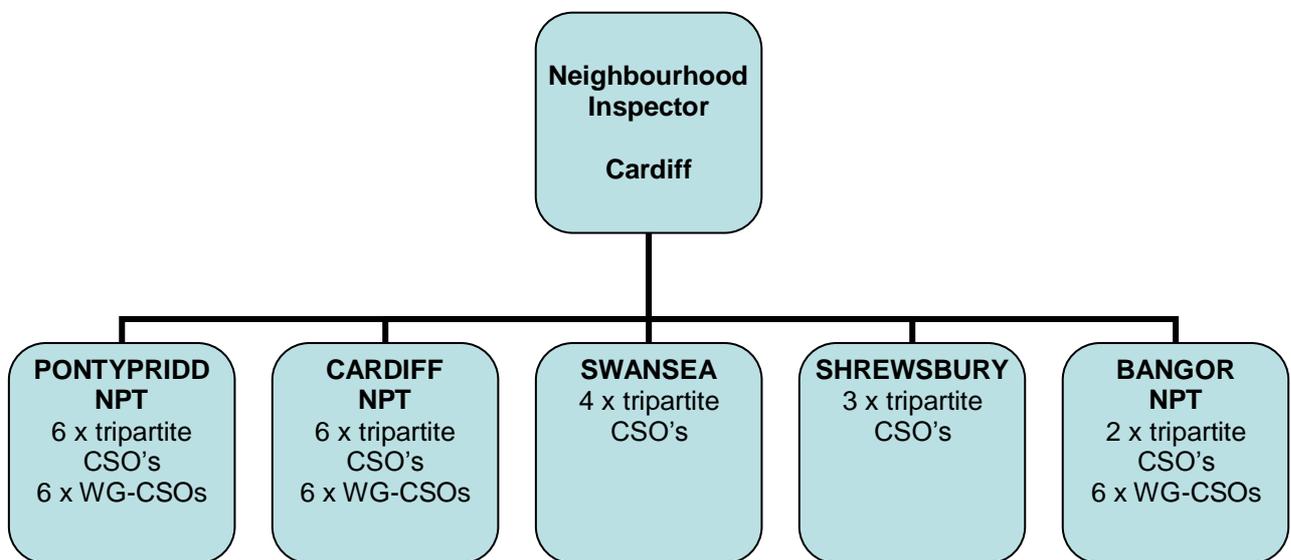
This question was addressed by the analysis of administrative data in the form of monthly monitoring returns provided by the Welsh Government and qualitative data derived from one in depth interview with senior management.

⁸ British Transport Police Neighbourhood Policing Welsh Sector: Report to the Welsh Government Public Transport Division, March 2014.

⁹ CSO Monitoring Report: Position as at 31st July 2014.

The 18 WG-CSO posts allocated to BTP Wales were initially divided equally between and deployed at station bases in Aberdare, Rhymney and Conwy¹⁰. With subsequent re-organisation of neighbourhood policing staff into three NPTs, officers are now based at Cardiff Central (6), Pontypridd (6) and Bangor (6) stations. The six posts based in Cardiff and five of the six based at Pontypridd cover Communities First areas in the region.

There was a clear strategic plan to keep the new officers deployed together as much as possible in order to better evidence the impact they had. The force in Wales currently has 14 BTP-funded PCSOs and seven additional officers funded directly by the Welsh Government’s Public Transport Division, bringing the sub-division’s full CSO establishment to 39 (Figure 2.1).



Source: Adapted from British Transport Police Neighbourhood Policing Welsh Sector: Report to the Welsh Government Public Transport Division, March 2014.

Figure 2.1 Community Support Officer Deployment, British Transport Police in Wales

The nature of the large geographical areas covered by BTP CSOs is such that their deployment base is, however, just that, with train and station patrols occurring throughout the network. Initial deployment strategy centred on the busiest stations and lines with the most passenger numbers, although from the outset it was considered important to ensure that the additional resources were utilised to enhance visibility on the more distant, quieter lines and stations as a senior officer describes;

¹⁰ CSO Monitoring Report: Position as at 31st January 2013.

'All the valley lines, which are problematic... that's why they were heavily weighted on those lines to make sure we got better coverage from 8am until midnight and that there's a healthy number to cover more than one problem'

[SMT6]

2.3 What are the BTP WG-CSOs doing in Wales?

This section is based on an in-depth interview with a BTP senior manager.

The primary focus of the day-to-day activities for the BTP Neighbourhood Teams is visible patrol, both on trains and at stations throughout the network. Since the passengers they serve are a predominantly transient population, engagement in order to develop familiarity and longer term relationships with this group is not always viable but visibility and accessibility are key objectives for the team. The BTP's abstraction policy has a target for neighbourhood policing staff to spend at least 80% of their time deployed within their neighbourhoods, either patrolling the railways or delivering rail safety messages within the community which they are currently exceeding¹¹. Additional resources have allowed for a greater level of patrol activity than had previously been possible throughout the network which senior staff believe is being noticed by the public and train company staff:

'The level of visibility, without a shadow of a doubt...when we are talking about particular routes here for example to Cardiff to Ebbw Vale line, all train guards from Arriva Trains Wales hate that line, the feedback were getting is when the PCSOs get on the train we feel so much better. There's never a comment of when the PCs get on we feel better, it's always the PCSOs'

[SMT6]

As well as the travelling public, train operators' staff are considered a key community for BTP and the level of visible deterrent impacts upon their perceptions of safety at work. Because of the sometimes remote and enclosed locations in which they work, and in contrast to many of their counterparts within Home Office forces, BTP CSOs have the discretionary power of detention for up to 30 minutes and carry personal protection equipment and handcuffs. This fact has not escaped the public or train staff;

¹¹ British Transport Police Neighbourhood Policing Welsh Sector: Report to the Welsh Government Public Transport Division, March 2014.

'The PCSOs are not being seen by the train companies as a toothless tiger...that's why they are so complementary about our PCSOs'
[SMT6]

Engagement with the local communities through which the railways run is also seen as crucial to BTP in Wales. Working with young people in local schools, alongside warranted officers in Schools Liaison Officer roles, is now a key activity for CSOs involving diversionary interventions to prevent offending on the railways. In addition, the Neighbourhood Teams work closely with other local partners, including the other Welsh forces and local authorities to solve local problems. Regular Police and Communities Together (PACT) meetings involve both train staff and the travelling public and CSOs also attend local Home Office Force PACT meetings where problems affect the railways¹².

One recent example of collaborative working involved taking the lead in a multi-agency intervention to deal with a sensitive, culturally divisive dispute between groups of taxi drivers using ranks at Pontypridd station, as a senior officer described:

'It involved all manner of diversity issues, there were cultural issues... Cardiff based taxi drivers of various ethnic origins coming to Pontypridd ... local taxi drivers being very unwelcoming and racist. It was leading to big conflict, almost a gang culture going on up there ... escalating out of pathetic, school-yard proportions. Where they were congregating and having problems was actually on BTP jurisdiction outside Ponty railway station, but it did spill out into SWPs patch. But it was BTP who got together and, with a partnership approach, sat down, involved the independent advisory groups, bought in diversity lecturers and various other people from different groups to chat to everybody, mediate and resolve it. Nothing to do with the railway, nothing at all to do with trains - it was a community issue. But they thought, hang on, this community is going to spill onto our patch, albeit it's a piece of tarmac well away from the railway line, best somebody grips this. South Wales appeared to not be, so we will and they did'.

[SMT6]

Another project, working with Arriva Trains Wales staff, resulted in the development of a 'Buddy-Buddy' system for disabled passengers travelling on remote valleys lines:

¹² British Transport Police Neighbourhood Policing Welsh Sector: Report to the Welsh Government Public Transport Division, March 2014.

'[the CSO came] across many, many people traveling down the valleys railway lines struggling with wheelchair access, struggling to get from A to B and feeling isolated, vulnerable and alone. And even though they may have booked somebody to be down at [the] railway station to put a ramp down to get off the train, if when they turn up there's no member of staff there who do they ring? Who do they get hold of? So [the CSO] developed a buddy-buddy scheme with Arriva Trains... Developed it, it worked, the feedback is exceptional, both from Arriva Trains and the public. ... That should have come from the train company but [the CSO] took it upon himself... not his job really but he did it for the good of the community. Has that got anything to do with crime? Fear of crime? To a degree it has but that was a community issue that BTP have been seen to resolve when other people couldn't and that's down to the PCSOs.'

[SMT6]

2.4 Recorded Crime and Anti-social Behaviour

This section uses crime and ASB data recorded by BTP over the last two years (between November and October) at rail locations where there is a known presence of WG CSOs: Cardiff Central, Pontypridd and Bangor.

The data is reported as a rate per 100,000 passengers and the three stations differ in the number of passengers each year that use them: from 6,265,507 at Cardiff Central, to 317,354 at Bangor. Busy stations will inevitably generate more reported crime than those that are less busy.

Rate per 100,000 passengers	Cardiff Central			Pontypridd			Bangor		
	2012-13	2013-14	Change	2012-13	2013-14	Change	2012-13	2013-14	Change
Station Crime & ASB	4.2	3.69	-0.51	8.55	9.07	0.52	5.36	4.41	-0.95
Station ASB	1.45	1.48	0.03	2.09	1.4	-0.69	1.58	1.58	0
On-train Crime & ASB	1.23	1.29	0.06	1.92	0.87	-1.05	3.15	1.58	-1.57
On-train ASB	0.14	0.37	0.23	0.17	0	-0.17	0.32	0.32	0
Average no. passengers:	Pontypridd 573,406			Cardiff Central 6, 265,507			Bangor 317,354		

(Source: <http://crimemaps.btp.police.uk/data/>)

Table 2.1 Crime and ASB offences recorded on trains and reported at stations

The BTP crime categories are the same categories used by Home Office forces. For anti-social behaviour, non-notifiable public disorder offences are included in addition to the notifiable offences recorded by Home Office forces.

- Over the last year, Cardiff Central and Bangor stations have seen sizeable decreases in their rate of station crime and ASB but most, if not all, can be attributed to less crime.
- By contrast, an overall increase in station crime and ASB at Pontypridd belies a decrease in ASB at this location.

The rates for on-train crime and ASB are lower in each locale than at the station.

- Pontypridd has seen a decrease in the rate of on-train crime and ASB whilst in Bangor this decrease was for crime only.
- Slight increases are evident for Cardiff Central mainly concerning on-train anti-social behaviour.

In sum, the recorded crime and ASB data from BTP shows a number of changes over the last year that coincide with the deployment of extra CSOs. However, due to the absence of any control of baseline measure, it is not possible to directly attribute change to the additional CSO resource on these areas of the railway.

2.5 Public Perceptions

This section uses survey data available from the National Rail Passenger Survey (NRPS) to look at public perceptions. This survey is conducted by Passenger Focus, an independent rail watchdog, and is based on a representative sample of journeys by passengers on Arriva Train Wales services. These services cover routes in North Wales, South Wales and the valleys.

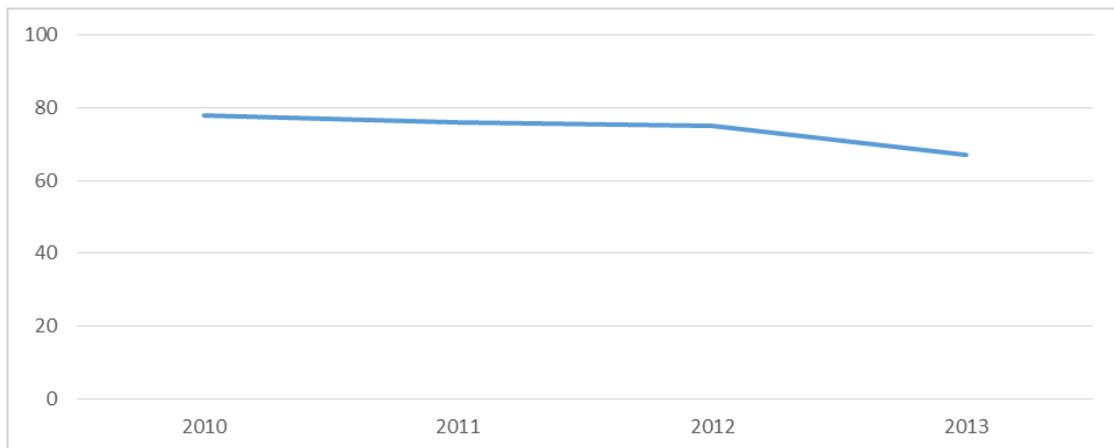
The data is weighted to help ensure the sample accurately represents passengers using each operator's service, in terms of the proportion of commuting, business and leisure journeys. The data is classed as Official Statistics by ONS.

Pre-tabulated open-access data from this survey is reported on, from Spring 2014 to Spring 2010¹³. Unfortunately the survey does not contain any questions about Community Support Officers so the reporting is limited to:

- Differences over time in public attitudes concerning safety ('personal security') and awareness of British Transport Police.
- A comparison between public attitudes for Arriva Trains Wales and all rail transport Services for the most recent data available (Spring 2014) and data that pre-dates the WG investment in CSOs on the railways.

2.5.1 NRPS Trends

This figure shows a decrease in public awareness of BTP between 2012 and 2013. In 2013, awareness among Arriva Trains Wales passengers was substantially lower than the national total (81 percent).



(Source: NRPS) Base: passengers on Arriva Trains Wales.

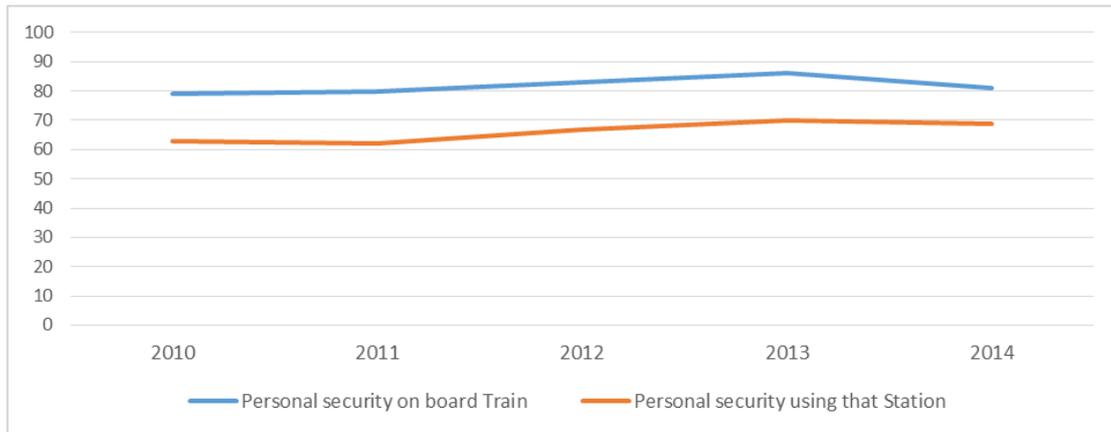
Figure 2.2 Public awareness of British Transport Police existence, 2010-13

Questions about personal security have been consistently used to assess passenger safety on board the train and using the railway station(s).

- At least 8 out of 10 passengers on Arriva Trains Wales feel personally secure on board the train. Train personal security has dipped over the last year, from a high of 86 percent in 2013.

¹³ <http://www.passengerfocus.org.uk/research/national-passenger-survey-introduction>

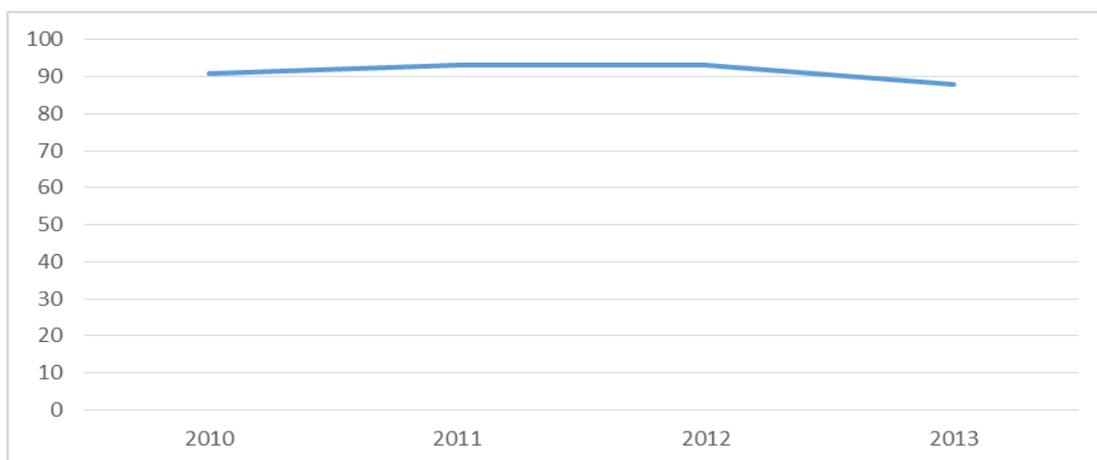
- Personal security at a station is lower than for the train but it has consistently risen over the last two years for Arriva Trains Wales passengers: from around 60 percent in 2010 to 70 percent in 2014.



(Source: NRPS) Base: passengers on Arriva Trains Wales.

Figure 2.3 Ratings of personal security as 'good', 2010-14

The majority of Arriva Trains Wales passengers have no concerns about their personal security that would prevent them from travelling by train. However, Figure 2.4 shows that this percentage has dipped slightly in 2013 compared to the previous three years of the survey. This personal security question was omitted in the 2014 survey, but in this year 81 percent of Arriva Trains Wales passengers felt 'satisfied' with their personal security on the train (a slight decrease on the previous year).



(Source: NRPS) Base: passengers on Arriva Trains Wales.

Figure 2.4 Percentage saying no personal security concerns have prevented train travel, 2010-13

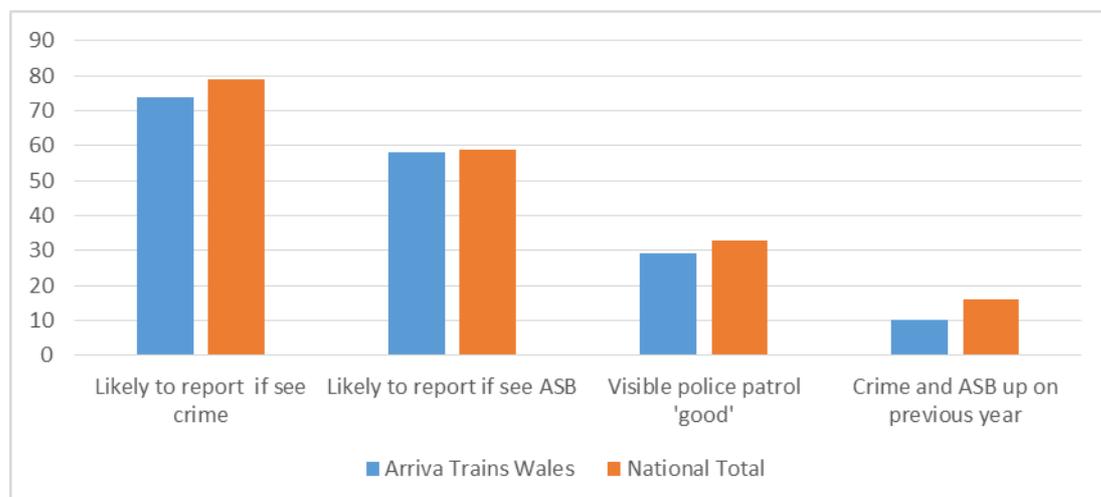
In 2013 and 2014, the survey asked if the behaviour of fellow passengers had caused any worry or discomfort during their journey. In both years this was 9 percent for Arriva Trains Wales, lower than the national total of 12 percent. However, among those who did feel worry or discomfort, passengers in Wales were much more likely to cite alcohol as the problem.

- Problems with people 'drinking or under the influence of alcohol' on trains are increasing in Wales: from 46 percent in 2013 to 63 percent in 2014.

2.5.2 Pre- Welsh Government Investment in British Transport Police

Data from the 2011 NRPP shows can provide a snapshot of rail user attitudes before the introduction of new additional CSOs (Figure 2.5).

- In 2011, only 1 in 10 travellers in Wales are of view that crime and ASB are increasing, less than for all services. This 2011 figure for Arriva Trains Wales is halved from the 2010 survey.
- There has been no change on the previous year in the percentage of Arriva Trains Wales passengers rating visible patrol as 'good'.

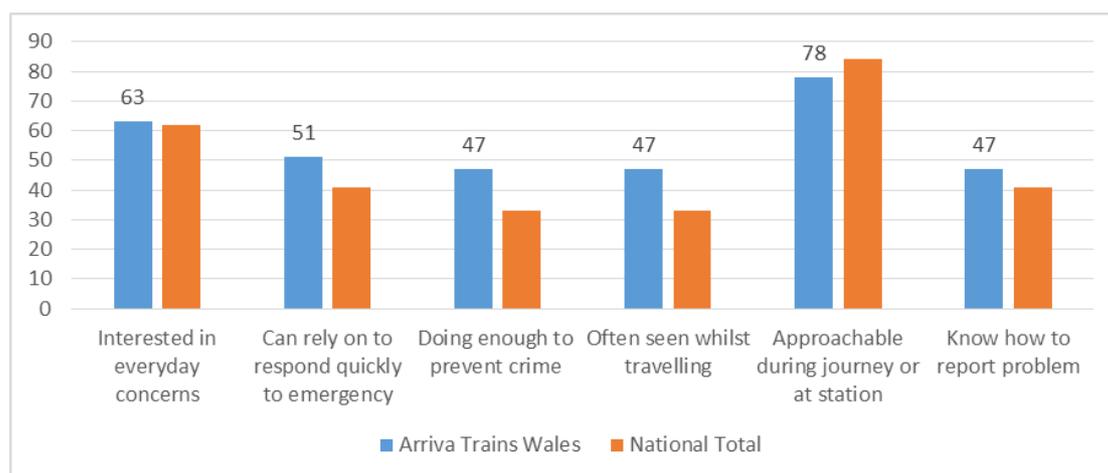


(Source: NRPS 2011)

Figure 2.5 Public attitudes pre-Welsh Government investment

2.5.3 Current Picture

Data from the 2014 NRPP shows can provide a snapshot of rail user attitudes following the deployment of new CSOs (Figure 2.6).



(Source: NRPS 2011)

Figure 2.6 Public attitudes post-Welsh Government investment

Compared to the national percentages for all rail services, Arriva Trains Wales passengers in 2014 were more likely to answer that police and rail security staff:

- would respond quickly in an emergency,
- were doing enough to prevent crime.

Passengers in Wales were also more likely to say they knew how to report a problem.

- BTP staff approachability was high among passengers using routes in Wales (78 percent) but was lower than the national percentage.

Although different questions were asked, comparison of two time periods suggests a positive change in visibility among the passenger sample for Arriva Trains Wales:

- In 2011, 30 percent said visible patrol was 'good' whilst in 2014, 47 percent said they often see police or railway security staff whilst travelling, more than the national total.

3 Conclusions

This appendix to the final report on the work of Welsh Government funded Community Support Officers has focused on the British Transport Police located in Wales.

Our consideration of British Transport Police and CSOs is fundamentally different from the Welsh Police Force Area reports for because:

- The design of this research did not include the selection of a Case Study Area of focused investigation for BTP in Wales; instead it was intended to obtain a high level overview of policy implementation and outcomes within the BTP in Wales at the national level.
- Some difficulties were encountered in obtaining access to the BTP in Wales in the early stages of the study and the available data are therefore more reliant on information and statistics in the public domain. These data exclude any specific questions relating to CSOs thereby limiting the inferences that can be drawn.
- The 'public' policed by BTP is a transient population of travellers and train company staff in 'neighbourhoods' that cover large geographical areas.
- BTP CSOs have additional powers and can look different to the public and train staff compared to CSOs working for terrestrial police forces.

Implementation - Integration and Differentiation: the unique tripartite funding arrangement for Neighbourhood Policing within BTP in Wales has been in place since the introduction of the CSO role in 2006. As such the force is very much used to integrating officers into a team regardless of their funding stream and the additional 18 CSOs provided under this policy are no exception, working alongside their colleagues with no operational differentiation.

Implementation – Demographics and Churn: in contrast to the other Welsh forces, the WG-CSO cohort within BTP is overwhelmingly male. The 'churn' of

CSOs is a common feature shared by Home Office force and BTP CSOs however. A number take advantage of the role as a route to become police officer or, unique to this context, become a train operator with its associated financial benefits and career structure.

Implementation – Activities and Function: highly visible patrol of the railways is a cornerstone of activity for BTP CSOs in Wales, and additional resources have allowed for an enhanced police presence on board trains and at railway stations, most notably in some of the more remote areas of the train network in Wales. Public engagement is also a significant part of the BTP CSO's role, which has a strong focus on community activities such as school visits, youth diversionary interventions and Police and Communities Together (PACT) meetings involving both train staff and the travelling public. Neighbourhood Teams work closely with other local partners, including the other Welsh forces and local authorities and there are examples of innovative problem solving activities that have been possible with increased resources.

Impact – Crime and ASB: from the data currently available for Wales, a number of positive changes have coincided with the deployment of Welsh Government funded CSOs on the rail lines, principally in Cardiff, Pontypridd and Bangor. There has been some reductions in the crime rate or ASB associated with stations or the journey itself over the last two years. It is not, however, possible to directly attribute these changes to the presence or activities of CSOs on the rail network.

Impact - Public Perceptions: there is an indication of greater policing visibility to the public using train routes in Wales from surveys of rail passengers. Although this change cannot be directly attributed to the presence or activities of CSOs, increased numbers of staff are likely to facilitate this kind of positive change. Public perceptions on emergency action, dealing with crime and knowing how to report that are more favourable for Arriva Trains Wales than the national total. However, perceived personal security on board train routes in Wales has dipped slightly in the last year and indications from the passenger survey suggest that, where such concerns exist, they are increasingly associated with public drinking and intoxication.

Acknowledgements

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