

September 2010

CONCESSIONARY BUS TRAVEL – BULLETIN #25

Reimbursement Consultation

On 16th September the Department for Transport launched a consultation on new concessionary travel reimbursement guidance and associated legislative changes, with a view to introducing changes to the reimbursement regime for schemes which begin in April 2011. The consultation is seeking views from stakeholders on the revised reimbursement guidance which adopts a more directive approach to reimbursement calculations, requiring fewer data inputs and assumptions but leaving some scope for local flexibility where appropriate. The proposed new guidance is based on extensive new research carried out by the Institute of Transport Studies at Leeds University and will help simplify the current system and enable more accurate reimbursement.

The consultation will run for a period of eight weeks and close on 11th November - please ensure that your response reaches us by that date at the latest. Given the need to publish the final guidance as soon as possible ahead of the 1st December deadline for authorities to publish their statutory schemes, respondents are encouraged to respond earlier than this if possible. We appreciate that the subject matter is complex and would therefore accept responses on two parts with respondents flagging up serious concerns/ issues as early as possible during the consultation period.

The consultation can be found at <http://www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/open/> and queries can be emailed to concessionaryfares@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Administrative Reform

We are in the process of compiling guidance for local authorities to assist in managing the change in responsibility for administering concessionary travel from lower tier to upper tier local authorities from April 2011. We plan to publish this guidance shortly.

From April 2011 funding for Concessionary Travel will be paid to upper tier local authorities to reflect the change in responsibilities.

On 28th July, Communities and Local Government published a consultation on the distribution of formula grant to local authorities in England, which includes proposals for how the transfer in responsibility for concessionary travel will be taken into account in authorities' funding allocations. The closing date for responses is 6th October 2010. For further information about this consultation please visit:

<http://www.local.communities.gov.uk/finance/1112/sumcon/index.htm> or email any questions to formulagrantsreview@communities.gsi.gov.uk

2010/11 Special Grant

Quarter 3 special grant allocations will be paid to Travel Concession Authorities on 19 November 2010.

Please refer to Bulletin 22, at the following [link](#), for details of the allocations as per the new Special Grant Report No 130.

Smart and Integrated Ticketing

DfT Ministers are keen to drive forward the roll-out of smart and integrated ticketing. Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Norman Baker MP, was clear in his support for smart ticketing in his recent speech to the Local Transport Today conference on 20th July 2010:

"I am keen to see the faster roll-out of smart ticketing across England, because that offers huge potential benefits for passengers, local authorities and operators."

The full text of his speech can be found at

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/press/speechesstatements/speeches/baker20100720>.

We will be writing to TCAs shortly seeking views about how the Department could support the ongoing roll-out of smart ticketing, for example through sharing best practice and developing framework contracts.

We also continue to support the ITSO organisation. The DfT Directors of ITSO, along with their Board colleagues, are currently working with the Chief Executive on the development of ITSO's business and financial plans for the future.

ITSO at Euro Bus Expo 2010 (2 - 4 November, NEC, Birmingham)

To help address the challenges that Transport Concessionary Authorities face in implementing smart integrated ticketing systems, ITSO Ltd, the organisation that maintains the national smart ticketing specification, has prepared a wide informational programme at the major bus industry show Euro Bus Expo 2010 that takes place on 2 - 4 November at the NEC, Birmingham.

ITSO Ltd is sponsoring the Seminar Theatre and has prepared a programme of lunch-time seminars titled Benefits of ITSO and Implementation of ITSO-Compliant Smart Ticketing which will take place at the Theatre on each day from 13:15 hrs – 13:45 hrs. Visitors can learn about the progress of the smart infrastructure roll out across the UK, and how ITSO can assist local authorities and transport operators to make implementation of their ticketing systems easier and more cost effective. They will also hear from those who have already implemented ITSO-compliant ticketing, e.g. NoWcard, Cheshire County Council and Transport Scotland.

A further ITSO seminar The way ahead: Delivering smart integrated ticketing across the UK (2 November, 14:30 hrs – 15:15 hrs) will feature presentations from Go-Ahead Group and the West Midlands Passenger Transport Executive, Centro.

Representatives from TCAs and passenger transport related services from all local authorities can go to the ITSO stand situated in the Seminar Theatre to learn more about the benefits of smart ticketing, discuss all aspects of smart system implementation and the role of ITSO Ltd. They can also provide support and assistance that you may require in preparing your plans for roll out.

If you would like to discuss your visit and plan an appointment time ahead of the show, please get in touch with Claudette Stephenson at ITSO on 0121 634 2751 or at relations@itso.org.uk. Alternatively, visit the ITSO stand on the day. If you are not able to come to the event and would like advice on smart ticketing, please contact ITSO at any time using the above details.

Detailed information about the Euro Bus Expo 2010 could be found at www.eurobusxpo.com.

Email Address for Concessionary Travel Enquiries

A number of people are still using the old CBT Bill email address to contact us. This email address has not been valid for some time now and we do not receive emails that are sent to this address. Please check that you are using the following email address to contact us: concessionaryfares@dft.gsi.gov.uk .

Concessionary Travel Online Community

If you would like to discuss the issues raised in this bulletin or anything to do with concessionary travel, with others working in this area then CTOC (the Concessionary Travel Online Community) is the place to go. The community is a forum for partners involved in delivering the concession, including local authorities and bus operators, to share best practice, ideas and practical tips. Follow the link below to sign up:

<http://www.communities.idea.gov.uk/c/844620/home.do>

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