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Committee                Sustainable Transport Committee

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## **2015/16 Public Transport Passenger Satisfaction Survey**

### **1. Purpose**

To present to the Sustainable Transport Committee the results of the Public Transport Passenger Satisfaction Survey (the 2015/16 Survey).

### **2. Background**

The New Zealand Transport Agency (the Transport Agency) requires annual surveying of public transport customers to determine the level of customer satisfaction.

The key questions and methodology are set by the Transport Agency to ensure results are comparable across regions and operators.

As with last year's survey, further questions were added to the 2015/2016 survey to better understand customer perception of the effectiveness of public transport information provided by Metlink and service operators.

Gravitas Research and Strategy Limited were commissioned to develop and conduct the survey in accordance with the Transport Agency's guidelines. Surveying took place between 3 May and 29 May, 2016. Gravitas staff members surveyed a total number of over 2,300 public transport customers on a total of 206 trips across train, bus, and harbour ferry services. The survey uses a 0-10 rating scale where 0 is extremely dissatisfied and 10 is extremely satisfied. A positive result is measured by the total responses in the 6-10 range, which in most cases, a majority of responses sat in that range.

A copy of the executive summary of the 2015/16 survey is in the appendix to this report, along with a single page infographic summarising the highlights of the 2015/16 Survey.

A copy of the full report is available on the Councillor portal. The full report plus the summary infographic will be made available online, in the Customer Services section of the Metlink website, following today's meeting.

### **3. General results**

#### **3.1 Highlights**

Customer response is extremely positive this year, overall satisfaction with the current trip reached new heights at **93%**, and there is an increase over last year for all modes and operators (up **4%**). By mode, levels of satisfaction with the journey increased significantly:

- Bus **94%** (up **5%**)
- Train **93%** (up **4%**)
- Harbour ferry **97%** (up **3%**)

Overall satisfaction with the bus stop, train station and ferry wharf:

- Bus **93%** (up **4%**)
- Train **94%** (up **4%**)
- Harbour ferry **92%** (down **1%**)

Other key results included:

- **89%** (up **3%**) saying they would recommend public transport to a friend or colleague
- **94%** (up **1%**) saying they find it easy to get on/off the vehicle
- **95%** (up **2%**) feel positive about their personal security during the trip
- **88%** (up **5%**) overall satisfaction with the public transport system
- **81%** (up **12%**) satisfaction with the services being on time.

Overall these are great results showcasing that Wellington's Metlink public transport network is achieving a very high standard of service provision.

Of course there are always areas that require an ongoing focus, many of which are considered "core drivers of satisfaction".

#### **3.2 Core drivers of satisfaction**

Gravitas has identified items among the survey topics that are considered to be "core drivers of satisfaction". These are areas of influence where small improvements in services have significant payoff in terms of customer satisfaction.

The core drivers of satisfaction closely reflect those of the previous year, and include:

- provision of information about service delays and disruptions
- the value for money of the fare
- the provision of shelter from the weather at the stop/station/wharf
- cleanliness
- how convenient it is to pay for public transport.

### 3.3 Responding to core drivers of satisfaction

Gravitas performed a gap analysis within each subcategory of the survey and identified not just the core drivers of satisfaction, but which core drivers are in most need of improvement. These areas of higher importance and lower performance are outlined below with notes on what steps the Council is taking, directly or indirectly, in response to these areas of concern.

#### 3.3.1 Information about service delays and disruptions (69% up 3%)

Though it saw an increase on the previous year, improving information about service delays and disruptions is a continuous priority for Council and remains an area that needs further development.

Initiatives include:

- Broadening the availability of Real Time Information to customers, through the roll out of Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) to Madge Coach Lines and to other operators who do not have the system
- Improved channels development, including:
  - the integration of the Tranz Metro information system into the Metlink website. At the time of the survey, information was held on both the TranzMetro and Metlink websites
  - sending SMS (text messaging) for rail customers and/or email information instantly to the 20,000 members of MyMetlink, (up from 1800 members three months ago)
- A new hybrid app (coming soon) to provide fast, effective and accurate information to customers on their smartphone (both android and iOS). This will offer customers the option to subscribe to push notifications for disruptions and delays
- A list of priorities for improving customer experience is being developed from the satisfaction survey
- Upcoming Public Transport Operating Model (PTOM) changes will see new bus operator contracts, allowing us to develop the Metlink website as single source for all transport updates in Wellington.

#### 3.3.2 Providing shelter from the weather (72% up 1%)

The public transport asset teams are making significant improvements in this area:

- Bus **67%** (up **3%**)
- Train **73%** (up **7%**)
- Harbour ferry **55%** (up **2%**)

Significant improvements will accompany the 2018 bus network changes. These programmes continue to be tied to the revisions of public transport asset management plans, and improving policies and processes to allocate spending and prioritise shelter renewals and improvements. A current recommendation is to allocate resources to the improvement of harbour ferry wharves at Eastbourne and Petone. This requirement is probably reflected relatively poorer result in satisfaction with harbour ferry wharf shelters.

### 3.3.3 Value for money for the fare (76% up 4%)

According to the 2015/16 survey, perceptions of value for money have increased on the previous year. Proposed improvements via the Integrated Fares and Ticketing Programme will be important to future proof the network and ensure the perception of fare-value is maintained and strengthened.

### 3.3.4 How convenient it is to pay for public transport (81% up 4%)

As noted in the previous section, the Integrated Fares and Ticketing Programme aims to improve the convenience of paying for fares and ensuring this convenience is replicated across modes. Some consolidation and simplification of ticketing products has already occurred in the transition to the new rail operating contract.

### 3.3.5 Cleanliness of the stop/station/wharf (86% up 7%)

New contracts with external partners for the cleanliness of stops/stations/wharves are in place and cleaners are regularly audited. The feedback that staff and contractors receive is positive. Strong contract incentives have improved contractor performance and customer satisfaction. This is an area that is undergoing continuous improvement to meet a higher and consistent standard across the network.

### 3.3.6 How often the service runs (81% up 3%)

While this is an area for improvement the percentage of satisfaction for the running of services improved, driven primarily by improvements in bus and ferry services while rail remained consistently strong. A number of service change projects, including the Northern Suburbs project and the Johnsonville rail timetable changes, have helped improve services and create better connected communities. The aim is to implement staggered improvements as the timeframe for the new network approaches.

## 4. Conclusions

- Satisfaction with current trip continues to rise, setting an enviably high standard
- A large number of customers would recommend the Metlink services
- Information channels are undergoing continuous improvement
- The work of GWRC and the contracted operators and service providers continues to have a positive impact on customer satisfaction.

## 5. **Communication**

The 2015/16 survey is expected to be of interest to the general public, public transport user groups, stakeholders and operators and the following action is being taken:

- A media release will be circulated to the usual media outlets
- An infographic will go on the Metlink and GWRC websites
- A full copy of the survey research report will go on the Metlink website
- An email will circulate out to 20,000 MyMetlink accounts informing public transport users of the results.

## 6. **The decision-making process and significance**

No decision is being sought in this report.

### 6.1 **Engagement**

A letter to operators, providing a link to, and informing them of, the completed 2015/16 Survey, will be sent following this meeting.

## 7. **Recommendations**

*That the Council:*

1. ***Receives the report.***
2. ***Notes the content of the report.***

Report approved by:

Wayne Hastie  
General Manager  
Public Transport

**Attachment 1** Executive Summary of 2014/15 Transport Passenger Satisfaction Survey

**Attachment 2** Summary infographic