



Public authority transport network benchmarking survey 2009/10

State of the market analysis

Briefing 11/62

November 2011

Introduction

The Public Authority Transport Network (PATN) is an e-enabled discussion forum made available to public sector operators who are members of the Freight Transport Association (FTA).

The PATN has a membership of over 900 individuals representing 428 unique organisations including Local Authorities, NHS Trusts, 'Blue Light' services and other public sector organizations.

FTA represents the transport interests of companies moving goods by road, rail, sea and air.

APSE (Association for Public Service Excellence) is a not for profit local government body working with over 300 councils throughout the UK, promoting excellence in public services. APSE Performance Networks is the largest voluntary public sector benchmarking service across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and covers 14 frontline service areas including transport operations and vehicle maintenance.

As part of the ongoing development of the PATN, as a management resource, the concept of online benchmarking was trialled successfully and this survey represents the 3rd annual exercise aimed at allowing members to share best practice and KPIs.

This survey is the first joint survey between the FTA and APSE. The aim of this partnership was to enable authorities who participated in the APSE Performance Networks benchmarking exercise not to have to input duplicate data into two separate surveys.

Aims of the survey

The survey has three key aims:

- To identify *best practice* for fleet management and vehicle maintenance.
- Results to demonstrate *value for money* based on strategic rather than operational costs
- Possible to complete the questionnaire within one hour and is an 'on-line' *desktop based* exercise which can be saved a re-visited if necessary

About the survey

The survey was issued in winter 2010 and related to the financial year 2009-10. Individual benchmarking results and a summary report were issued to participating authorities in April 2011. The survey asked various questions on the state of market for transport services including workload, recruitment and retention of staff, job evaluation, staff absence, apprentices and whether services are sold to other organisations. This briefing paper is a resume of these responses received to these questions.

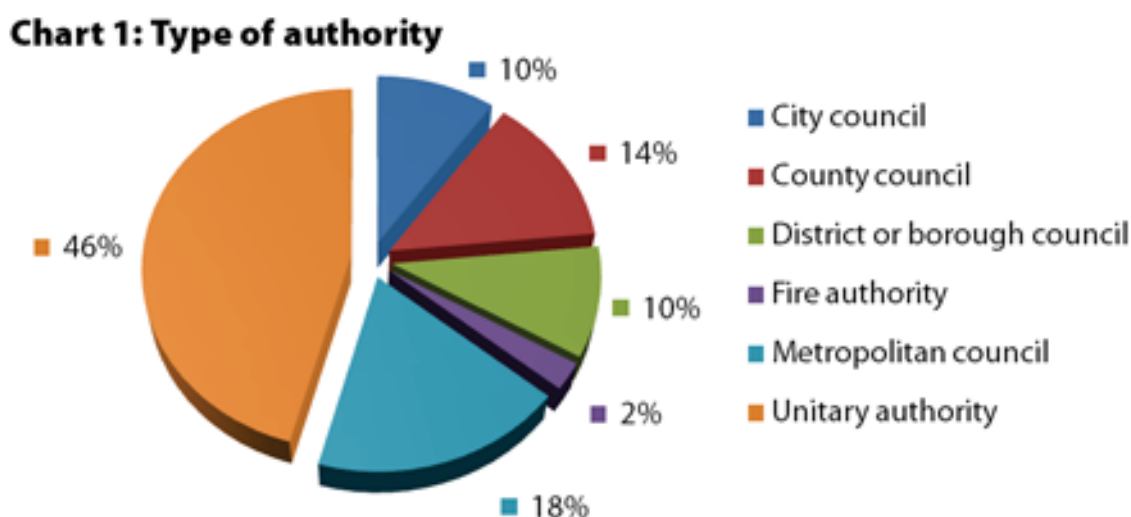
If your authority does not currently participate in this survey and would also like to receive benchmarking analysis for your authority for 2010-11, please contact djohns@apse.org.uk

Participation summary

The survey was sent to 428 organisations within the Public Authority Transport Network (PATN) and 472 organisations involved with APSE.

Initially the survey sought general information about the participants' authority. This included the type of authority they were from, where they are geographically situated within the United Kingdom, and what types of services they provide

The survey was completed by 81 authorities in total and these can be categorised into the following types.



Type of authority	Number of responses
City council	8
County council	11
District or borough council	8
Fire authority	2
Metropolitan council	15
Unitary authority	37
Total	81

Table 1: Type of authority

Chart 2: Geographical regions of participating authorities

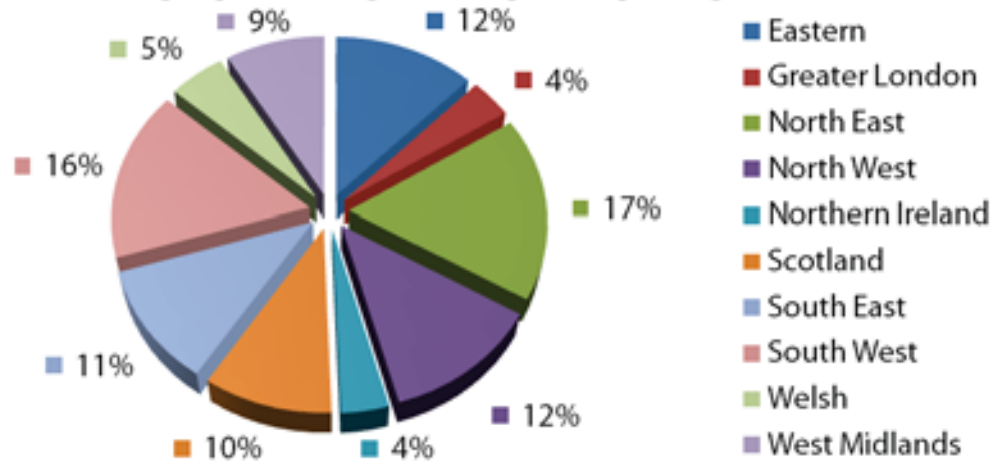
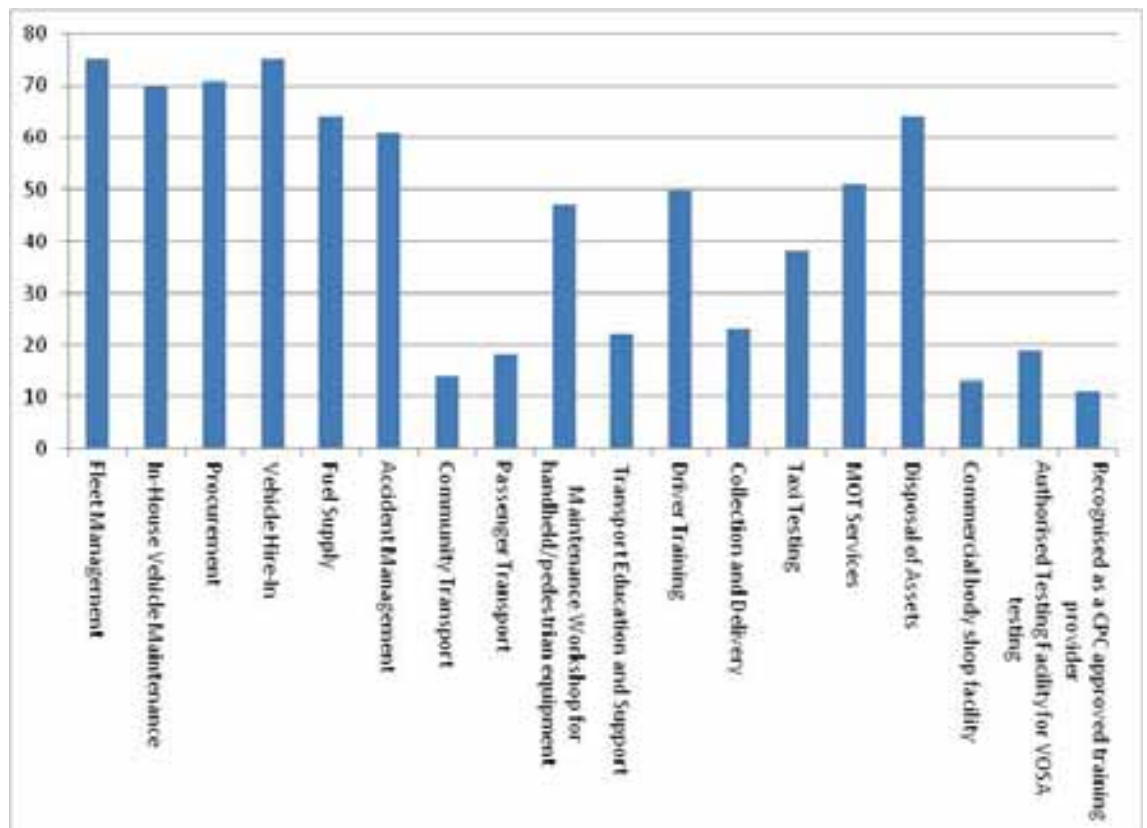


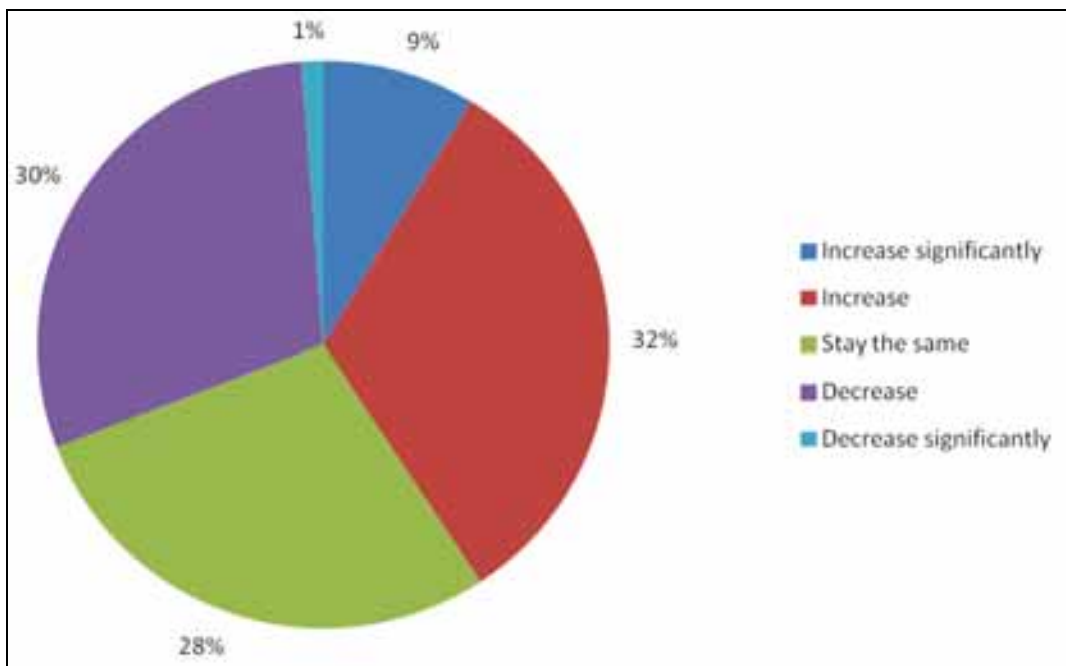
Chart 3; Types of services provided by participants



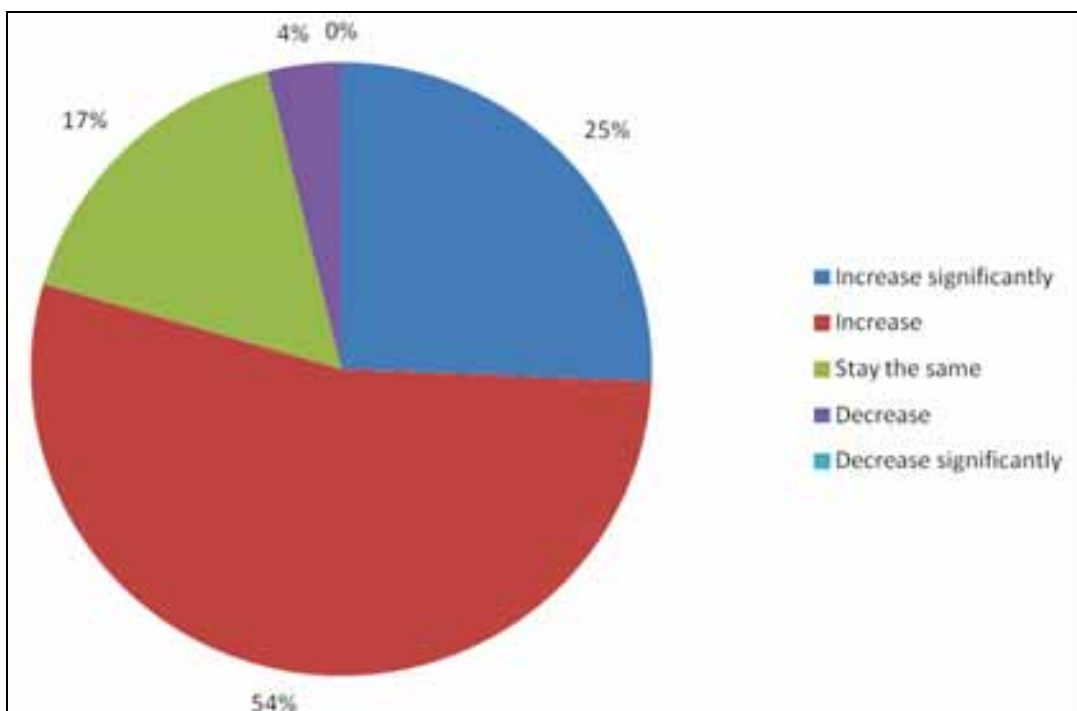
Results summary

a) Workload

The survey asked how authorities expect the workload of the transport section to change over the next 12 months and the responses were as follows:



Therefore, 41% expected the workload of the transport section to increase or increase significantly within the next 12 months. The survey also asked whether participants expected their personal workload to change over the next 12 months and the results to this question indicate that a greater number of participants (79%) thought that there would be an increase in their personal workload:



b) Expected changes to the transport service over the next 12 months

91% of respondents expect to remain in-house over the next 12 months. The survey asked how organisations expected the budget for transport to change over the next 12 months. 67% expected this to decrease, 22% expected this to stay the same and only 7% expected this to increase. The survey then explored this further and asked for growth areas and areas where work may decrease over the next 12 months and some of the responses are shown below.

Growth areas for transport services

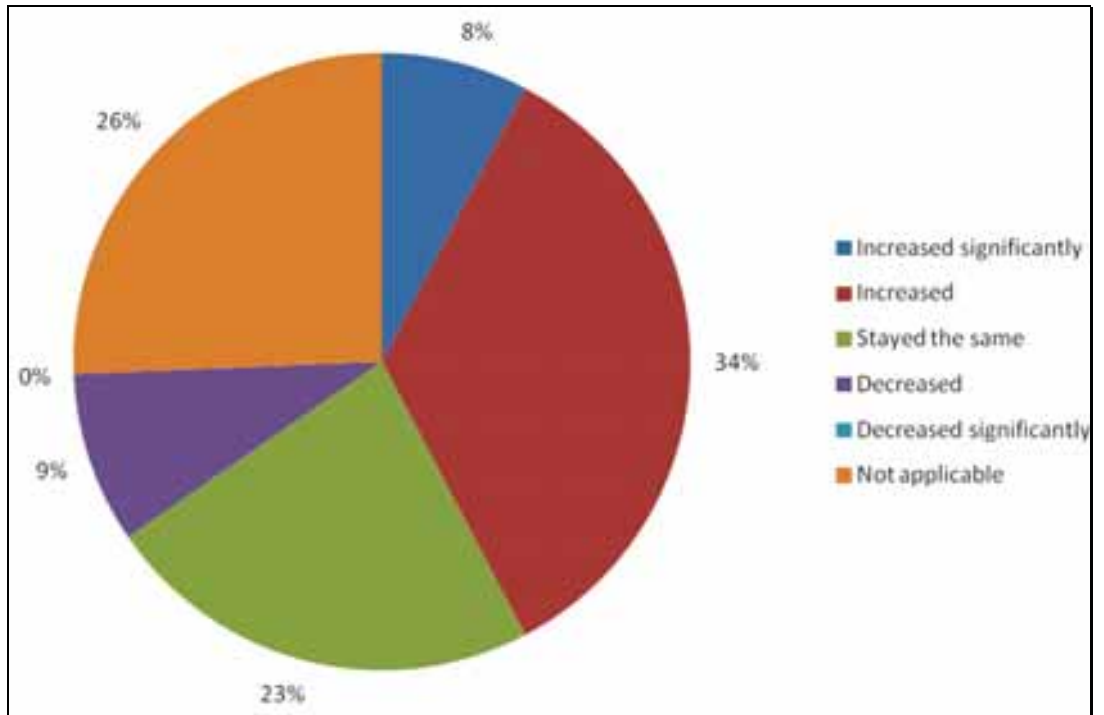
- Private and taxi MOT's and repairs
- Tachograph repairs
- Inspection and audit
- Corporate car pools and grey fleet
- Driver training
- Ageing fleet that will require more maintenance
- Improved compliance across the whole council
- Sharing working practices and services with neighbouring local authorities, public sector (NHS, fire, police) and private sector
- Selling services
- Passenger transport
- Greener vehicles
- 24/7 operations for waste services support and recycling collections
- Management data and cost analysis

Areas where work may decrease

- Number of vehicles/size of fleet
- Internal maintenance as users reduce their fleet in response to budget/service cuts
- External contracts with other organisations where budget pressures force them to reduce fleet size.
- Purchase of new vehicles and reviewing replacement policies
- Procurement role becoming more corporate
- Transport for children, as schools receive their own budgets
- Adults receiving direct payments and not requiring transport

c) Job evaluation

The survey found that 76% of organisations had completed job evaluation and for the majority of organisations (which this question applied to), this had resulted in wages increasing or staying the same:



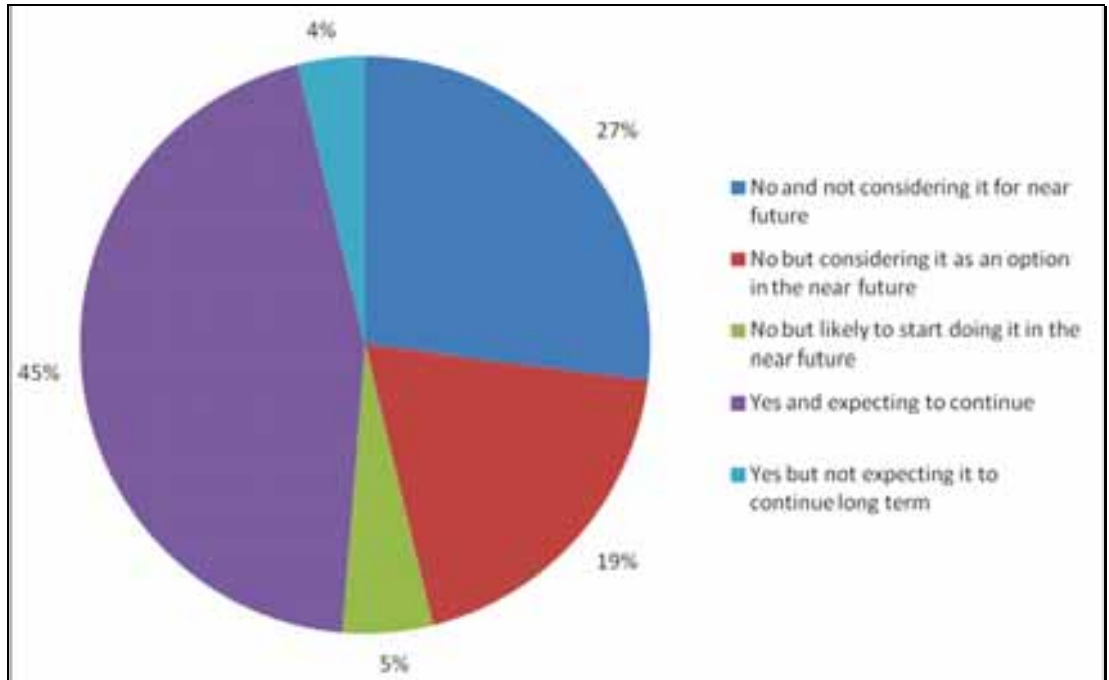
d) Staffing issues

The survey asked 'irrespective of any recruitment freezes your authority has in place, do you have trouble recruiting staff?'. 67% of respondents answered 'no' to this question. The majority of respondents (86%) did not have any trouble retaining trained staff as well.

77% of respondents thought that staff absence levels were at an acceptable level. Just over half of the respondents (51%) run an apprenticeship scheme.

e) Selling services outside of the local authority

45% of respondents currently sell their services outside of the local authority and expect this to continue. The breakdown of the responses was as follows:



Therefore, a further 24% of respondents are likely to start selling their services outside of the local authority or are considering it as an option in the near future.