

**Perceptions of crime 2010  
communications  
development**

**09048**

April 2010

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Research conducted by 2CV

# Contents



**Introduction**

**Reviewing the advertising concepts**

**Exploring other media ideas**

**Summary**



# Introduction



# Research objectives

- *To pre-test the creative approach amongst the key target audiences:*
  - *To check that the target market is motivated by the idea behind the campaign and whether knowing who to contact/presence of officers/knowledge that there are many safety initiatives in place is likely to provide reassurance.*
  - *To explore response to additional ideas / initiatives (Z-Cards and web concepts)*
  - *To provide guidance on development of the campaign*

# Methodology and sample

- Research was conducted amongst the core and diverse target audiences for the campaign across four London boroughs.
- All respondents were concerned about crime on public transport and this affected their travel behaviour

Groups	Gender	Age	Area
1	Female	16-19 years	Bexley
2	Female	20-24	Camden/ Southwark (viewed)
3	Mix	65 and older	Camden/ Southwark (viewed)
4	Mix	65 and older	Bexley

Triads	Gender	Age / school year	Area
1	Male	Year 8 / 12-13 yrs	Brent
2	Female	Year 9 / 13-14 yrs	Southwark
3	Male	Year 10 / 14-15 yrs	Bexley

Depths	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Area
1	Female	16-24	Black	Bexley
2	Male	24-35	Asian	Brent
3	Female	35-34	Asian	Bexley
4	Female	40-55	Black	Camden
5	Male	Over 65	Asian	Southwark

# Research Materials

- Respondents reviewed a number of different components of the campaign:
  - Print Adverts
    - 2 concepts: Safety in Numbers and 2,500
      - 2 executions for each concept
  - Radio Adverts
    - 2 concepts : Safety in Numbers and 2,500
  - Call To Action
    - 4 end-lines and 7 web call to action options
  - Z-Card concept
  - Web search concept
    - Text or map based search concepts

A large, blank billboard is mounted on the side of a multi-story building. The billboard is completely white and occupies a significant portion of the building's facade. The building itself is light-colored with several windows and air conditioning units. The sky is blue with some clouds, and there are green trees visible on the right side of the frame. A concrete barrier is visible in the foreground.

**Reviewing the advertising concepts**



# Overall response to the campaign

## ■ Key take out

- Overall the advertising was seen to be broadcasting the efforts of ‘the government’ (including TfL and The Police) to make the transport system safer, that TfL were doing a good job and that they are trying to scare criminals.

## ■ Consistent across all target audiences response to this proposition was mixed and there were three key responses (sometimes experienced concurrently):

- The predominant response was one of scepticism about the campaign overall feeling specific messages would make little difference to how they felt about crime on the transport network
- Others responded with increased feelings of concern / anxiety
- The least common response was feeling reassured by the increase in security on public transport

*“I feel reassured – they’re doing lots of different things to make it safer, frankly they need to.”*

Camden, 65+

*“The fact that there is so much trouble and they are going to employ that many officers worries me.”*

Bexley 65+

*“If there’s that many, where are they? People aren’t seeing the benefits.”*

20-24 Female, Southwark

*“What difference does it make to me? They’re not going to be on my bus are they“*

14-15 Brent

**The predominant response was one of scepticism.**

# Feelings of anxiety and scepticism come from reflection on personal experience

- Personal day to day experiences of safety, transport and crime come to mind when reviewing the ideas:

*“There’s been a stabbing, six rapes, and god knows how many muggings on the 29 bus. I’ve been mugged twice.”*

Camden, 65+

*“I will change at ‘safe stops’ when going home because there are one’s where I’ve had problems in the past.”* Camden, 20-24

*“The police won’t even go upstairs on the bus with the school children, they herd them upstairs and leave them to it, it is really worrying.”* Bexley, 65+

- Initiatives to increase infrastructural and police support, are welcomed, but confidence in effectiveness of the changes and actual personal benefit is low □

*“It doesn’t mean much to me to see an ad...seeing people on the bus would mean more”* Bexley 65+

*“CCTV is no use if you’re getting attacked, unless someone’s watching it and calling the police. The bus driver won’t even help.”*  
20-24 Female, Southwark

*“If they’re just talking about the pretend police it won’t make any difference, they don’t have any more power than you or me”*

16-19 Female, Brent

*“It is for when you are travelling to make you feel like you are not on your own. It feels like they are deceiving me.”* Camden, 20-24 Female

**First and foremost there is a need for personal experience to change in order to feel reassured**

# Fear is grounded in attitudes and day to day experience, and fear of low level crime and ASB

- Certain common themes widely acknowledged across all audiences:
  - School kids on top decks; adults and younger people intimidated alike
  - Bendy buses; concerns over fare evasion, a sense of lawlessness prevails
  - 'Rough' routes; specific to each area but well known
  - Late at night travel; fear of anti-social behaviour and crime



- Often fear of getting to and from transport as much of an issue as transport itself:
  - Locations that have higher crime rates
  - Poor street lighting
  - 'Hang out spots' for weirdoes / criminals

*"I'll walk my daughter to the tube and see how it feels, if there are junkies around we'll call her boyfriend and ask for a lift."*

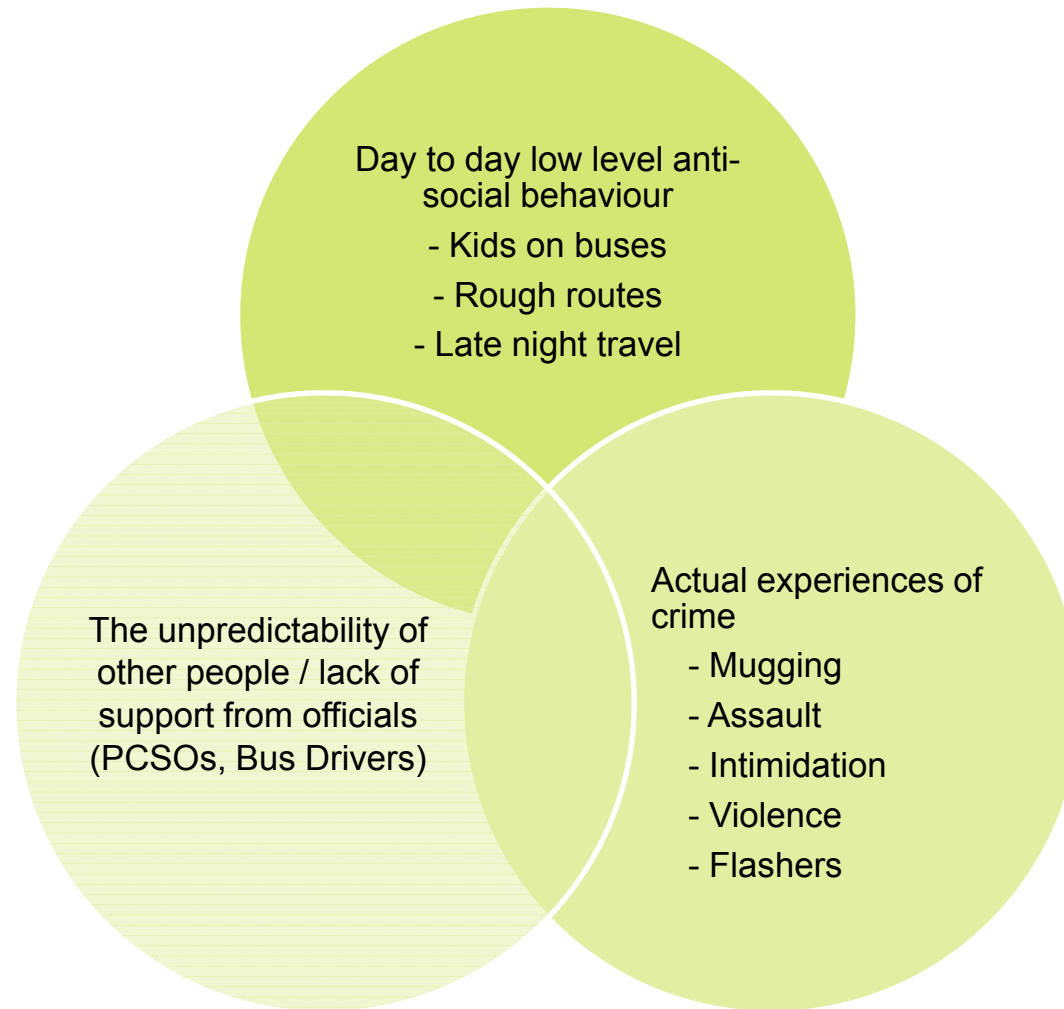
Camden, 45-55

*"The 'lower line' is awful, I'd never catch it"*

Bexley 65+

**Issues and hot-spots are thought to be common knowledge amongst locals and authorities.**

# Fear of crime is interlinked with other issues



**Many could recount actual experiences of crime on transport, which is reinforced on a day to day basis with ASB and unpredictable behaviour**

# Reviewing the two campaign ideas

Safety in Numbers /  
Safety Noticed

2,500

MONITORED HELP POINTS AT LONDON UNDERGROUND STATIONS  
600 REVENUE & ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR INSPECTORS ON THE NETWORK  
2,500 OFFICERS PATROLLING THE NETWORK  
1,500 Buses with CCTV  
8,500

There's safety in numbers

MAYOR OF LONDON

SAFETY NOTICED

The Metropolitan Police and 2,500 officers patrolling London's transport system. You might not have searched all our 8,500 buses from CCTV cameras or the 1,500 monitored help points at London Underground stations. That's why we're making these six pictures of the things we're doing to make your safety when travelling easier and better.

MAYOR OF LONDON

Over 2500 officers now patrol the network

MAYOR OF LONDON

Over 2500 officers now patrol the network

MAYOR OF LONDON

Safety in Numbers  
Radio

2,500  
Radio



# Attitudes to police underlies response to 2,500 concept



- There are significant underlying concerns amongst all audiences about the police and PCSOs although these feelings are most strong amongst younger audiences:

*"The problem is you have two responses to police: you feel like they're out to 'catch' you when you don't need them, and the only time you feel positive is when something bad is happening to you."*  
Southwark female 20-24

*"Seeing the ad makes me sad. When we were young and saw a police officer you gave them respect."*  
Bexley 65+

*"The standards have dropped, they used to have a height restriction for getting into the force, also the PCSOs have not helped matters.."*  
Bexley 65+

*"I know my local police who come around the estate, but the ones on public transport and the community officers don't do anything."* Camden 45-55

*"There's the Proper police and the Pretend police, they're probably talking about the Pretend police who have no powers and just walk around in pairs."*  
Bexley female 16-19



2,500  
Radio



**A campaign based solely on the number of officers brings negative feelings to the fore**

# PCSOs particularly have a bad reputation



- Across all ages and demographics there was a negative perception of PCSOs
  - They are seen to have little power / authority
  - They are not seen to be well trained
  - They detract from other police's role and responsibilities

*“Are those meant to be community police hats? Is that what they’re talking about? They’re useless.”*  
Camden, female, 20-24

*“They’re not going to be wardens are they....? They don’t do f\*\*\*ing anything.”*  
Southwark, 14-15 years

*“Community support officers are just a joke, they’ve got no more power than you or me.”*  
Bexley 65+

**Any overt reference to PCSOs would likely detract from a campaign**



## '2,500' figure can be read in different ways

- 2,500 can seem large to one person and small to another
- Particularly upon reflection, for those who consider it small, 2,500 is not enough:

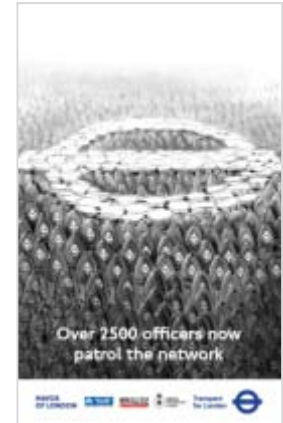
*"It looks impressive at first, but then you think that's over three shifts, over the whole network of the transport system, take off any time they have holidays / sick days, and if they're being good and doing paper work and you're probably only down to about 500 at any one time, which is not that many!"*

Bexley 65+

- There was positive response when this was read as 2,500 additional officers. But if response is positive, there is an expectation that they would experience tangible difference and see the new officers on their bus / tube

*"I take it this means the officers in addition to what they have already. If so that's brilliant it will feel much safer when I take the bus."*

Camden Female 20-24



2,500  
Radio



**If this number is interpreted positively, people expect to see a greater police presence on their journeys**



# Visually the campaign has both positive and negative connotations

## Positive

- A large force of police
- Strong and protective

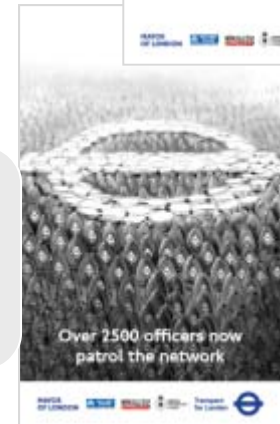
## Negative

- A swarming army
- Imposing and threatening force
- Connotations of crowded public transport

*"You would have to be so close to see that. From here, I can't see what it is...it looks like flowers in the fields."*  
Bexley 65+

*"It looks like Nazi Germany because it's like an army marching towards you"*  
Camden, 20-24, Female

*"This doesn't make me think of my safety on trains it just makes me think of overcrowding and less seats."*  
Southwark, 20-24, Female



Negative connotations also grounded in negative associations with police.

# 2,500 radio execution

2,500  
Radio



- Negative response to police, PCSOs and 2,500 figure re-emphasised and the ad therefore doesn't resonate
- Furthermore (and potentially due to this lack of resonance) the ad is also seen to be trying hard (and failing) to be inclusive:

*"It was all different cultures and nationalities. It represents everybody in London....They have to have that."*  
Bexley 65+

*"It seems to be trying too hard like.... It's a woman, a man, then multicultural."*  
Female, Southwark, 20-25

- The single-minded police message can also be criticised for not providing enough information:

*"It doesn't have any information really. But people don't want to go onto a website."*  
Female, Camden, 20-24

**Response to radio very consistent with response to print executions, attitude to police and 2,500 figure underlies response**

# Safety in Numbers / Safety Noticed fares better as a campaign idea

- The problem of crime on public transport is perceived to be multi-faceted and long-standing
- The Safety in Numbers campaign presents multiple solutions that resonate with customers to some degree
- Although side by side some of the numbers can look smaller



*"It talks about all kinds of things other than police...it isn't like they are out to get you"*  
London 20-24 Female

*"2,500 looked big initially but compared to 8,500 buses and however many tubes it's tiny!"*  
13-14, Brent

*"it's better than the other one, it feels like more would be on my bus. But it's not really helping me is it, I bet it wont make any difference"*  
Female, 16-19, Bexley

*"The CCTV stat is impressive, I didn't realise that every bus had that, that is quite reassuring"*  
London 20-24 Female

*"So is this all new? That would be very helpful"*  
Bexley, 65+

*"I just feel like it is because of the Olympics that they are doing this. They just know that what they have now is completely ludicrous."* London 20-24 Female

**A multi-faceted message is more reassuring on the whole. But there is still a feeling that it would need to be experienced on a personal level to have any impact**

# Whilst criticism is slower to come to the fore; as people process the ad, each message can be criticised in turn



## CCTV

- What if it's not working
- Lots of cameras on buses don't work at the moment
- Images on bus screens can be very pixilated
- Can seem like old news

## Help Points

- Good in principle but don't know how to use them
- Not as reassuring as a real person
- Only on underground



## Officers

- Lack of confidence in police and PCSOs

## Revenue inspectors

- Role is different to safety
- Making up for loss of conductor role
- Many people feel quite negative



Empirical evidence is still required to overcome concerns on public transport

# Safety in Numbers / Safety Noticed: The two print ideas received distinctive responses



Overall message is consistent between executions:

*There are many initiatives being undertaken by TfL to improve safety*

*"I would read this..I think it is funkier"* London 20-24 Female

*"Wow that's confusing, I would look at this and think it is something to do with the works. It wouldn't grab my attention."* Bexley 65+

*"It is not really engaging. It could ask "what do you think?" but instead it reads as if "if you can be bothered"* London 20-24 Female



- Visual and eye-catching
- Somewhat popular amongst younger audiences
- Older audiences (65+) struggled to read and de-code the message due to the layout
- Presentations of numbers in this format can be overwhelming and misinterpreted

- Does not stand out
- Reflects some interesting facets of customer attitudes' to information on safety:
  - Information on safety is not actively consumed / sought out
  - They feel the responsibility is on TfL to *push* info to customers
  - This ad feels like it's putting safety into the small print

**Safety Noticed was seen to place too much responsibility on the customer to seek out information**

# The endline *Safety in Numbers* can be misconstrued

## There's safety in numbers

*"If you saw that when you were the only one on the train with a weirdo, you're on your own then and there's no safety in numbers"*  
Bexley, 16-19, Female

*"It just makes you think of being squished in at peak hour and how horrible that is"*  
Camden, 45-55

*"That's the problem with public transport, there's either too many or too few people, there's an ideal balance somewhere"*  
Southwark, 65+

- Response to the line is reflected upon in the context of past actual, or future anticipated, personal experience
  - Safety in numbers is a delicate balance between too many people and too few and based in personal experience on a journey by journey basis
  - There are times when there are too many people and also too few
  - The ads are clearly understood but cannot be relied upon to deliver 'the numbers' as and where they are needed
  - Can result in respondents feeling more vulnerable / unsafe as a result
  - Mention of numbers can accentuate the fact that there is no phone number provided

**Whilst positive associations are made,  
there are potential risks in using this line**

# Safety in Numbers radio

## *Safety in Numbers Radio*



- Overall radio ad is categorised as a public service announcement style ad and quite well received :
  - Improvements being made to the system
  - Matter of fact tone
  - Seen as TfL taking responsibility for safety
  
- Some criticisms noted where the ad tried to seek customer engagement:
  - Do not want to visit a website / have responsibility to do anything proactive
  - A safe network is not the customer's responsibility

**Opportunities for improvement exist**

# Overall response: There is a clear distinction between personal and system safety

## Personal safety

- Being streetwise
- Using intuition / safety techniques
- Knowing the risks / your area

→ *Personal responsibility to change*

## Government / System safety

- Infrastructural faults and cultural issues
- Extends beyond transport system to London in general
- Dangerous locations / areas

→ *System responsibility to change*

**The system is expected to be responsible for a constant review / update process, the campaign messages are accepted but not surprising**



# Overall response: no engagement with call to action



*"We want to see these things...we don't want to read about them."*  
Bexley 65+

*"Why would I go to a website, I just feel they're trying to push it back onto me, why can't they have a freephone number."*  
Southwark, 20-24, female

- It is not perceived to be the user's responsibility to find out more
- They want to experience improved safety and security not read about it
- There is no interest in going to a website
- Local officers become very important when present at the point of transport, but again are not seen as relevant on the website
- Way of potentially engaging the audience it is to use as a broadcast message detailing the initiatives
  - *e.g. We've made the transport network safer*

**it would seem that desired campaign is more broadcast than engagement**

# Overall preference for URL language

- Overall there was little interest in visiting a website and therefore response to Call to Actions was somewhat spurious
- There was an equal split between preference for Search vs URL
  - Search feels more memorable / accessible for some
  - URL more clear that it is 'internet' based information (rather than local directory)
- Some older people were not confident with the internet and could feel excluded by the campaign only referencing web based information
- On the whole there was a preference for Search / URLs that referred to Safety and Safer Travel over 'Security' which was more associated with terrorism
- The most preferred options were therefore:
  - Safer Travel
  - Travelsafe



**Other Media**







# Z-Cards overall response

- Overall response was positive to the concept of Z-cards as it contained useful information on maps / travel tools.
- Safety and FoC information was seen as a secondary benefit of the tool, information on Cabwise was seen as the biggest bit of new use.
- It was assumed that these tools would be best distributed around tube station / bus stops / Oyster card points where other travel information was available. These would be picked up / read particularly when people were at a loose end / bored on transport.

*"I would use the bus map. There are so many new stations and some of them have changed their names so you want to check up on them."*

Bexley 65+

*"You can carry this with you anytime you want and if you are going somewhere you can check where you're going and how it goes."*

London 20-24 Female

*"It's useful information to have, I haven't heard of CABWISE before and that sounds helpful."*

Camden 45-55 Female

A useful travel tool with some handy hints

# Z-Card: purpose and use

- The key aspects of the Z-Card that held appeal to people were:
  - A useful travel tool / map
  - Portable / easy to fit in your wallet
  - Contact details for travel information – website / phone number
  - Cabwise information
  - Contact information for crime / local Safer Travel team (least important)
- Therefore, the front cover was felt to lack a hook to draw people in.
  - People are not that interested in finding out about safety / police
  - Could do more to grab attention by promoting the travel tools / local information contained within.



Useful information centres on Travel Tools. Front cover does not convey this.

# Z-card: response varies by age

- This tool was most well received amongst the adult audiences (16 years +)
  - Taking a wider range of journeys
  - Helpful to have information about buses / tube on the go.
  - Bus map was seen to simplify a complex system making it more accessible.
  - It was felt that the Key could still be improved somewhat.
- School aged audiences (under 16 years) were less engaged
  - Have a limited journey repertoire
  - Found the bus map confusing.
- Some felt that looking at a map in public could potentially put them at risk of crime / bullying (particularly younger).

*"It's good to have that information, the buses are really complicated"*  
20-24 Female, Southwark

*"It's not much use, I know all my bus routes and you'd get bullied having that out in public"*  
12-13 years, Brent

**School aged audiences seem least likely to engage.**

# Z-Card: Tips and hints

- The 'Safety Tips' were well received as practical tips and suggestions.
- However, few of the tips were seen as new news, and some were seen as 'patronising' and stating the obvious, for example:
  - *Try and have your ticket, pass or change ready in your hand so your purse or wallet is out of sight. Keep your bag zipped.*
  - *The best idea is to head for a public place where you know there will be other people, for example a garage or shop*
  - *Use well lit areas*
- The audience felt they were already taking these steps where possible and were on the whole 'street wise', Points, such as heading for public places and well lit areas were felt again to be natural safety behaviours but sometimes beyond customers' control. These could raise sensitivity / frustration over the infrastructure.
- Additional helpful hints and tips they suggested included:
  - *If you're changing bus try to change at a busy stop / interchange*

**Some tips and hints are well received as supporting customers personal safety**



## Z-Cards: *good news stories*

- Response to the information on policing and safety initiatives was mixed. The ‘Good News stories’ statistics could prompt quite polarising responses:
  - Making some people feel reassured and impressed that crime is falling - providing evidence that the initiative is working
  - Others felt that this highlighted how bad the issue had been and felt concerned that it was still potentially very bad
- These differences in response were not correlated with any specific demographic. Difference in opinion seemed to be primarily driven by how comfortable they were with statistics in general and how cynical or optimistic they were rather than by age, gender, levels of anxiety around crime or ethnicity.

*“That’s the most reassuring thing I’ve seen, I think that’s brilliant, they’ve clearly done a lot of work”*  
Southwark, 70+

*“A 45% fall in crime is huge. Does this mean before 8 in 10 of my neighbours were getting robbed on the bus? It’s good they’ve got it down so much, but it’s still very scary”*  
Camden 45-55

**Some of the audience struggle to decode the statistics.**

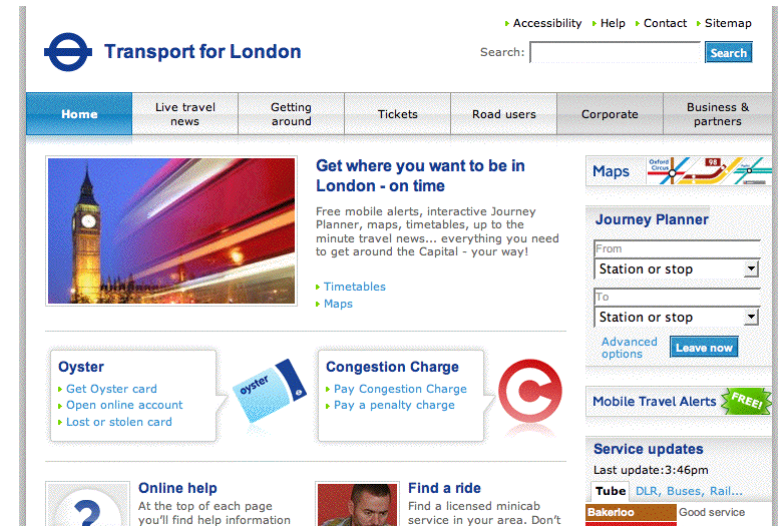
# Role of police in distributing Z-Cards

- It was suggested to participants in the research that the Z cards would be handed out by police.
- For many respondents this was not felt to be the most useful channel for distribution.
  - Firstly they felt it was not a specific part of the role for the police / CPSOs (there was some feedback that if police were focussing on handing out cards, some of the “2500” would be taken away from their patrolling duties).
  - Secondly they did not feel that they saw police / CPSOs on their journeys regularly enough for this to be of use.
  - For a small minority (mostly teens and some BAME participants) there was distrust of the police which they claimed would put them off taking a card directly from an officer.

**In addition to or instead of giving the cards to police to distribute, alternative distribution channels should also be considered**

# Web: Overall response

- No-one felt that they could envisage a scenario where they would use a website about safety on public transport
- The scenarios under which they could imagine seeking information were either immediate or local:
  - When an emergency is occurring
  - When you are at a local station and see a local officer
- For many in the older target audience web makes the campaign seem inaccessible



*"I think the only people that would go on to this would be our parents."*

London 20-24 Female

*"Where are these people? Do they have an office somewhere? Can't I just talk to them there?"*

Bexley 65+

Low engagement overall

# Web: response is hypothetical due to low engagement



- However, if they did go to a website a text based search is perceived to be most useful:
  - Quick and easy to use
  - Most universally accessible



**Summary**



# Summary

- The campaign elicited three core responses across the target audiences:
  - The predominant reaction was scepticism over the likely impact of anti-crime measures on personal experience (this won't make a difference to me)
  - Increased anxiety
  - Reassurance (I feel safer knowing this)
- This response is driven by a disconnect between what the advertising is saying (that PT is being made safer) and their personal experience of the PT they use (that they still encounter some low level ASB and actual crime despite the CCTV / number of police officers on PT)
- Therefore, evidence of the initiative needs to be seen in their day to day experiences, to be credible for the audience
- This was reflected in response to all executions and mediums of delivery