

# The National Concessionary Bus Travel Scheme, Smartcards, ITSO in the North East of England

Introduction

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# Introduction

- The government is enhancing the way that concessionary travel works in England
- Currently each travel concessionary authority issues its own pass
- But things change next year ...
- To avoid driver confusion, eligible people will be issued with a standardised pass
- Done to provide everybody with the best – a smartcard

# Key points of the UK system

- To get this concession a person must have the smartcard
- The format has been developed by the Department for Transport
- Local transport authorities will be responsible for reimbursing operators
- The introduction of a government sponsored open source protocol

# The benefits of simplification

- Most operators don't have smartcard readers
- But some do
- Simplicity and ease of use for both the customer and the operator-provider
- Some big challenges – principally interoperability

# Why can't we just use our bank cards?

- Why can't we just use our bank cards?
- Individual bus companies with individual cards would drive customers to distraction!
- Designing their own schemes would be a costly enterprise
- UK government has sponsored an open specification for smartcards called "ITSO"

# What is ITS0?

- ITS0 is *I*ntegrated *T*ransport *S*martcard *O*rganisation
- It is an open specification
- This means that the details of how to encode data is public information

# Benefits of smart systems (1)

- Fraud reduction
- Rogue cards can be turned off
- The customer gets a faster boarding
- This smartcard could make life easier in other ways
- For example if other authority services are combined with it
- It will be easy to fund discretionary add-ons

## Benefits of smart systems (2)

- Catalyst to operators to install electronic ticket machines
- Makes calculation of concessionary travel on bus services easier
- Economies of scale make extending the scheme possible
- Greater access to data



# Conclusion

- Universal acceptance of ITS/O
- ITS/O-enabled equipment has a huge potential
- The government help
- Planning travel network less hazardous
- But why stop with transport?
- A catalyst to changes in light rail



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