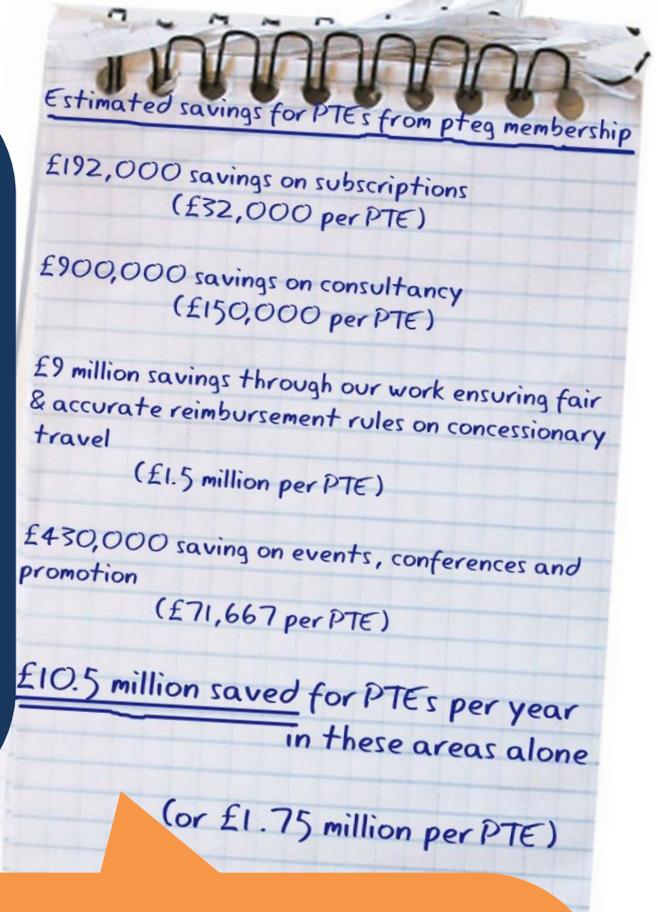# pteg

...driving efficiencies

pteg represents the six Passenger Transport Executives (PTEs). The PTEs plan, procure, provide and promote public transport in six of England's largest conurbations — Greater Manchester, Merseyside, South Yorkshire, Tyne and Wear, the West Midlands, and West Yorkshire..

A primary purpose of *pteg* is to save money for the PTEs (Passenger Transport Executives) through doing things once and collaboratively, rather than separately and expensively.

This ranges from co-procurement of services and consultants through to our joint representations to Government on multi-million pound decisions on funding for key issues like smartcards and concessionary travel.

With public spending under pressure, this work is more important than ever. This paper reviews some of the ways that *pteg* works to drive forward these essential efficiencies.

Estimated savings for PTEs from pteg membership

£192,000 savings on subscriptions (£32,000 per PTE)

£900,000 savings on consultancy (£150,000 per PTE)

£9 million savings through our work ensuring fair & accurate reimbursement rules on concessionary travel (£1.5 million per PTE)

£430,000 saving on events, conferences and promotion (£71,667 per PTE)

£10.5 million saved for PTEs per year in these areas alone (or £1.75 million per PTE)

At *pteg* we are committed to finding ways to save PTEs money by enabling them to work together. This work has gained considerable momentum in the last couple of years as spending cuts start to bite and it becomes even more important to generate efficiencies.

In recognition of this, 2009 saw the creation of the *pteg* Operations group the purpose of which is to drive more efficiencies through. 2009 also saw the launch of *pteg* **extra.** A password protected extranet site for PTE staff, it was aims to 'take the lid off' the *pteg* network, allowing all staff to access the expertise that lies within it. You can find out more about the work of Operations group and about *pteg* **extra** later in this paper.

In 2010 we recruited an in-house Economist to help the PTEs navigate the many complex challenges that are critical to public transport in our areas – from bus subsidy regimes to concessionary travel – and to help us make an economically robust case for continued investment. Having this shared resource reduces the need for spending on separate and external advice in each PTE. You can find out more about the work of our Economist in our 'Week in the life' feature.

Our well established task groups also continue to bring together expertise from across the PTEs to share experience and knowledge. This paper includes a look at how one of these groups – Safety and Security - has worked collaboratively to do things differently and save money.

spotlight on...*pteg* Operations group

Working to understand more thoroughly where collaboration can add value and what issues require collective effort, *pteg* Operations group is taking the lead on driving efficiencies throughout the *pteg* network. The group was established in 2009 in response to the increasing pressures on public spending which make finding savings and better ways of working more essential than ever.

Key areas of focus for the group have been:

Joint procurement

Working to maximise opportunities for pooling the purchasing power and expertise of the PTEs to get the best value for money. Efforts have already resulted in a cross-PTE tender for insurance brokerage

Coordinating market research

Developing more cost-effective, transparent and efficient ways to measure bus service performance. A review was commissioned with Passenger Focus resulting in agreement to move towards a shared approach to remove duplication, improve comparability and save money

Smartcard collaboration

All PTEs are developing smartcards, presenting a valuable chance to work together to ensure greater compatibility of systems and products and to save PTEs money by commissioning for common needs once, not six times.

pteg extra...unlocking joint working

Launched in 2009, this password-protected site for PTE staff is designed to encourage collaboration and promote efficiencies. It aims to 'take the lid off' the *pteg* network, allowing all staff to access the expertise within it.

It features hubs for each of the *pteg* groups, allowing members to access meeting papers and shared resources. Each hub also includes contact details for group members, providing a speedy way to get in touch with all experts on a particular subject from across the *pteg* network.

A key feature of the site is the Collaborate section which seeks to enable joint working between the PTEs.

A week in the life of Pedro Abrantes, pteg Economist... and Agony Aunt?

Pedro is busy this week. In fact, he has been busy every week since he started as *pteg*'s first Economist in March 2010. But this week is particularly busy. I know because I share an office with him and his phone has been ringing off the hook. The skills of an Economist, it seems, are much in demand and it's hardly surprising, particularly given that this week saw the announcement of the Local Government Settlement and the ongoing repercussions following the launch of the DfT's concessionary travel reimbursement guidance, not to mention the need to input into the DfT's rail value for money study.

The result was a lot of calls to and from Finance Directors, concessionary travel officers and rail officers as Pedro explains, *'Our role is to reduce uncertainty when people are asking 'Is this terrible? Or not as terrible as I think?''*. He continues *'In the past couple of weeks, some of my role has been that of an agony aunt!'*

The Local Government Settlement is a case in point. Announced on Monday, it came equipped with a bewildering array of spread-sheets to make sense of. Pedro likens it to *'a little monster spewing out spread-sheets left, right and centre'*. And he's right, I clicked on one seemingly innocuous link on the CLG page dedicated to the settlement, only to be greeted by 30 further spread-sheets. He adds, *'The local government settlement is mind-bogglingly difficult to see through'*. Luckily his time and effort in tracing the money, working out the comparative scale of the cuts and calculating how much districts would be getting to fund concessionary travel, meant that this task only had to be done once, rather than replicated six times across the PTEs.

Pedro distilled his findings into a briefing note for Finance Directors, which was met with widespread approval and praise for its clarity in explaining what is a very complex subject, he says: *'After all that time and effort, being able to explain it in a way that seems to make sense felt quite satisfying'* This work will help PTEs *'have the best and the most informed discussion that they can'* as they meet with districts to discuss the settlements further. Also rewarding was that the lobbying work *pteg* had done in the run up to the settlement announcement had paid off, resulting in a fairly favourable allocation and a clear sense of the level of funding PTEs can expect to get.

From the high point of the week, to the low point and the ongoing concern caused by the publication of DfT's concessionary travel reimbursement guidance. Despite some considerable success throughout the process, it was disappointing that a number of significant points still went unheeded. Since publication, Pedro has spent time trying to understand what DfT has done and relaying this to concerned concessionary travel officers both over the phone and via a number of written briefings. Given the magnitude of the changes the guidance implies, officers needed advice as to how to proceed and how to explain the new arrangements to operators.

There was a chance to vent frustration and let off steam at a meeting of the DfT Funding and Administration Working Group at the end of the week, where Pedro made the case to improve the clarity of the guidance for the PTEs. In the end, it turned out that there were other representatives from the wider local government community who'd had it a lot worse, putting things into perspective somewhat. Pedro concludes: *'Strength in numbers is certainly something that makes my job easier. I have often felt that the DfT listen more closely when we're able to offer a strong collective view on behalf of all the PTEs.'*

Pedro's plans after the DfT meeting on Friday? Finally some R&R with a party at a friend's house in Vauxhall, just down the road from DfT *'I could go and use their wireless internet!'* Pedro comments, hoping to squeeze in some more work – I think he deserves a break!

spotlight on…*pteg* Safety and Security group

The Safety and Security Group has a wide membership, from across the PTEs and beyond, forming an impressive repository of expertise in both its people and outputs. Representatives from DfT and the Department's Transport Securities and Contingencies Team routinely attend their meetings which are complemented by informal sharing of good practice and support throughout the year. Here, members share their thoughts on how the group has made a difference to their work.

A key focus for the group has been the compilation of the Public Transport Crime Reduction Toolkit. An online resource for group members, it is a collection of factsheets and good practice materials from across the PTEs that members continually add to as new evidence, expertise, facts and figures become available. It includes, for example, comparative data on criminal damage to buses, template victim impact statements and guides to managing anti-social behaviour effectively. These quotes from members illustrate the value of the toolkit and of being part of the Safety and Security group.

"a perfect example of collaborative working and generating efficiencies through cooperation…Just like an Aladdin's cave, our toolkit is full of treasure in terms of knowledge. Every member has input into the toolkit as well as taking things out of it and at no cost to the organisation concerned.

Without the toolkit, many members would still be at the trial and error stage and spending money unnecessarily with no guarantee of success. It is truly a treasure chest of knowledge." *Dave McNulty, GMPTE – Chair of Safety and Security Group*

"We do not have to await *pteg* meetings to address issues. All members are constantly in touch to assist with a myriad of projects, and inter-PTE visits are made as the norm to address any advice or best practice." *Mick Watson, Security Manager - Metro*

"the real benefits are in the expertise of all the lead officers. We each offer to members of the group what amounts to 'free consultancy'. I know that I am in contact with various members of the group on a weekly basis…

Cost savings are difficult to calculate. What I can say is membership of this group saved at least 24 months of research, consultation and pilot initiatives and allowed Lancashire to save these costs and be efficient from the outset." *Rick Wilson, Safer Travel Unit Manager – Lancashire County Council*

Shelter cameras – a success story

Mick Watson, Security Manager at Metro, cites the roll out of bus shelter cameras as one of the group's key achievements. They were first piloted by Metro before being implemented by the wider Safety and Security Group. Mick says:

"*As a result, not only most PTEs, but many local authorities throughout the UK have used this system. The catalyst for this was the* **pteg** *group…***It is incalculable as to how much this has saved in repeat damage throughout the UK.** *Our new version in West Yorkshire maintains a crime detection rate of 80%, with clear evidence that repeat offences cease, allowing it to be transferred to new sites where the process is repeated.*"

Costings from Metro made available to the group in the toolkit demonstrate that cameras become self-funding in as little as 3 years, saving thousands of pounds in cleaning and repair costs.