Polis recommendations for action (b) of the ITS Directive

A. Local authorities and real-time transport data

Most real-time transport data used by local (transport) authorities are gathered primarily for network management purposes, for instance, traffic control, public transport operation or running a public bike scheme. The information services that have emerged over recent decades have largely built upon this dynamic data. Only more recently have data started to be gathered purely for the purpose of feeding information services.

The multiple tasks of gathering, processing and storing data comes at a significant cost for transport authorities. The data may not be fully reliable or fully up to date but it is generally sufficient for network management purposes. Where real-time data is no longer required for the purpose of managing the transport network, the transport authority may well cease to collect it. Transport authorities cannot commit themselves to gather data at their own cost when this data no longer serves a core network management need.

B. Local authorities and the ITS Directive

Local authorities largely support the move towards open data but they would find it hard to justify the investment in making their local transport data compatible with EC specifications purely for the benefit of the ITS market. Most ITS investment (indeed any investment) by local authorities is objective-led, ie, the investment is made to help achieve a policy objective, such as modal shift.

While EU-wide compatible data may be useful for developing interurban information services, the EC should not overlook the fact that the bulk of trips in cities are intra-urban and most are repeat trips (mainly commuters). Inter-urban journeys represent a small proportion of trips and they are not a strategic target group for local authorities, with the exception of lorry trips and possibly coaches. Whilst having compatible data formats across Europe is a nice aspiration, the reality of implementing it is hugely challenging and expensive.

Regarding data quality (and liability), there is concern that stringent quality assurance requirements may have adverse effects: specifically, a transport authority may well decide that it is safer to release no data rather than release data which is wrong (or does not meet the quality criteria).

C. What should be the focus of Action (b)?

In view of the concerns raised above, Polis proposes that action (b) has a specific focus in terms of application level and type of data for what concerns urban and regional roads.

These are detailed below (C1-C3). This focus could make it easier for local authorities to make a case for investing in the required actions to make data compliant with the EC-specified format. Even in times of funding uncertainty, transport authorities generally (but not always) have the resources to manage strategic routes and public transport.

Furthermore, Polis proposes that the EC makes provision for:

1. quantifying the costs incurred by local authorities in adopting the specifications;

2. supporting the development of appropriate business models;

3. defining a sensible roll-out process over the coming 10 years;

4. revising, updating or extending the specifications.

A "sensible roll-out plan" focused on "main corridors" is likely to see deployment earlier, more reliably and more successfully - and therefore more beneficially - than an unfocused requirement to implement everything.

C1. Where should the action (b) specifications apply?

a. On main transport corridors within cities and regions*
   i. those corridors carrying collectively a high proportion (eg, 80-90%) of all daily transport movements across all modes (**multimodal**) <u>AND</u>
   ii. where routes carry more than annual average of daily traffic (**high capacity**) <u>AND</u>
   iii. where the peak/off-peak journey time is >1.5 (**variable**) <u>AND</u>
   iv. where the corridor is connected to TEN-T (**urban/interurban**)
b. On public transport routes and at Park&Ride
c. On freight corridors (if different to main corridors)

The definition of what constitutes a main transport corridor should be left to the road authority. However, they should meet the majority of the characteristics cited above: multimodal, high capacity, variable and urban/interuban

C2. What type of information is relevant?

a. Planned events likely to affect multimodality, capacity and/or journey time
   i. Road works
   ii. Public events, eg, parades
   iii. Stadium/arena events
   iv. etc
b. Unplanned events
   i. Public transport source disruption
   ii. Emergency road works
   iii. Accidents/incidents
   iv. Outages, etc
c. Threshold exceedances (beyond norm)
   i. Public transport full

    ii. Congestion (as measured by system, if available)
   iii. Flow interruptions (as measured by system, if available)
   iv. Parking (facilities) full
    v. etc

C3. Which data could be provided?

a. Corridor monitoring (real-time data to be provided, if available, and if owned by the public authority)
   a. Flow, by mode, by direction
   b. Journey time by mode
   c. Park+ride, multi-storey car park availability
b. Basic road data and traffic circulation plans (updated annually)
   a. Public transport only sections
   b. Network not suitable for through traffic (no other information provided)
   c. Network at 50 km/h and 30 km/h
   d. Network not suitable for trucks
   e. Network not suitable for 5+ axles (or expressed in tonnes)
   f. Pedestrian zones, LEZ, restricted zones, etc
   g. Banned areas for general traffic including time restrictions
   h. Signalised junctions or crossings
   i. Height restrictions
c. Agreed communication around contingency planning on main corridors (following an accident for instance)

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