

TRANSPORT FOR LONDON

AUDIT COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: INDEPENDENT REPORTING LINES

DATE: 2 MARCH 2011

1 PURPOSE AND DECISION REQUIRED

1.1 To provide the Committee with an update on the reports to the staff reporting lines in 2010. The Committee is asked to note this paper.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Arrangements have been in place since 2004 to provide staff with access to independent reporting lines. This independent reporting mechanism is in addition to normal reporting channels.

2.2 Staff and contractors can raise concerns on these independent reporting lines about any aspect of TfL's activities. This includes concerns about the safety of the public and/or staff, fraud or financial negligence, harassment, bullying, or discrimination. Also covered would be any decisions, actions, conduct or communications that are unlawful, or in breach of TfL's policies or in significant breach of its core values.

2.3 The internal line is managed within General Counsel and the external line, SafeLine, has been managed since September 2009 by Crimestoppers, an independent company.

2.4 The existence of independent reporting lines is an important safeguard that enables staff to raise concerns within a safe environment. TfL has therefore committed to protect anyone who raises such matters, provided the disclosures are made without malice and in good faith, regardless of whether the concern raised is upheld.

2.5 Raising awareness of the reporting lines service is undertaken at regular intervals. Details of how to contact both internal and external reporting lines is included in the TfL Code of Conduct, which is given to all new staff. In addition to contacting SafeLine by telephone, there is now a facility to do so by email.

2.6 A communications plan was put in place for 2010. This included a poster campaign, leaflets, payroll messages, messages in the weekly bulletin and a front piece message on TfL's intranet.

2.7 The overall annual cost of the external reporting lines is in the order of £27,000 per annum. This is a reduction from the £40,000 per annum in 2008. The reduction in costs followed re-tendering the contract in 2009.

3 REPORTS IN 2010

3.1 There were 35 contacts on the external reporting line in 2010 of which 19 were anonymous. The table below provides a summary of the nature of the issues involved. The breakdown of the categories of concerns raised has remained relatively constant with HR always accounting for more than 50 per cent of reports.

Category	2009 Reports	2010 Reports
Integrity (including Fraud)	9	3
Health and Safety	2	0
Human Resources	30	32*
Total	41	35

* 1 item may also involve fraud

3.2 The 35 calls in 2010 represents a decrease in the number of reports compared to 2009 when there were 41 calls. However, it is around the average number received in any one year. It would appear that TfL receives slightly less than the average number of calls when compared to other similar organisations. The explanation may be related to the number of other methods of raising concerns and a high level of union membership providing another avenue to interact with management.

3.3 SafeLine reports this year have been concerned with a variety of issues:

- (a) accusations of bullying;
- (b) alleged unfair employment practices;
- (c) unresolved tensions in a team;
- (d) alleged unsatisfactory performance by sub-contractor's staff; and
- (e) abuse of drugs.

3.4 The current position of the matters raised is:

- (a) all enquiries have been, or are being, addressed;
- (b) the concluded HR matters were dealt with through managerial action with 13 allegations currently outstanding; and
- (c) in respect of fraud, theft or lack of integrity, where investigations are complete, insufficient evidence has been found to justify further action with three allegations currently outstanding.

- 3.5 The reports this year only involved individuals or small groups of people. The monetary sums involved were small in absolute terms and have never been significant in TfL corporate terms.
- 3.6 The most common reasons that a reporting line is used are that the issue is with the immediate manager of the reporter or because of a fear of reprisals.
- 3.7 No new cases were reported between 10 September 2010 and 6 January 2011. However, two test cases had been reported during this period and had not been notified by Crimestoppers. TfL has addressed this with Crimestoppers and tested the resilience of its reporting and dissemination process. TfL has been given firm assurances that these errors will not reoccur. There will be regular monitoring of its performance and closer engagement (involving members of its team attending TfL's premises and meeting representatives of HRS and Internal Audit, at no additional cost to TfL).

4 EQUALITIES AND INCLUSION

- 4.1 The existence of the reporting lines provides another means for TfL staff to raise equality and inclusion concerns either for themselves or on behalf of others. There were a number of reports relating to harassment of various types and the subsequent investigations routinely examine the relevant equality and inclusion issues.

5 CRIME AND DISORDER

- 5.1 The existence of the reporting lines similarly provides another means for TfL staff to raise crime and disorder concerns, either for themselves, or on behalf of others.

6 RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 The Committee is asked to NOTE this paper.

7 CONTACT

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