



2013-14 Quarter 2 Statistical Release

Passenger Rail Service Satisfaction

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Complaints and National Rail Enquiries telephone service

2013 – 14 Quarter 2 (1 July to 30 September 2013)

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Introduction

This release contains information on passenger rail satisfaction in Great Britain with the latest data in this release referring to 2013-14 Q2 (1 July to 30 September 2013). The data covered within the release are:

- Complaints rate the number of complaints received per 100,000 passenger journeys;
- Complaints by category the number of complaints received regarding each complaints category per 100,000 passenger journeys;
- Complaints rate by train operating company (TOC) the number of complaints received per 100,000 passenger journeys for each train operating company;
- Complaints rate by category and train operating company the number of complaints received regarding each complaints category per 100,000 passenger journeys for each train operating company;
- Complaints by train operating company and contact method the percentage of complaints received by each train operator by source
- Complaints answered within 20 working days the percentage of complaints answered within 20 working days for each train operating company;
- National Rail Enquiries (NRE) the total number of calls made to the National Rail Enquiries telephone service and the percentage answered.

We no longer publish appeals opened and complaint comments data due to methodology differences between Passenger Focus and London TravelWatch. For further information on passenger rail satisfaction please see the <u>Quality Reports</u>.

A complaint in the rail industry is any expression of dissatisfaction by a customer or potential customer about service delivery or about company or industry policy. Measures of complaints are key indicators of the levels of passenger satisfaction in Great Britain. Due to the strong relationship¹ between the level of satisfaction and levels of delay experienced by passengers, complaints provide an indication of service performance. TOCs use this information to identify areas of service through which improvement schemes could increase passenger satisfaction.

It is important, when analysing complaints data, to take into account the ease of access to complaint making. This will vary between and within train operators. For example some TOCs may be more proactive

¹ Passenger Focus Research - Examining the links between Train Performance Measures and Customer Satisfaction http://www.passengerfocus.org.uk/research/publications/examining-the-links-between-train-performance-measures-and-customer-satisfaction

in promoting methods of making a complaint, such as posters displayed at stations and on trains, handing out complaints forms on disrupted services, and providing more prominent links to complaints methods on their website. All these types of practices will affect the number of complaints received by a TOC and therefore should be taken into account when reading these statistics.

The data contained within this release is complemented by the Passenger Focus National Passenger Survey (NPS)² which provides a network wide picture of customers' satisfaction with rail travel. Passenger opinions of train and station services are collected twice a year from a representative sample of passenger journeys. Passengers are asked about a particular journey to measure their overall satisfaction with the station and train. Satisfaction with over 30 specific aspects of the service can then be compared over time and with external measures, such as those within this release. In order to improve the comparability of data across the industry, we have worked with the train operating companies to ensure that our complaints categories align with the NPS categories from the beginning of 2013-14.

National Rail Enquiries is one of the principal methods of providing passenger information primarily on train timetables and fares. Despite the increase in the use of alternative methods to acquire information, such as self-service channels and social media, data on the use and performance of the NRE provides an indication of how successful the industry is at providing passenger information.

All the data contained within this release are sourced from the train operating companies (TOCs) and the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC). For more detail on data collection and the methodology used to calculate the data within this, please see the accompanying quality report which can be found at: Quality Reports.

This is a quarterly release and the latest data in this release refers to 2013-14 Q2, 1 July to 30 September 2013. All the data contained and referred to within this release can be accessed via the ORR <u>Data Portal</u>.

National Statistics

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007, signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs:
- are well explained and readily accessible;

² Passenger Focus National Rail Passenger Survey http://www.passengerfocus.org.uk/research/national-passenger-survey-introduction

- are produced according to sound methods; and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

For more details please contact the Statistics Head of Profession Jay Lindop at Jay.Lindop@orr.gsi.gov.uk or on 020 7282 3978 or contact rstats@orr.gsi.gov.uk

Summary of key results

- There were 26 complaints per 100,000 train journeys in 2013-14 Q2, a decrease of 19.0% on the same quarter last year. The moving annual average (MAA) continues on a downward trend with 31 complaints per 100,000 journeys.
- Comparing 2013-14 Q2 against 2012-13 Q2, there were ten operators with a reduction in the number of complaints per 100,000 passenger journeys, ranging from 6.3% to 54.0%, with nine operators experiencing an increase in complaints per 100,000 passenger journeys.
- In 2013-14 Q2, 36.6% of all complaints were due to the punctuality/reliability of trains and this
 continues to have the highest number of complaints. This quarter also coincides with a fall in the
 national measure of punctuality (PPM).
- East Coast is the only TOC for which train punctuality/reliability did not account for the highest proportion of complaints in 2013-14 Q2. 17.8% of complaints were made to East Coast about ticketing and refunds policy.
- In 2013-14 Q2, the proportion of complaints received by letter was less than 50% for all TOCs (except London Midland and Chiltern) and reflects passenger's use of other contact methods. This was also the first time since the time series began where the proportion of complaints received by letter was lower than those received by other contact methods for most operators.
- During 2013-14 Q2, Southeastern was the only operator to hold a "meet the manager" session, whilst Merseyrail was the only train operator to receive complaints via online forums, such as web chats.
- In 2013-14 Q2, c2c and Southeastern responded to 100% of complaints within 20 working days and Virgin Trains had the lowest response rate responding to 42.0% of complaints within 20 working days.
- Over a million calls were made to the National Rail Enquiries telephone service during 2013-14 Q2 but the number of calls made was 19.1% less than Q2 the previous year. This quarter stopped the trend in successive fall below a million calls seen for the last two quarters.

1. Complaints

About Complaints

A complaint in the rail industry is any expression of dissatisfaction by a customer or potential customer about service delivery or about company or industry policy. The level and type of complaints is a useful performance indicator as unlike other system-based measures, the number of complaints reflects direct feedback from passengers. Used in conjunction with other performance measures, such as the public performance measure (PPM), a more comprehensive description of rail industry service and passenger satisfaction can be reported. To allow effective comparison of data between time periods and train operating companies complaints are normalised by passenger journeys.

1.1 Complaints Rate

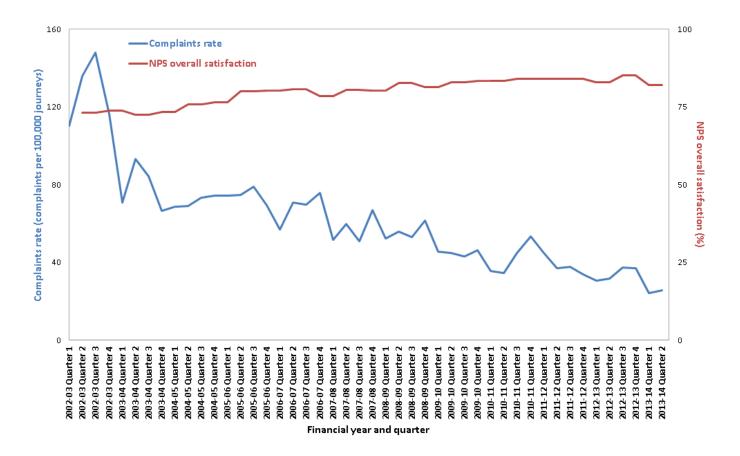
Since the time series began, in 2002-03, the complaints rate has been steadily decreasing with the number of complaints per 100,000 journeys reaching its lowest annual level in 2012-13. At 34 complaints per 100,000 passenger journeys, the complaints rate in 2012-13 was 73.2% lower than in 2002-03 and 10.2% lower than the previous year.

2013-14 Quarter 2 Results

Complaints rate - chart

Great Britain quarterly data 2002-03 Q2 to 2013-14 Q2 – complaints per 100,000 passenger journeys (left-hand axis)

Great Britain bi-annual data 2002-03 to 2013-14 – National Passenger Survey (NPS) overall % satisfaction (right-hand axis)



- There has been a slight increase in the complaints rate this quarter compared to previous quarter. The result of the Passenger Focus National Passenger Survey (NPS) is unchanged from last quarter as there were no new surveys conducted between last quarter and this quarter. The result of the Passenger Focus National Passenger Survey (NPS) stands at 82%.
- There were 26 complaints per 100,000 train journeys in 2013-14 Q2, a decrease of 19.0% on the same quarter last year. The moving annual average (MAA) continues on a downward trend with 31 complaints per 100,000 journeys.
- The punctuality/reliability of services continues to be the main reason for complaints, with this category accounting for 36.6% of categorised complaints. This is supported by the fall in the public

performance measure moving annual average (MAA) from 91.7% to 90.7% at the national level between 2012-13 Q2 and 2013-14 Q2³

• The complaints rate MAA⁴ at 31 complaints per 100,000 journeys is currently the lowest MAA since the time series began.

Complaints rate by quarter data are presented here: Data Portal

A list of pre-created complaints tables available on the data portal is presented in Annex 2.

Revisions: Data for 2013-14 Q1 have been revised.

³ National Rail Trends Public performance measure (PPM) by sector – table http://dataportal.orr.gov.uk/displayreport/report/html/be8ce46b-ba99-41c5-8a22-48b8759a16cb

⁴ By taking an average of the last four quarters we smooth out short term fluctuations or spikes and highlight longer terms trends in the complaints data.

1.2 Complaints rate by train operating company

Since the time series began in 2007-08, with the exception of London Midland and South West Trains, all train operating companies have experienced a decrease in their annual complaints rate.

The five train operating companies which had the highest complaints rates in 2012-13 operate all, or part, of their services in the long distance sector. Long distance operators, by nature of travelling greater distances and for longer periods of time, are exposed to more chances of disruption and therefore would be expected to have higher complaint rates than TOCs operating in the London and South East or regional sectors. In addition, the consumer base of long distance operators is predominantly leisure and business passengers who have a greater propensity to complain than commuters.

The highest complaints rate in a single year was received by Virgin Trains in 2008-09 when 548 complaints per 100,000 passenger journeys were received. 2008-09 was the first year that saw a sharp increase in the number of trains operated by Virgin because of the West Coast Mainline upgrade and coincided with Virgin Trains' poorest performance in terms of punctuality and reliability since 2004-05. Since the completion of the West Coast Mainline upgrade in December 2009, the number of complaints per 100,000 journeys received by Virgin Trains has decreased each year, falling to 224 in 2012-13, representing a 59% drop compared to the high of 2008-09.

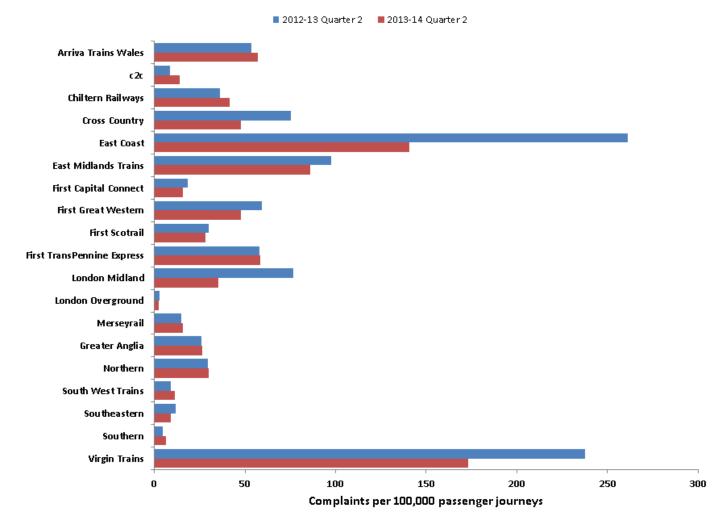
Compared to 2011-12 East Coast experienced the largest decrease in complaints rate during 2012-13 declining from 254 complaints per 100,000 passenger journeys to 212 complaints per 100,000 passenger journeys. In 2012-13, of the franchised operators, 11 experienced a decrease and eight an increase in the number of complaints per 100,000 passenger journeys compared to 2011-12.

The largest increase in the complaints rate between 2011-12 and 2012-13 was for Arriva Trains Wales whose complaints rate increased by 46.0%. This coincided with an increase in the proportion of complaints regarding train service performance as PPM fell to its lowest level since 2008-09. However, there are other factors that could have impacted the increase in complaints rate such as changes in company policy regarding advertising of complaint channels.

2013-14 Quarter 2 Results

Complaints rate by train operating company - chart

Train operating company quarterly data 2012-13 Q2 and 2013-14 Q2 (complaints per 100,000 passenger journeys)



- There were ten operators who experienced reduction in their complaints rate in 2013-14 Q2 compared to 2012-13 Q2. Of these operators, London Midland recorded the biggest fall at 54.0% compared to the same period last year (numerous cancellations last year due to driver shortages), followed by East Coast at 46.1%, and Cross Country at 36.5%. The seven remaining operators' reduction in complaints rate ranged from 6.3% to 27.2%.
- There were nine operators with an increase in their complaints rate in 2013-14 Q2 compared to 2012-13 Q2.
- Virgin Trains and East Coast are the only two operators with a complaints rate of more than 100 in in 2013-14 Q2. Virgin Trains received the highest number of complaints per 100,000 journeys in 2013-14 Q2 with 173 although this was a reduction of 27.2% on the same quarter last year. Issues

around the reliability of overhead line equipment would have been contributory factors⁵ for passenger complaints as they affect both operators' train performance which fell in 2013-14 Q2⁶.

• London Overground received the lowest number of complaints per 100,000 journeys in 2013-14 Q2 with 2.4. London Overground has the joint highest satisfaction rating (with c2c) for franchised operators in the National Passenger Survey of 92%.

Complaints rate by train operating company quarter data are presented here: Data Portal

A list of pre-created complaints tables available on the data portal is presented in Annex 2.

Revisions: Data for 2013-14 Q1 have been revised.

⁵ Network Rail performance 2013-14 P4,P5 and P6 http://www.networkrailmediacentre.co.uk/News-Releases/National-train-performance-for-period-4-is-91-3-1e4e.aspx and http://www.networkrailmediacentre.co.uk/News-Releases/National-train-performance-for-period-6-is-92-3-1e95.aspx

⁶ Passenger and Freight performance 2013-14 Q2 statistical release (page 10) http://www.rail-reg.gov.uk/upload/pdf/passenger-freight-performance-13-14-q2.pdf

1.3 Complaints by category

Train service performance has consistently received the highest proportion of complaints since the data collection began in 2007-08. In 2012-13, it accounted for 39.5% of all passenger complaints with fares, retailing and refunds accounting for the next highest proportion at 14.7%, although this is the lowest proportion for fares, retailing and refunds since the time series began.

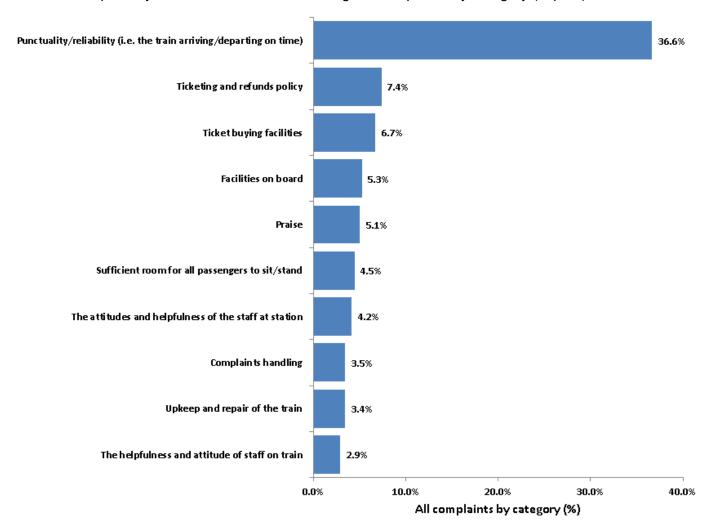
The proportion of complaints regarding complaints handling fell in 2012-13 compared to the previous year, whilst complaints in relation to train service performance and station quality were the only categories to increase compared to the previous year.

From 2013-14 the complaints category data are reported under the NPS categories.

2013-14 Quarter 2 Results

Complaints by category - chart

Great Britain quarterly data 2013-14 Q2 – Percentage of complaints by category (Top 10)



In 2013-14 Q2, 36.6% of all complaints were due to the punctuality/reliability of trains. This is along
the same theme to previous years where complaints regarding train service performance have
consistently had the highest number of complaints. This quarter also coincides with a fall in the
national measure of punctuality (PPM).

 Ticketing and refunds policy received the second highest proportion of complaints in 2013-14 Q2, with 7.4%.

• Ticket buying facilities was the third highest category in 2013-14 Q2 with 6.7%.

Complaints by category quarterly data are presented here: Data Portal

A list of pre-created complaints tables available on the data portal is presented in Annex 2.

Revisions: Data for 2013-14 Q1 have been revised.

1.4 Complaints by category and train operating company

Train service performance has accounted for the highest proportion of complaints received in each of the

three years in the time series for 15 of the franchised train operating companies. For Arriva Train Wales,

Chiltern, South West Trains, and Southeastern train service performance has accounted for over half of

complaints received during at least one of the years within the time series.

2013-14 Quarter 2 Results

Please visit the data portal for the complaints by category and train operating company data table Data

Portal

During 2013-14 Q2 the punctuality/reliability of services continues to be a key factor for complaints

and accounted for the highest proportion of complaints for all operators except East Coast.

London Midland had the highest complaints for this category, with 87.0% in 2013-14 Q2. Ongoing

issues around train crew shortages could have contributed to this.

East Coast is the only TOC for which train punctuality/reliability did not account for the highest

proportion of complaints in 2013-14 Q2. The highest proportion of complaints made to East Coast,

17.8%, was regarding ticketing and refunds policy. the ease with which passengers can claim for

affected journeys could contribute to the complaints under the ticketing and refund policy category

on East Coast.

Complaints by category and train operating company quarter data are presented here: Data Portal

A list of pre-created complaints tables available on the data portal is presented in Annex 2.

Revisions: Data for 2013-14 Q1 have been revised.

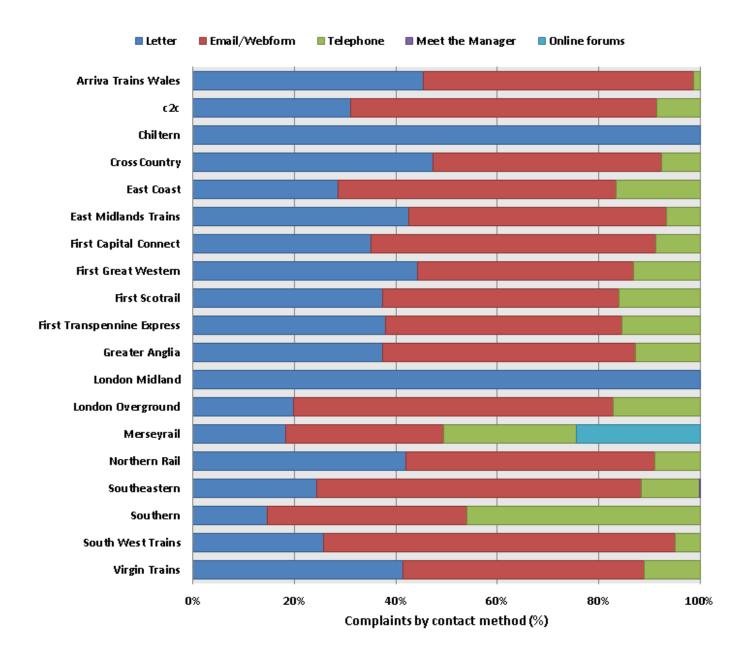
1.5 Complaints by train operating company and contact method

Letter was the main method of complaint for passengers in 2012-13, accounting for 45% of all contact methods. This was closely followed by email/webform with 44%. During the year only seven operators engaged with passengers via meet the manager events and online forums, accounting for less than 1% of all complaints. Figures for complaints by source vary significantly between operators and highlight the different methods that are offered or promoted by each operator.

2013-14 Quarter 2 Results

Percentage of complaints by train operating company and contact method

Train operating company data 2013-14 Q2 - percentage of complaints by contact method



In 2013-14 Q2, 100% of Chiltern's and London Midland's complaints were assigned to letter, as these operators did not provide disaggregated data by contact method. For the remaining operators, the proportion of complaints received by letter was less than 50%, corresponding to the

first time since the time series began where the proportion of complaints received by letter was

lower than those received by other contact methods.

During 2013-14 Q2 four operators - c2c, London Overground, Southeastern and South West Trains

received over 60% of their complaints via email/webform. South West Trains received the greatest

proportion with 69.2%. Merseyrail and Southern received the lowest proportion of complaints via

email/webform with 31.2% and 39.3% respectively.

The contact methods available to passengers, the advertising undertaken by operators and the

resources dedicated to responding to email/webform varies between operators and as a result,

correspondence via social media channels, for example Twitter, is currently excluded from the

complaints statistics.

In 2013-14 Q2, Southeastern was the only operator to hold a "meet the manager" session. These

events are not run at regular periods and each train operator will decide the frequency of these

events through the year.

Merseyrail was the only train operator to receive complaints via online forums, such as web chats,

with 24.4% in 2013-14 Q2.

Complaints by train operating company and contact method by quarter data are presented here: Data

Portal

A list of pre-created complaints tables available on the data portal is presented in Annex 2.

Revisions: There have been no revisions to the previously published dataset.

1.6 Complaints answered within 20 working days

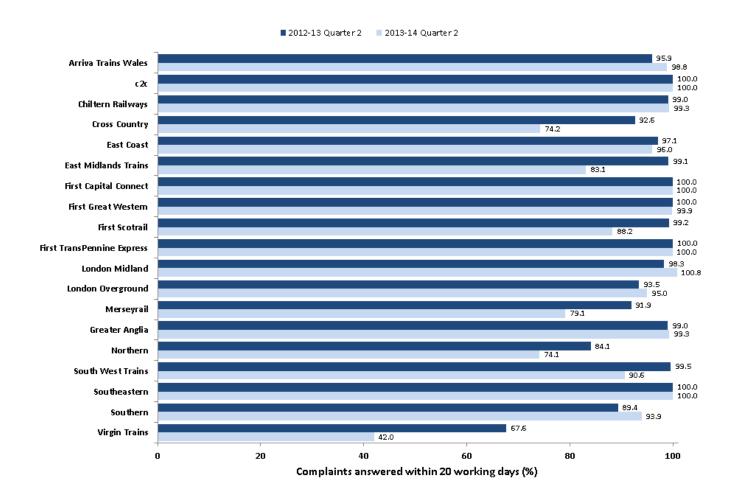
Five of the 19 franchised TOCs have responded to over 95.0% of complaints within 20 working days in all years since the beginning of the time series in 2007-08. In 2012-13 Q1, c2c achieved a 100% response rate for the first time since the time series began. Virgin Trains have had the lowest percentage of complaints answered within 20 working days in each of the years presented in the time series, with 56.1% in 2012-13, the second lowest percentage in a year since the time series began. This is not surprising given Virgin Trains had the highest complaints rate. Furthermore, the strong branding and advertising associated with Virgin may be a reason for the large number of passenger complaints.

It should be noted that each TOC has their own targets for timescales in which they should respond to complaints; this differs between TOCs, and for some TOCs between different contact methods. All TOC target response timescales presented below are within the industry target of 20 working days.

2013-14 Quarter 2 Results

Percentage of complaints answered within 20 working days - chart

Train operating company data 2012-13 Q2 and 2013-14 Q2 - Percentage of complaints answered within 20 working days



During 2013-14 Q2 c2c and Southeastern responded to 100% of complaints within 20 working days, compared to three operators in the same quarter last year (c2c, First TransPennine and

Southeastern).

Virgin Trains had the lowest response rate in 2013-14 Q2 responding to 42.0% of complaints within

20 working days. Virgin also had the highest complaints rate, 173 complaints per 100,000 journeys

in 2013-14 Q2.

In 2013-13 Q2, London Midland responded to 100.8% of complaints within 20 working days. We

recognise that a figure of more than 100% is incorrect but in the interest of openness and honesty,

the figure has been included as provided in the underlying data. In the underlying data, the reason

was due to some of the complaints received in the previous quarter being answered in the latest

quarter. We are working with the industry on ensuring there is a consistent approach to how

complaints received are logged and their status when the complaints are answered.

Complaints answered within 20 days by quarter data are presented here: Data Portal

A list of pre-created complaints tables available on the data portal is presented in Annex 2.

Revisions: Data for 2013-14 Q1 have been revised.

2 National Rail Enquiries telephone service

About National Rail Enquiries

National Rail Enquiries provides information for all passenger and rail services on the National Rail network in England, Wales and Scotland. National Rail Enquiries is part of the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC), which is responsible for providing business services to the Train Operating Companies. Enquiries to National Rail Enquiries can be made through numerous different channels including telephone and self-service channels, such as the National Rail Enquiries website, Train Tracker text services and mobile applications. The data presented in this statistical release relates to enquiries made through the National Rail Enquires telephone service only.

The National Rail Enquiry telephone service is regulated by the Department for Transport (DfT) and its minimum performance standards are set out in the National Rail Enquiries telephone service agreement. The agreement is for 93% of all calls in a financial year to be answered, and for no less that 90% of all calls in any four-week railway reporting period to be answered. It also introduces a formal quality regime, which includes monitoring through mystery shopping surveys.

2.1 National Rail Enquiry telephone service (enquiries received)

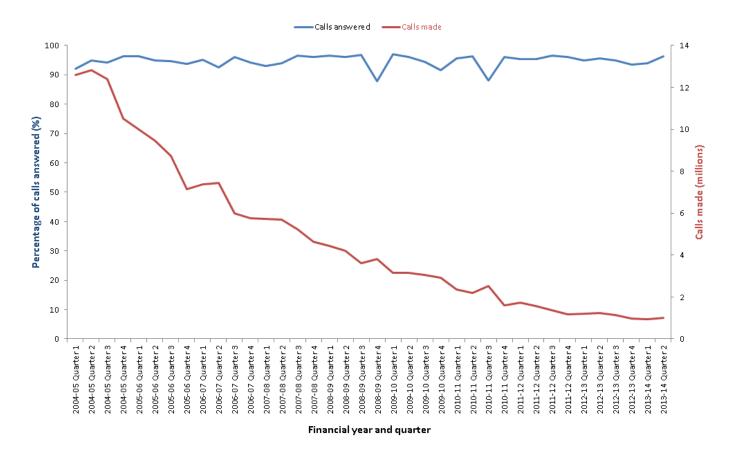
There were 4.6 million calls made to the National Rail Enquiries telephone service during 2012-13. The number of calls has fallen every year since the start of the time series and reduced by 90.6% between 2004-05 and 2012-13. The number of calls made in 2012-13 was a reduction of 22.0% compared to the previous year. The decline in the number of calls made to the National Rail Enquiry telephone service is mainly due to the introduction of more ways of accessing train information and the increasing use of these methods, such as self-service channels like websites and apps.

The percentage of calls answered within any financial year since the beginning of the time series has remained between 93.7% and 95.8%. Of the 4.6 million calls made during 2012-13 94.9% were answered, whilst 5.1% were abandoned.

2013-14 Quarter 2 Results

National Rail Enquiry telephone services (enquiries received) - chart

Great Britain data 2004-05 Q2 to 2013-14 Q2 (million calls) – Percentage of enquiries received



- Over a million calls were made to the National Rail Enquiries telephone service during 2013-14 Q2.
 The launch of self-service channels⁷ including the NRE TrainTracker[™] (2005), mobile website (2011) and mobile apps (2012) have all contributed to this trend.
- The number of calls made during 2013-14 Q2 was 19.1% less than 2012-13 Q2 but 5.9% more than the previous quarter.
- During 2013-14 Q2 the percentage of calls answered, 96.4%, was 2.5 percentage points higher than the previous quarter.

Full quarterly National Rail Enquiries telephone service data can be found at: Data Portal

A list of National Rail Enquiry telephone services tables available on the data portal is presented in Annex 2.

Revisions: There have been no revisions to the previously published dataset.

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⁷ About National Rail Enquiries http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/46383.aspx

Further details of these and historic revisions to the data set can be found at: Revisions Log					

Annex 1 – Statistical release themes and publication timetable

Statistical release	Data	Publication schedule
Passenger and Freight Rail Performance - Quarterly	Public performance measure Freight performance measure Cancellations and significant lateness	Q1: 5 th September 2013 Q2: 14 th November 2013 Q3: 6 th February 2014 Q4: 8 th May 2014
Passenger Rail Usage – Quarterly	Passenger kilometres Passenger journeys Passenger revenue Timetabled train kilometres	Q1: 19 th September 2013 Q2: 28 th November 2013 Q3: 20 th February 2014 Q4: 22 nd May 2014
Freight Rail Usage - Quarterly	Freight moved Freight lifted Freight delay per 100 train kilometres Freight market indicators (Q4 only)	Q1: 3 rd October 2013 Q2: 12 th December 2013 Q3: 6 th March 2014 Q4: 5 th June 2014
Passenger Rail Service Satisfaction - Quarterly	Complaints Complaints comments received by London TravelWatch and Passenger Focus National rail enquiries	Q1: 17 th October 2013 Q2: 19 th December 2013 Q3: 20 th March 2014 Q4: 19 th June 2014
Regional usage - Annual	Regional usage profiles	August 2014
Key Safety Statistics - Annual	Key safety facts Passenger key safety facts Public key safety facts Workforce key safety facts Train accident facts	August 2014
Rail Finance - Annual	Government support to the rail industry Rail fares index Private investment Subsidy	August 2014

Rail Infrastructure, Assets and Environmental - Annual	Infrastructure on the railways	August 2014
	Average age of rolling stock	
	Sustainable development	

Annex 2 – List of pre-created performance reports available on the ORR Data Portal

All data tables can be accessed on the data portal free of charge. The ORR data portal provides on screen data reports, as well as the facility to download data in Excel format and print the report. We can provide data in csv format on request.

Complaints

- Complaints rate table <u>Data Portal</u>;
- Complaints rate by TOC table <u>Data Portal</u>;
- Complaints by category table <u>Data Portal</u>;
- Complaints by category and TOC table <u>Data Portal</u>
- Complaints answered within 20 working days table <u>Data Portal</u>; and
- Complaints by TOC and contact method table <u>Data Portal</u>

National Rail Enquiries

National Rail Enquiries (telephone enquiries received) – table <u>Data Portal</u>

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