

Performance and punctuality

ATOC's view

- ATOC, train operators and Network Rail are all committed to improving punctuality performance because they recognise that a reliable train service is a prime requirement for passengers. They demand that the railway delivers on its timetable commitments and it must therefore continue to consistently deliver punctual journeys wherever and whenever people travel.
- The train operators have been major players in achieving the improved punctuality that has been achieved. Latest figures available by period show that the delay minutes attributed to the train operators were 269,000, 0.9% less than in the previous year and more than 16% better in the last three years.

Background and key issues

- Recent research by Passenger Focus has shown that 82% of rail passengers are satisfied with the punctuality and reliability of their train services.
- Increasing numbers of trains running and passengers travelling have an effect on punctuality performance, any significant future improvements will need to be linked to increased infrastructure capacity. New lines which are purpose built with adequate capacity would produce very high levels of performance.
- The present measure of punctuality is the Public Performance Measure (PPM), which was introduced by the Strategic Rail Authority in June 2000. The PPM combines figures for punctuality and reliability into a single performance measure, covers all scheduled services and measures the performance of individual trains against the planned timetable.
- Until 1985/6 the measure of punctuality was five minutes of delay for all trains; since then it has been ten minutes for longer distance services and five minutes for the rest.
- The lowest point for punctuality in recent years followed the Hatfield train crash in October 2000, which led to Railtrack imposing huge numbers of speed restrictions and, as a consequence, punctuality performance plummeted. In the two quarters following Hatfield, only 63.1% and 76.3% of trains arrived at their destinations within PPM.
- Since then train operators working with industry partners in national and local activities and Network Rail have made great efforts to improve punctuality performance and in the 12 months to September 2010, a total of 91.5% of trains arrived at their destination within PPM - an improvement of 0.3 PPM points over the previous 12 months and 2.7 PPM points over three years.

Relevant ATOC activity

- ATOC and its members are committed to the industry meeting the targets set by Government in the 2007 White Paper, of reaching a PPM of 92.6% by 2014 and reducing the number of delays of more than 30 minutes by 25%. A specific cross-industry body, the National Task Force, meets 10 times a year to review progress and agree what areas of activity need attention, though national focus.
- Each TOC and Network Rail agrees, *locally*, its Joint Performance Improvement Plans (JPIPs). These plans identify relevant local projects and activities to improve punctuality and could include better hardware, better processes, and resource changes.
- ATOC is working with all its industry partners to deliver improved punctuality performance through initiatives overseen by the National Task Force.
- ATOC has a specific Train Operator Member Performance Forum, which identifies common areas for attention pertinent to train operators and shares good practices between operators.
- ATOC organises an annual Performance Good Practice Fair, at which TOC practitioners may learn from each other, and an annual Fleet Reliability Seminar where the supply chain and the industry come together to improve the performance of the fleets operated.
- ATOC leads the cross-industry ReFocus programme to improve the overall reliability of the rolling stock fleet. It is a group of rolling stock engineers from the train operators, leasing companies, Network Rail, Department for Transport and the Railway Industry Association.

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