Freight Rail Usage
2017-18 Q3 Statistical Release

Publication date: 1 March 2018

Next publication date: 7 June 2018

Background

This release contains information on rail freight usage. You will find:

- Freight moved by commodity
- Freight lifted (Coal and Other)
- Freight delays per 100 train kilometres
- Freight train kilometres by operator

Coverage: Great Britain

Latest Quarter: 2017-18 Q3 (October to December 2017)

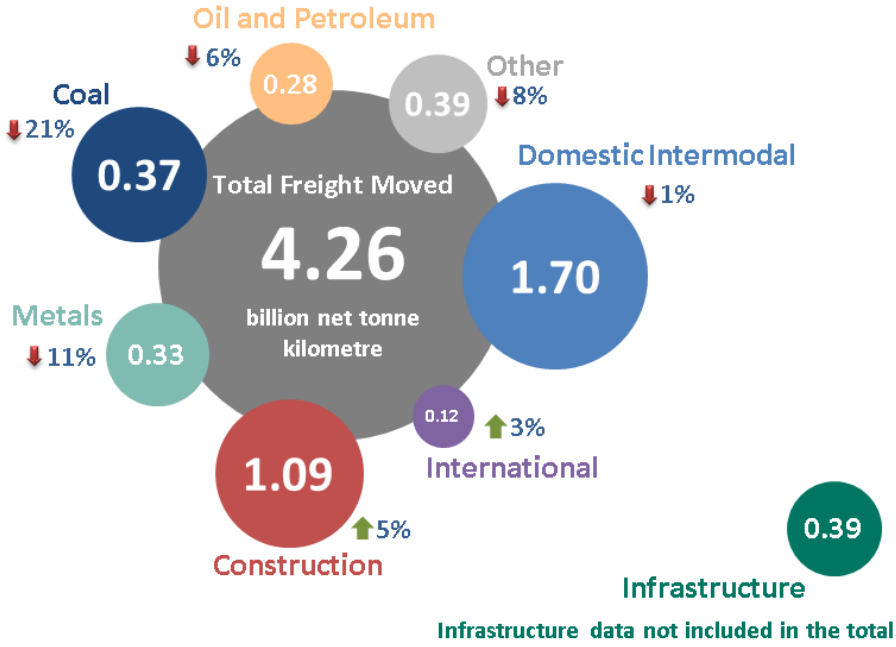
Sources:

- Network Rail
- Freight Operating Companies (FOCs)

Contents

The volume of rail freight moved in October to December 2017 fell by 3% compared to the same quarter last year, primarily due to a 21% fall in coal moved.

Freight moved by commodity, Great Britain, 2017-18 Q3



The total volume of rail **freight moved** decreased to 4.3 billion net tonne kilometres in 2017-18 Q3 compared to 2016-17 Q3. **Construction** recorded its highest Q3 freight moved with 1.1 billion net tonne kilometres.

Total **freight lifted** was 18.8 million tonnes in 2017-18 Q3. This was a decrease of 10% compared with the same quarter last year, and is the lowest Q3 volume recorded since the start of the time series in 1996-97 Q1.

Total **freight train kilometres** was 8 million kilometres, a reduction of 0.45 million kilometres (5%) compared to 2016-17 Q3. This is the lowest Q3 amount recorded since the time series began in 2010-11 Q1.

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1. Freight moved

2017-18 Quarter 3 Results

Total freight moved in 2017-18 Q3 was 4.3 billion net tonne kilometres, a 3% decrease compared to the same quarter last year. This is second lowest Q3 since start of time series in 1998-99 (after 2000-01 – 4.2 billion net tonne kilometres).

Figure 1.01: The volume of rail **freight moved** (billion net tonne km), 1998-99 Q1 to 2017-18 Q3 (Table 13.7)

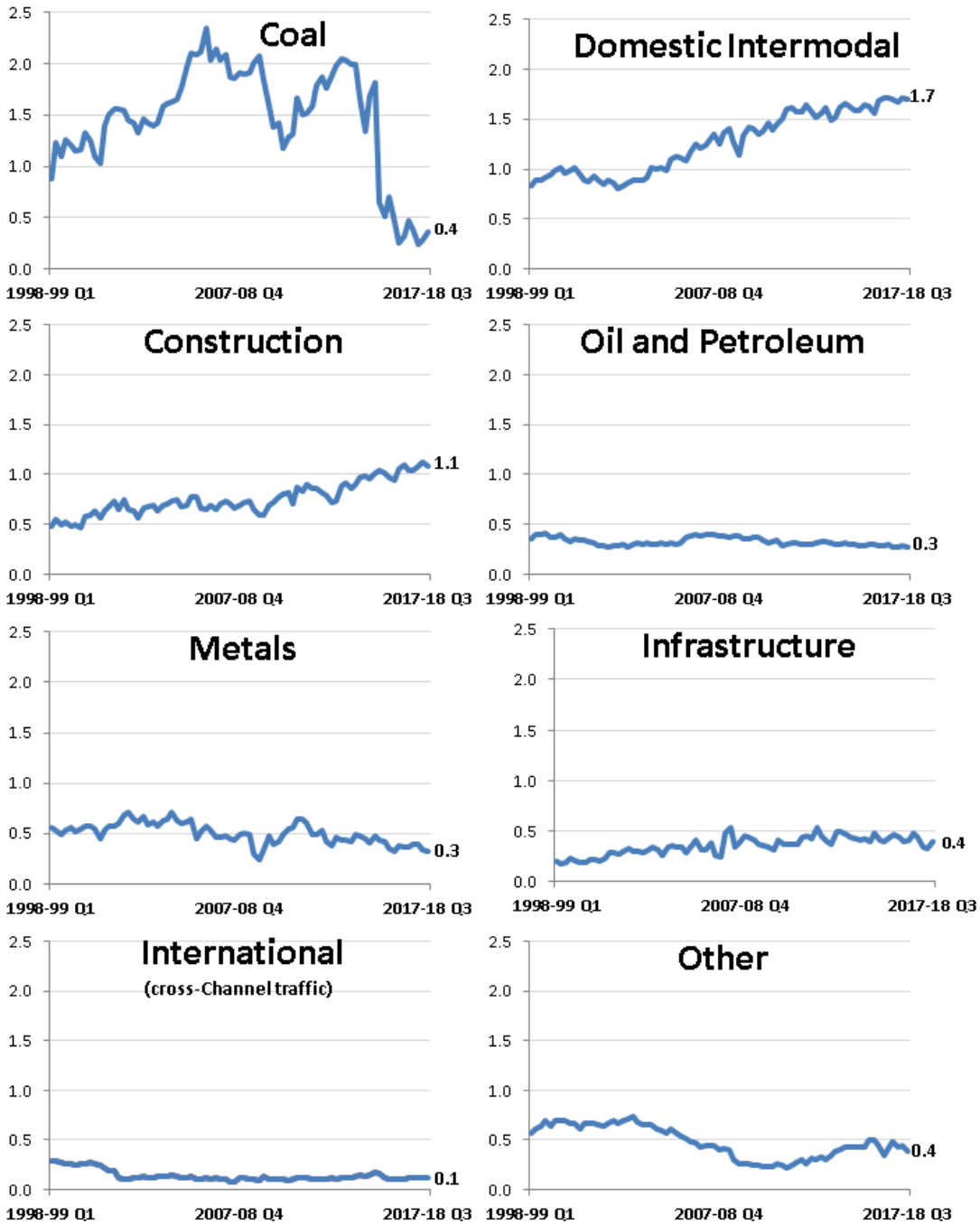
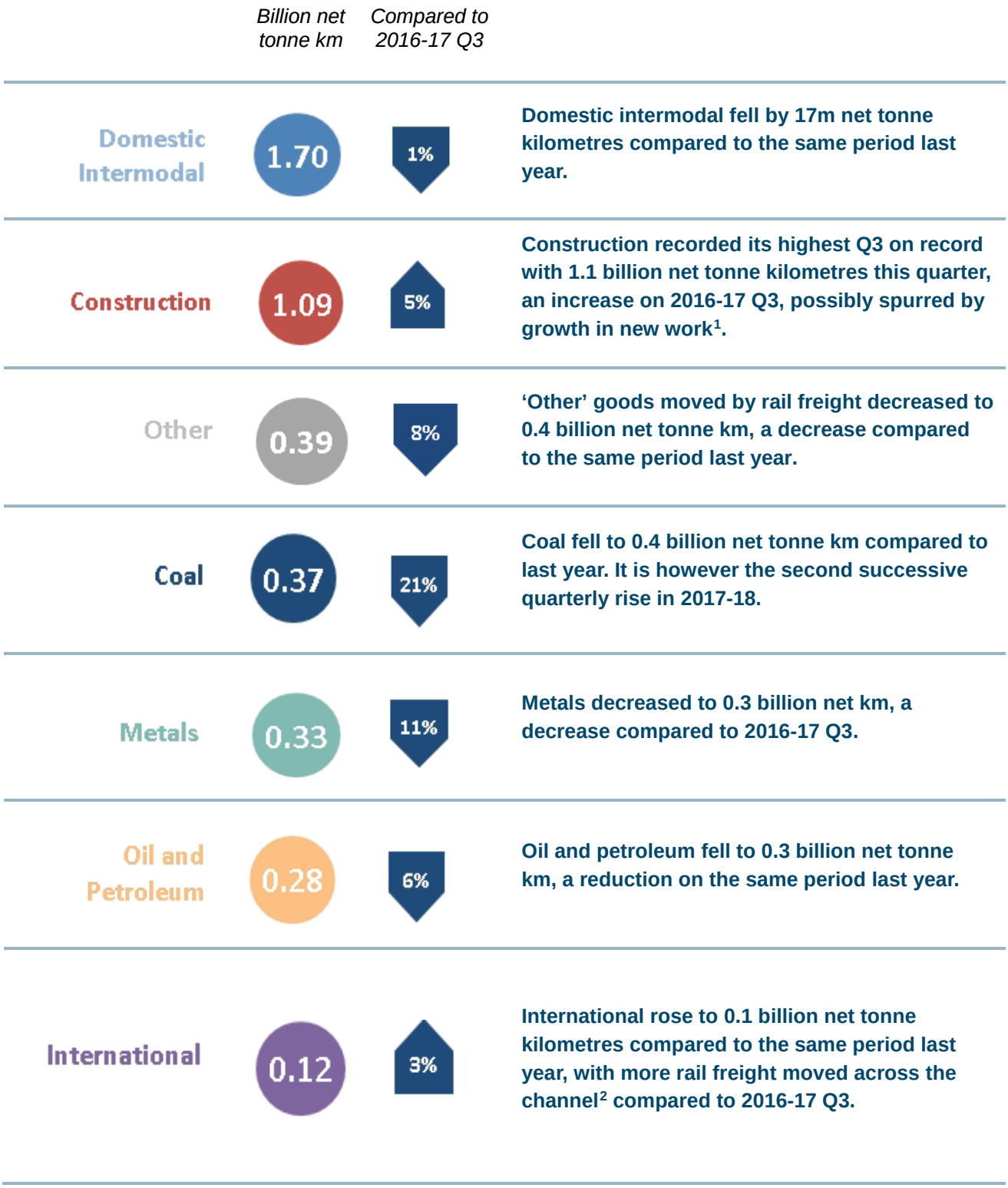


Figure 1.02: The volume of rail **freight moved** (billion net tonne km), 2017-18 Q3 compared to 2016-17 Q3 (Table 13.7)



[1] https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/constructionindustry/bulletins/constructionoutputingreatbritain/december2017 (figure 1 and 2)

[2] https://www.getlinkgroup.com/uploadedFiles/assets-uk/Media/Press-Releases/2018-Press-Release/180125-Getlink-further-increase-in-revenues-for-2017.pdf (page 4, Fixed Link Traffic)

Construction and domestic intermodal freight combined accounted for just under two-thirds of total rail freight moved this quarter.

- Quarterly freight moved data are available on the data portal in: Table 13.7

Freight moved data, measured in net tonne kilometres, shows the amount of freight which is moved on the railway network, taking into account the weight of the load and the distance carried.

Freight moved is disaggregated by seven commodities which are also summed to provide an overall total freight moved. The seven commodities are coal, metals, construction, oil and petroleum, international, domestic intermodal and other.

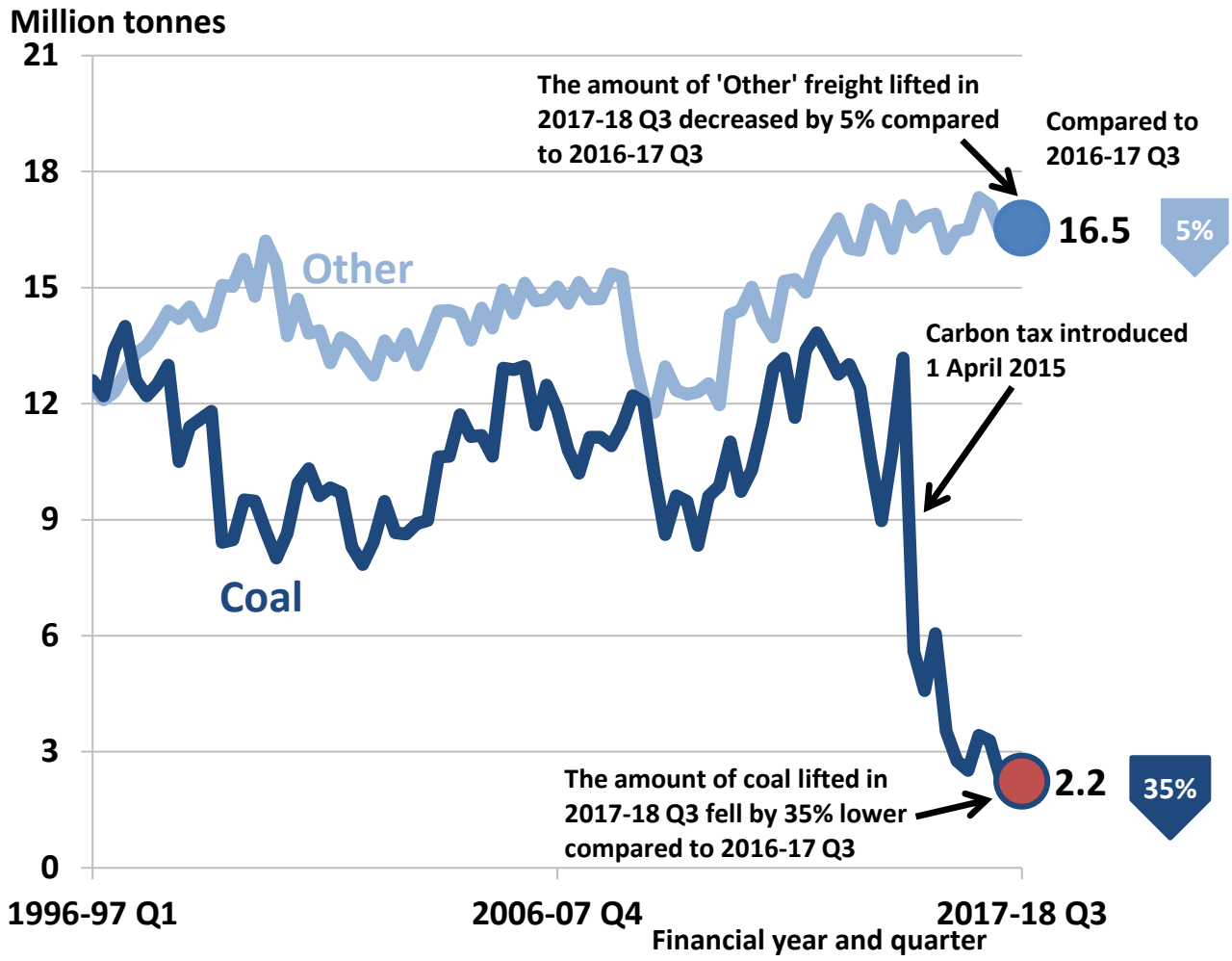
In addition to the seven commodities listed above the amount of goods used for railway engineering work is also reported, under the 'infrastructure' category. This is not included in the totals published in the freight moved tables and charts.

2. Freight lifted

2017-18 Quarter 3 Results

The total volume of freight lifted in 2017-18 Q3 was 18.8 million tonnes, a decrease of 10% compared to 2016-17 Q3. This is the lowest Q3 since the start of the time series in 1996-97.

Figure 2.01: Freight lifted (million tonnes), 1996-97 Q1 to 2017-18 Q3 (Table 13.6)



Quarterly freight lifted data are available on the data portal in: Table 13.6

Freight lifted is the mass of goods carried on the rail network measured in tonnes, excluding the weight of the locomotives and wagons. Unlike freight moved it takes no account of the distance travelled.

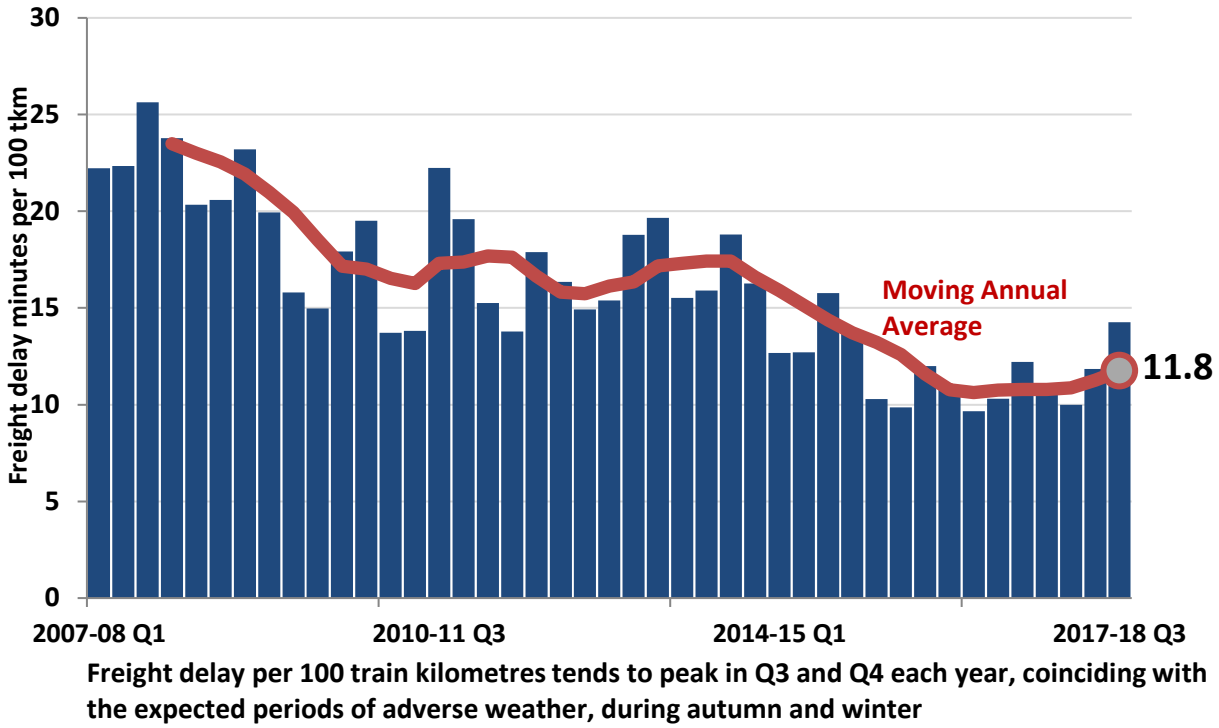
Freight lifted information is sourced from the four major FOCs: DB Schenker Rail (formerly EWS), Freightliner Ltd (formerly the BR container business), Direct Rail Services (DRS) and GB Railfreight.

3. Freight delay per 100 train kilometres

2017-18 Quarter 3 Results

Freight delays recorded 14.3 minutes per 100 train kilometres this quarter, a 17% increase compared to 2016-17 Q3. It is the highest quarterly normalised delay since 2014-15 Q3.

Figure 3.01: Normalised **Freight delay per 100 train kilometres**, 2007-08 Q1 to 2017-18 Q3 (Table 13.5)



(P) This dataset is provisional as delay data is often revised as part of the delay attribution process (please see the Freight Rail Usage quality report for further details).

- Quarterly freight delays per 100 train km data are available on the data portal: Table 13.5

Freight delay per 100 train kilometres is a normalised measure of delay experienced by FOCs.

The measure is calculated from the total delay experienced by all GB freight operators divided by their train mileage.

Freight train mileage can fluctuate depending on demand so a normalised measure allows for comparison over time regardless of changing levels of freight traffic on the network.

Freight Delivery Metric (FDM) is another measure of freight train delay. It is based on the percentage of freight trains that arrive at their destination within 15 minutes of their scheduled arrival time. Results and more information can be found in the quarterly Passenger and Freight Rail Performance statistical release.

4. Freight train kilometres by operator

2017-18 Quarter 3 Results

The total volume of freight train kilometres recorded in 2017-18 Q3 was 8 million kilometres: the lowest Q3 and second lowest across all quarters since the start of the time-series in 2010-11 (after 2017-18 Q1). This is a reduction of 0.4 million kilometres (5%) compared to 2016-17 Q3.

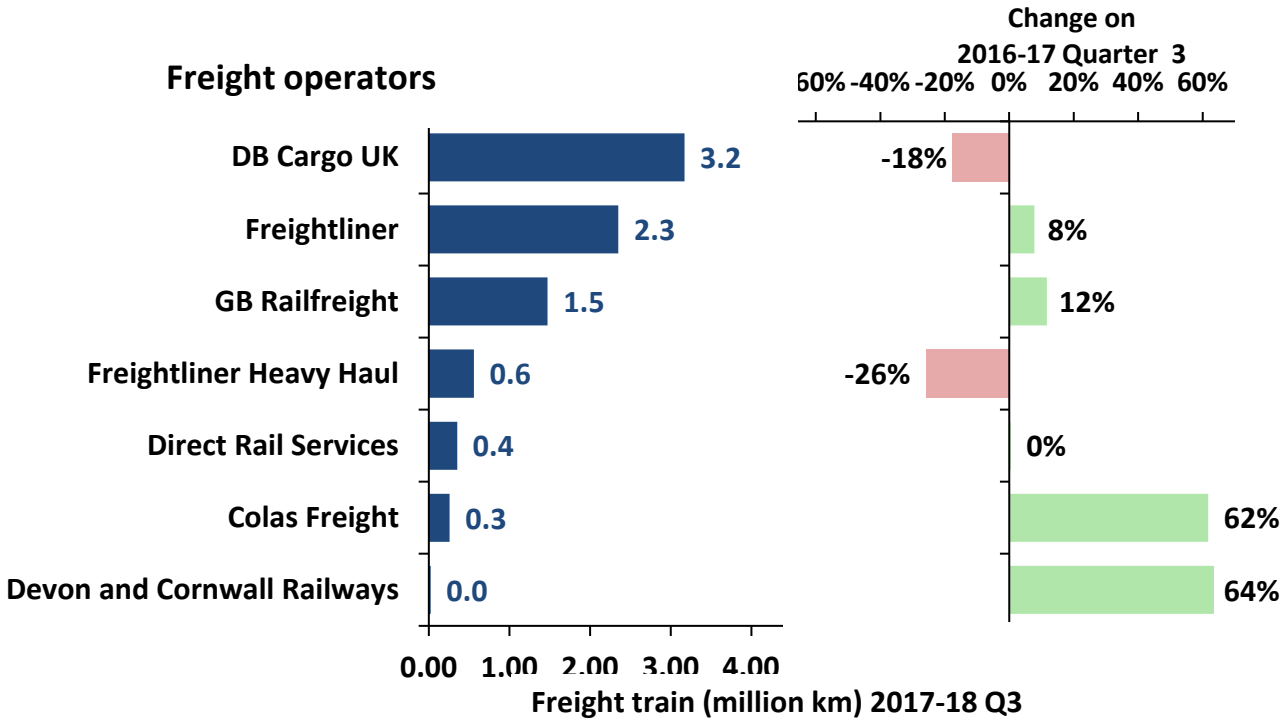
DB Cargo UK has the largest share of freight train kilometres but a decrease of 0.7 million kilometres combined with a 0.2 million fall for Freightliner Heavy Haul resulted in a drop despite five operators experiencing an increase compared to last year.

In this quarter, GB Railfreight recorded its highest freight train kilometres (1.5 million) since the start of the time-series in 2010-11 Q1, while Freightliner recorded its highest Q3 freight train kilometres (2.3 million) and second highest since the start of the time-series in 2010-11 (after 2017-18 Q2 – 2.4 million). Some of the increase in GB Railfreight traffic could be due to the new intermodal contract[3] resulting in more services operated in the quarter.

DB Cargo UK, Freightliner Intermodal and GB Railfreight accounted for 85% of all freight train kilometres in 2017-18 Q3.

[3] http://www.gbrailfreight.com/media-centre/news-releases/ (3rd November 2017)

Figure 4.01: Freight train kilometres by operator, 2017-18 Q3 (Table 13.25)



Quarterly freight kilometres by operator data are available on the data portal in: Table 13.25

Annex 1 – List of pre-created reports available on the Data Portal

All data tables can be accessed on the data portal free of charge. The 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.

Freight moved

- Freight moved, 1982-83 to 2016-17 (annual), 1998-99 Q1 to 2017-18 Q3 (quarterly) – Table 13.7

Freight lifted

- Freight lifted, 1982-83 to 2016-17 (annual), 1996-97 Q1 to 2017-18 Q3 (quarterly) – Table 13.6

Freight delay minutes per 100 train kilometres

- Normalised freight delay, 2007-08 to 2016-17 (annual), 2007-08 Q1 to 2017-18 Q3 (quarterly) – Table 13.5

Freight train kilometres by operator

- Freight train kilometre, 2010-11 to 2016-17 (annual), 2010-11 Q1 to 2017-18 Q3 (quarterly) – Table 13.25

Freight market indicators (Q4/annual publications only)

- Number of freight train movements, 2003-04 to 2016-17 – Table 13.10
- Impact on rail haulage, 2004-05 to 2015-16 – Table 13.8
- Rail market share, 1998 to 2015 – Table 13.12

Revisions: There have been some minor revisions to the previously published dataset. Further details can be found at: Revisions Log.

Methodology: For more information on data collection and the methodology used to calculate the statistics in this release please see the accompanying Quality Report.

Annex 2

Statistical Releases

This publication is part of the statistical releases which cover the majority of reports that were previously released through the Data Portal. The statistical releases consist of four annual and four quarterly themed releases:

Annual:

- Rail Finance & Rail Fares Index;
- Rail Safety Statistics;
- Rail Infrastructure, Assets and Environmental;
- Regional Rail Usage.

Quarterly:

- Passenger and Freight Rail Performance;
- Freight Rail Usage;
- Passenger Rail Usage;
- Passenger Rail Service Complaints.

A full list of publication dates for the next twelve months can be found in the release schedule on the ORR website.

National Statistics

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

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is ORR's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

For more details please contact the Statistics Head of Profession Abby Sneade on 020 7282 2022 or contact rail.stats@orr.gsi.gov.uk.

The Department for Transport (DfT) also publishes a range of rail statistics which can be found at DfT Rail Statistics. They also publish road freight statistics which can be found at Road freight: domestic and international statistics.

This publication is available at orr.gov.uk

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at orr.gov.uk