

Why are data provisional?

31st October 2011

ORR is aiming for National Statistics accreditation and, as such, it will need to demonstrate that *National rail trends* is compliant with the UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

In order to comply with the guidelines for the Code of Practice, ORR are flagging specific tables and charts that are subject to change and adding a flag to indicate that these are 'provisional' data.

The tables and charts included are:

- Passenger kilometres and journeys
- Complaints rate per 100'000 passenger journeys (GB and by TOC)

LENNON and non-LENNON data

LENNON is the basis for passenger kilometres and journeys data. LENNON is a database that holds information on all national rail tickets purchased in Great Britain.

However, LENNON does not correctly record sales of certain products, in particular some operator-specific tickets and Passenger Transport Executive (PTE) multi-modal tickets.

In previous years, the non-LENNON data have been added to the LENNON data at the end of the financial year, when all train operating companies submitted a return to ORR providing information on the annual number of non-LENNON kilometres and journeys.

The non-LENNON data was then split proportionately across the four quarters according to volume, ticket type and sector.

From 2010-11 Q1, all train operating companies supplied ORR with data on non-LENNON passenger kilometres and journeys each quarter. This process is relatively new and it has been apparent that these data can be subject to revision. Consequently, ORR will continue to flag these data as provisional until we are satisfied that the data are complete and accurate, usually after the end of the financial year.

Impact on passenger kilometres, journeys and complaints rate

The proportion of non-LENNON kilometres and journeys differs between each TOC which can affect the data for kilometres and journeys, resulting in under-reporting of kilometres and journeys in the unadjusted figures.

The complaints rate is also affected by the changes in passenger journeys data as passenger journeys are used as a normaliser to calculate the complaints rate. The complaints rate is based on the number of complaints per 100'000 passenger journeys. Any changes to the unadjusted data particularly affect those train operators with a large proportion of non-LENNON journeys as if the number of passenger journeys increases, the complaints rate will fall.

Example

Unadjusted data:

- Number of complaints = 100
- Unadjusted journeys data = 500'000
- Complaints rate = 20

Adjusted data:

- Number of complaints = 100
- Adjusted journeys data = 1'000'000 (LENNON + non-LENNON)
- Complaints rate = 10

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