



Assists and DPRC quality report:

- Passenger assistance (Rail passenger assists and bookings)
- Disabled Persons Railcards

Quality and Methodology Report

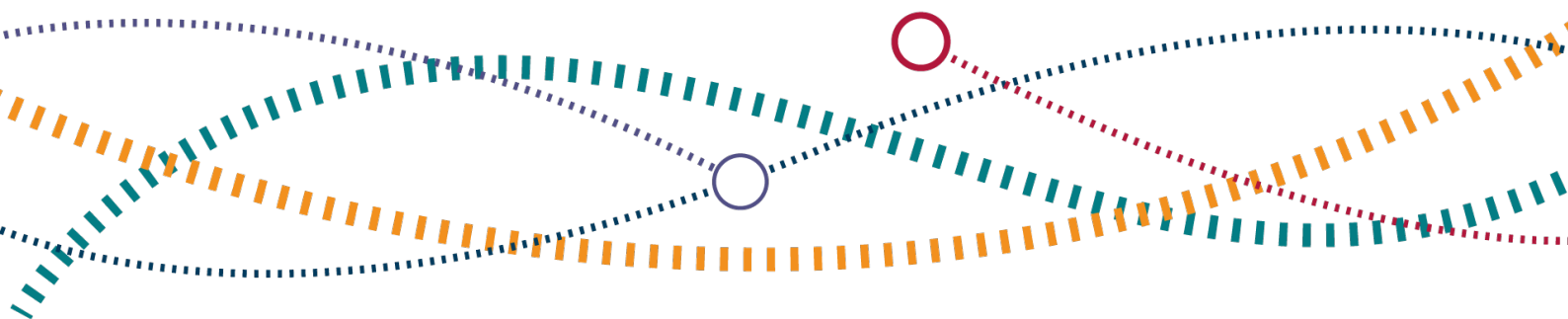
06 July 2023

Contact information:

Responsible statistician: L. Al-Ajeel

Public enquiries: rail.stats@orr.gov.uk

Media Enquiries: Tel: 07856 279808



Contents

Introduction	2
Data sources, methodology and definitions	3
1. Rail passenger assists and bookings	3
2. Disabled persons railcards (DPRC)	5
Relevance to users	6
Accuracy and reliability	8
Timeliness and punctuality	10
Accessibility and clarity	11
Coherence and comparability	12

Introduction

This is a report on the quality and methodology of statistics for the following passenger experience statistical factsheets and associated data tables:

1. Passenger assistance (Rail passenger assists and bookings)
2. Disabled Persons Railcards (DPRC)

This report helps users to understand the quality of our statistics, and also ensures we are compliant with the three quality principles in [the Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#) –

Q1: Suitable data sources,

Q2: Sound methods, and

Q3: Assured quality.

This report also provides information on the methodology and data sources used to produce the statistics.

This report covers the following areas:

- Data sources, methodology and definitions – detail on the various data sources, methodology used to compile the statistics and key definitions;
- Relevance to users – the users of the statistics, and our engagement;
- Accuracy and reliability – the accuracy, data coverage and quality assurance of the statistics;
- Timeliness and punctuality – our timescales for the production and publication of the statistics;
- Accessibility and clarity – the format of our statistics and where they can be found;
- Coherence and comparability – similar statistics published elsewhere and the degree in which the statistics can be compared over time.

Data sources, methodology and definitions

1. Passenger assistance

Data sources

The data contained within the Rail passenger assists and bookings factsheet and data tables are provided to ORR by Rail Delivery Group (RDG). Rail passenger assists and bookings data are collected through the National Passenger Assistance Booking System which is managed by RDG.

Data governance

We have a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with RDG detailing the scope and timeliness of each dataset supplied. This ensures consistent and timely data are received. This MoU is reviewed on an annual basis.

Methodology

[Passenger Assist](#) is a free service offered by operators providing passengers with disabilities or anyone else who may require help with assistance to enable them to make their journey. Passenger Assist is open to anyone in need of assistance and no proof is required to demonstrate eligibility to use the service. Assistance can range from being assisted into the station and help getting on and off the train, to help with luggage and while moving around the station. The responsibility for the assistance at each station is with the designated operator of each station, known as the Station Facility Owner (SFO). Passenger Assist is intended to make rail travel accessible to everyone, regardless of their circumstances.

Data are collected for individual stations, with boarding and alighting data counted as separate assists.

We began collecting rail passenger assists and booking data in 2012 as part of our [accessible travel policy](#) (ATP, previously Disabled People's Protection Policy (DPPP)) compliance monitoring. A condition of the operating licences that we grant to mainline train and station operators requires them to establish and comply with an ATP, which must be approved by us. One of the main requirements of the ATP is that the train and station operators must participate in Passenger Assist.

Definitions

Passenger assists

The number of assists that have been requested through the National Passenger Assistance Booking System. A typical one-leg journey may involve two assistances: one at the departure station and one at the destination station.

Passenger bookings

The number of bookings made through the National Passenger Assistance Booking System. For each booking there can be several assists requested. Therefore, assists volumes will always be greater than (or equal to) bookings volumes.

2. Disabled Persons Railcards (DPRC)

Data sources

The data contained within the DPRC factsheet and data tables are provided to ORR by RDG. The number of DPRCs sold in each period are sourced from the rail industry's LENNON (Latest Earning Networked Nationally Over Night) ticketing and revenue system.

Methodology

The [disabled persons railcard](#) provides a discount on rail tickets for people with a disability that makes travelling by train difficult. It is administered by RDG on behalf of operators. Data on DPRC issued and in circulation are provided to us by RDG. We began collecting this data in 2012 as part of our [accessible travel policy](#) (ATP, previously Disabled People's Protection Policy (DPPP)) compliance monitoring.

Definitions

DPRC in circulation

The number of disabled persons railcards in circulation which are valid to use for a discount on rail fares. This includes both one-year and three-year railcards.

DPRC issued

The number of disabled persons railcards that have been issued during the year. These can be either for one year or three years in length.

Relevance to users

The degree to which the statistical product meets the user needs in both coverage and content.

Some of the users and uses of our passenger assistance and DPRC statistics are as follows:

Train operators	Train operators use the published data to make comparisons to other train operators and to provide transparency to their customers.
Office of Rail and Road (ORR)	These data are used internally at ORR to monitor train operators' obligations to passengers in relation to their ATP licence. It is also used to inform policy decisions on operators' consumer-facing activities.
Department for Transport (DfT)	The data informs policy at DfT regarding the accessibility of the industry at train operator level and for the industry as a whole, as well as for planning and monitoring purposes.
Rail passengers	Passenger assistance and DPRC data help to inform rail passengers of the existence of both passenger assistance and discounted travel for disabled passengers.
"Inquiring citizen"	This group of users may want to access the data for unbiased facts on the volume of passenger assistance and disabled persons railcards. These users may want to use our interactive tools, infographics and clear high-level summaries to help make informed decisions.
Technical users	Technical users will often want to use the data published within our data tables. Data tables for all releases are available free of charge on the data portal.
"Information foragers"	These users will often want local data about their rail journey. They often want official data from reliable sources with a clear methodology they can trust. The data portal is presented by theme in order to see data organised in a structured way and therefore make it easily accessible.

User satisfaction

ORR's last [user survey](#) took place from mid-January to mid-April 2020. The aim of the survey was to gather feedback on ORR's new data portal; this includes statistical releases, data tables and other supplementary material. There were 42 responses to the survey. ORR created an [implementation plan](#) following the 2020 user survey.

More detailed information on users of ORR statistics and meeting the needs of users is available on our [user engagement webpage](#).

Accuracy and reliability

The proximity between an estimate and the unknown true value.

Passenger Assistance – data coverage

The data cover all station facility owners (SFOs) in Great Britain. This includes 19 mainline passenger train operators and other SFOs including Network Rail. Grand Central, Lumo, Hull Trains, Caledonian Sleeper and Cross Country are excluded as they do not manage any stations.

Our Passenger assistance data only cover booked assistance. They are not intended to include data for passengers who request assistance once they have arrived at the station (also known as turn up and go (TUAG)). However, it is possible that some unbooked assistance requests are included in the data submitted by SFOs. This is a possible source of overestimation of the total number of bookings made.

Our passenger assistance data also do not include whether the passenger actually made the trip (e.g. they do not account for “no shows”). Our data present the number of bookings made for assistance and the number of assists requested, not the number of assists made.

DPRC – data coverage

Our DPRC data cover the national disabled persons railcards administered by the RDG for Great Britain. Some operators offer their own disabled persons railcards; however, these are not included in our statistics.

Estimates of the total number of DPRCs in circulation at any one time are subject to possible sources of over-estimation. One reason for this is that applications to renew a DPRC can be made up to one month before the existing one expires. Also, when a DPRC holder dies, the record is not removed from the system. However, the impact of these factors is considered to be relatively small.

A further potential source of inaccuracy is that it is not possible to identify where an individual holds more than one DPRC. Fraudulent use of DPRCs, where an individual applies for more than one railcard, is mitigated as the card can only be used by the named individual. The card has photographic identification that should be checked and validated by staff at platform entries and exits, or onboard the train.

The impact of these limitations is expected to be broadly stable over time and therefore is unlikely to affect trends showing overall growth or decline in DPRC holding over time.

Quality assurance

All data supplied to ORR are subject to an extensive quality assurance process, including a suite of validation checks to ensure the data meets the required specification and is in line with previous trends. Any arising issues are highlighted with RDG who must confirm the anomalies or correct the data and re-submit.

These data are then prepared for publication. The process includes quality assuring the tables and charts produced and providing supporting commentary regarding the key trends, methodology and quality measures. These reports are subject to peer review. The final stage of the quality assurance process is a sign off by the statistics Head of Profession confirming the data meets the quality standards and are fit for publication.

Revisions policy

Our statement on [orderly release and revisions policy](#) outlines ORR's revision policy. Details of any revisions are available in the [revisions log](#). Further information on revisions and data series breaks can also be found in the data tables.

Timeliness and punctuality

Timeliness refers to the time gap between publication and the reference period.
Punctuality refers to the gap between planned and actual publication dates.

This data is reported periodically (4-weekly) but supplied to us on a quarterly basis, at the end of rail periods 4, 7, 10 and 13. At the end of each of these aforementioned rail periods, RDG are given 15 working days to provide their submission of the passenger assistance and DPRC data to us. Generally, these statistics are published two to three months after the end of the aforementioned rail periods.

The [publication schedule](#) available on the data portal outlines the publication dates for National Statistics quarterly and annual statistical releases and other official statistics up to 12 months in advance.

We are committed to releasing our statistics in an open and transparent manner that promotes confidence.

Accessibility and clarity

Accessibility is the ease with which users are able to access the data, also reflecting the format in which the data are available and the availability of supporting information. Clarity refers to the quality and sufficiency of the metadata, illustrations and accompanying advice.

All rail statistics data tables can be accessed free of charge on the [Data Portal](#). Commentary about the statistics and trends are provided in the factsheets. Interactive dashboards (PowerBI) are also available on the [Passenger assistance](#) and [Disabled Persons Railcards](#) theme pages of the Data Portal.

The tables currently published on the data portal are:

Passenger assistance

- Passenger assists and bookings – Table 4210
- Passenger assist by station operator –Table 4213

Disabled Persons Railcards

- Disabled Persons Railcards (DPRC) in circulation and issued – Table 4310

Coherence and comparability

Coherence is the degree to which data that are derived from different sources or methods, but refer to the same topic, are similar. Comparability is the degree to which data can be compared over time and domain.

Related data

ORR research: Experiences of Passenger Assist

We commission [research](#) on the passenger experience of booked assistance to investigate the extent to which Passenger Assist is meeting users' needs and expectations overall and how well individual operators are performing in terms of meeting their Passenger Assist obligations.

ORR research: Passenger awareness of assisted travel services

In 2017 we published [research](#) on passenger awareness of the available assisted travel services.

DfT: Disability and Accessibility Statistics

DfT publish information annually on transport related [disability and accessibility statistics](#) in England, drawn from a variety of data sources and covering all modes of transport.

DWP: Family Resources Survey

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) publish data on the results from their [Family Resources Survey](#); a continuous household survey providing information on income and circumstances of UK households, including the number of people reporting having a disability.

Transport Focus: National Rail Passenger Survey

Transport Focus' [National Rail Passenger Survey](#) consults around 50,000 rail passengers twice a year on their satisfaction with their last rail journey. The latest wave of the survey was published on 2 July 2020. Due to the pandemic and a significant drop in the numbers of people using public transport, NRPS has been paused.

Length of comparable time series

Passenger assistance

Measures	Start of time series	Any break in time series
Passenger assists and bookings (table 4210)	2012-13	-
Passenger assists by station operator (table 4213)	2012-13	-

Disabled Persons Railcards

Measures	Start of time series	Any break in time series
Disabled persons railcards (DPRC) in circulation and issued (table 4310)	2012-13	-



© Office of Rail & Road 2023

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3.

Where we have identified any third-party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at dataportal.orr.gov.uk

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

