

# Rail passenger assists and bookings

## Rail periods 11 to 13

7 January to 31 March 2024

11 July 2024

This factsheet presents data for the full financial year and the latest three railway periods. The data presented in this factsheet only covers **pre-booked assistance**.

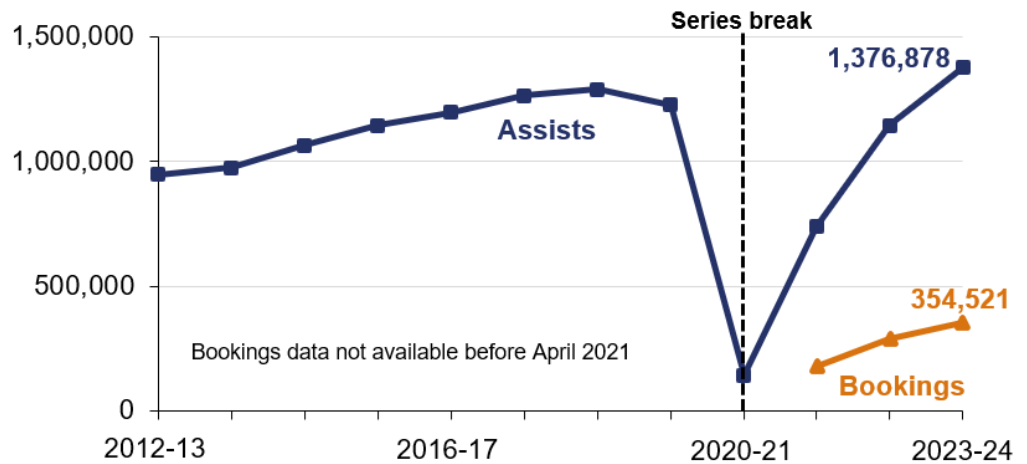
Data between 1 April 2021 and 14 October 2023 have been revised. For more information, please see page 7.

### Annual data

In the latest year (April 2023 to March 2024), there were 1,376,878 passenger assists requested, an increase of 20% on the previous year and more than in any previous year. There were 354,521 passenger bookings during the latest year.

#### Figure 1.1 Requested passenger assists and bookings have increased since the pandemic

Number of requested passenger assists and bookings, Great Britain, annual data, April 2012 to March 2024 (Table 4210)



Note: Before period 7 2020, an existing booking could not be edited. Any changes required a new booking to be created resulting in duplication. Other changes over time which affect the comparability of the data are given on page 6.

All data tables, a quality and methodology report and an interactive dashboard associated with this factsheet are published on the [passenger assistance page](#) of the data portal. Key definitions are at the end of this factsheet.

#### Background:

This factsheet contains information on the **requested number of passenger assists and passenger assistance bookings** on the rail network in Great Britain. **These statistics do not include unbooked assistance** also known as 'Turn up and Go' assists.

**Passenger assistance continued to be available throughout the pandemic.**

The bookings are made through the National Passenger Assistance Booking System managed by the Rail Delivery Group (RDG).

We collect this data as part of our [Accessible Travel Policy \(ATP\)](#) compliance monitoring.

**Source:** Rail Delivery Group

**Latest periods:** Rail periods 11 to 13 (7 January 2024 to 31 March 2024)

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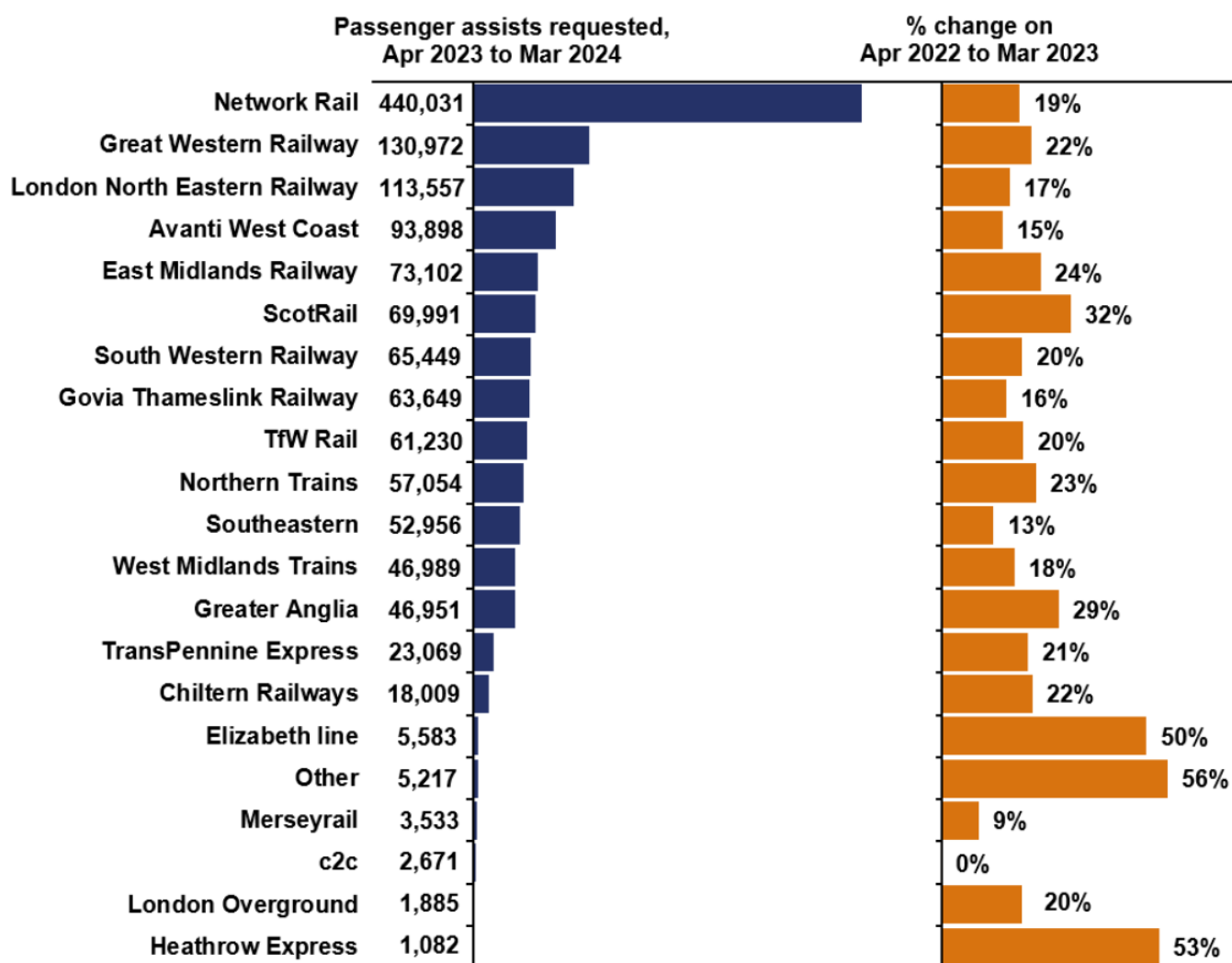
**Next publication:**  
31 October 2024

Each passenger assist requested is attributed to the **station facility owner (SFO)** that manages the station where the assist takes place. Data are presented here for Network Rail and 19 train operators (Caledonian Sleeper, CrossCountry, Grand Central, Hull Trains and Lumo do not manage any stations). [Network Rail currently manages 20 stations](#), which include many of the busiest stations in Great Britain. Data are also presented for “Other” SFOs, which include London Underground. **The SFO may be different to the train operator that the passenger travels with. Furthermore, there are some stations where the assistance is delivered by staff of a train operator that is not the SFO.**

In the latest year (April 2023 to March 2024), Network Rail managed stations accounted for 32% (440,031) of all passenger assists. Stations managed by the remaining SFOs accounted for the other 68% (936,847) of passenger assists.

**Figure 1.2 Requested passenger assists increased for all SFOs**

Number of requested passenger assists by station facility owner, April 2023 to March 2024 and change compared with the previous year (Table 4213)



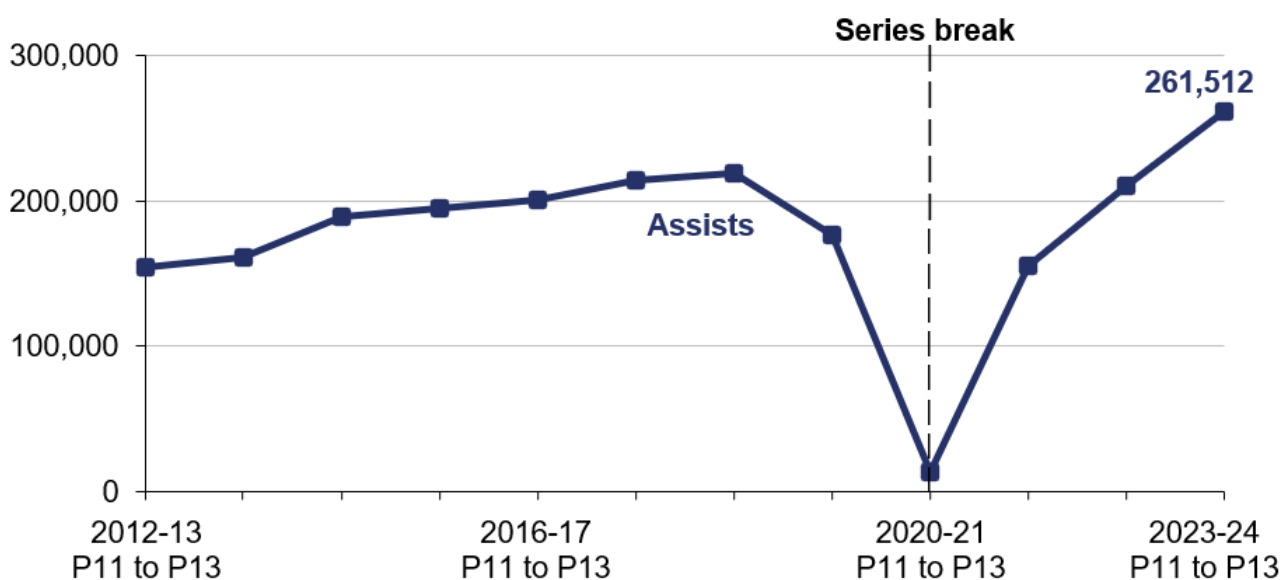
## Rail periods 11 to 13 (7 January to 31 March 2024)

In rail periods 11 to 13 (7 January 2024 to 31 March 2024), there were 261,512 passenger assists requested, up 24% on the same rail periods in the previous year and the highest level recorded for these rail periods since the time series began in 2012.

It is not possible to provide the total number of passenger bookings for the three periods combined, as bookings can relate to assists in more than one period. Data for bookings relating to the assists in each of the three periods can be found in Table 4210.

### Figure 1.3 Requested passenger assists continued to increase since the pandemic

Number of requested passenger assists, Great Britain, rail periods 11 to 13 since 2012 (Table 4210)

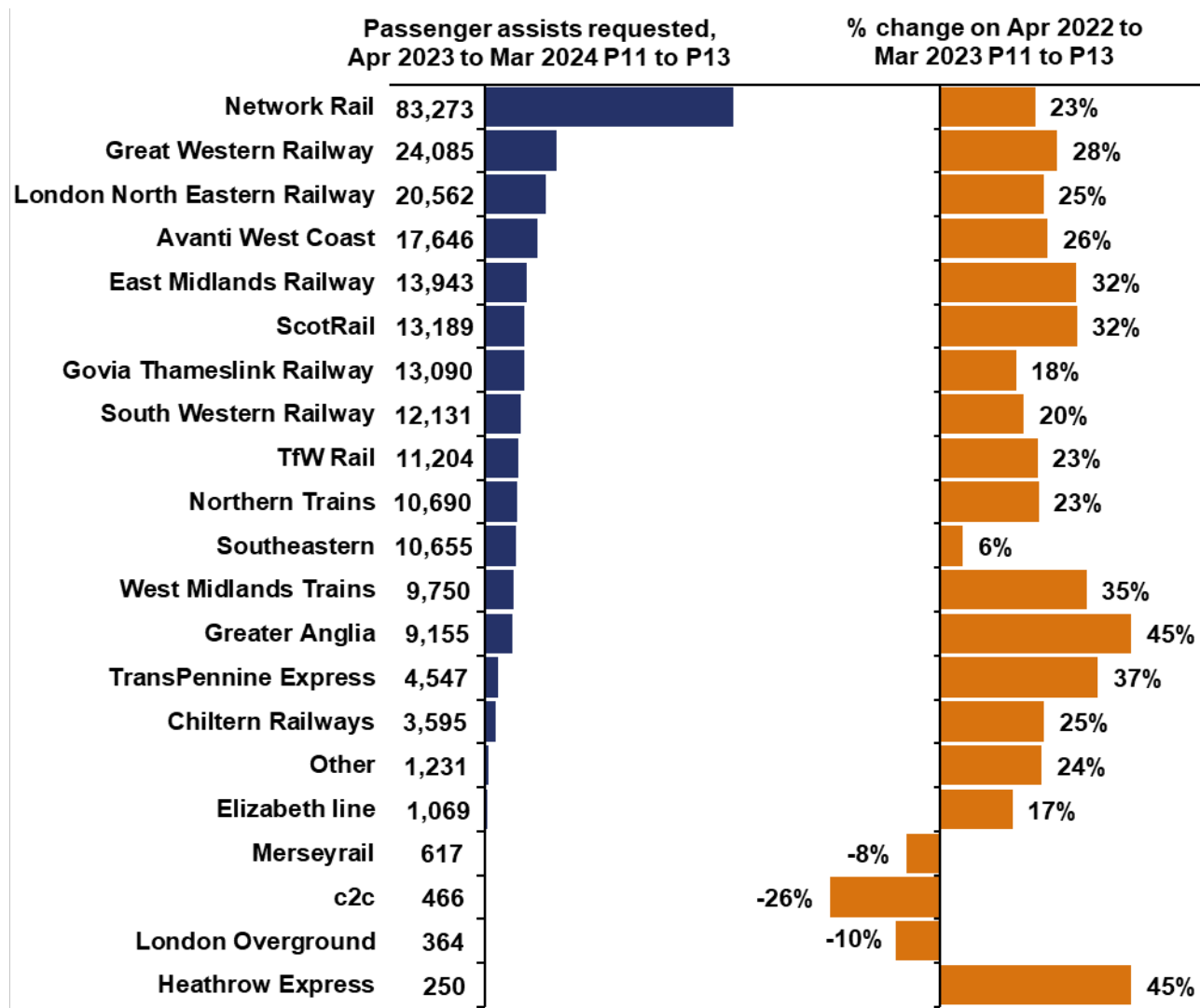


Note: Before period 7 2020, an existing booking could not be edited. Any changes required a new booking to be created resulting in duplication. Other changes over time which affect the comparability of the data are given on page 6.

During rail periods 11 to 13, Network Rail managed stations accounted for 32% (83,273) of all passenger assists. Stations managed by the remaining SFOs accounted for the other 68% (178,239) of passenger assists.

**Figure 1.4 Requested passenger assists increased for all but three SFOs**

Number of requested passenger assists by station facility owner, rail periods 11 to 13 and change compared with the previous year (Table 4213)



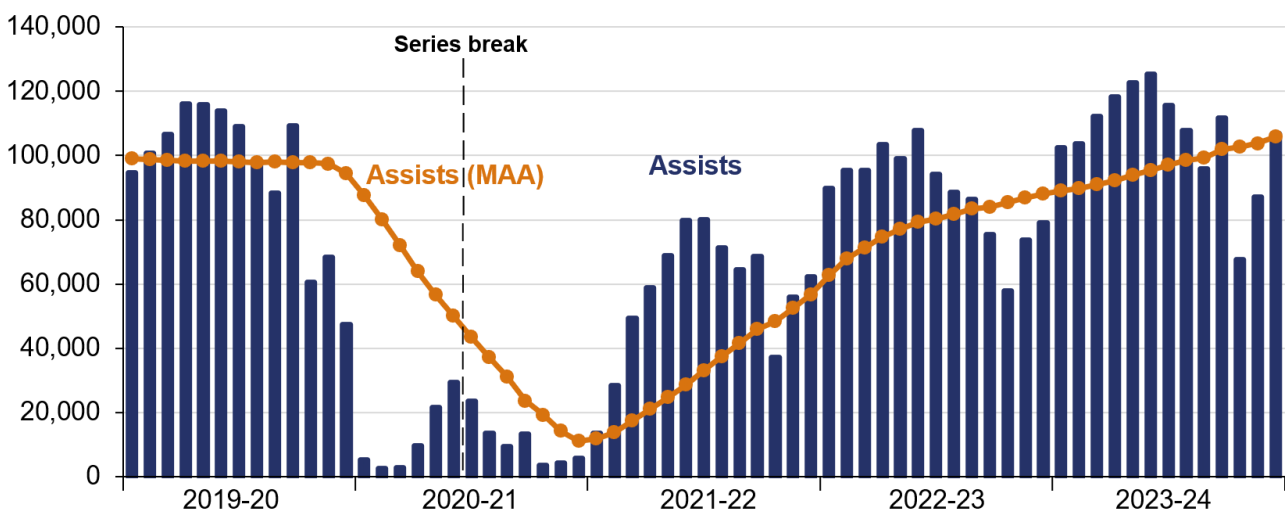
## Periodic time series

Viewing the data railway period allows the seasonality of the data to be seen. Assists are at their highest during the summer periods, especially during rail period 6 (mid-August to mid-September) and at their lowest during the winter periods, especially during rail period 11 (early January to early February).

There has been a consistent increase in the Moving Annual Average (MAA) of assists since the pandemic. The MAA is the average number of assists over the most recent 13 rail periods.

**Figure 1.5 The Moving Annual Average for assists has increased since the pandemic**

Number of requested passenger assists, Great Britain, periodic data and Moving Annual Average (MAA), April 2019 to March 2024 (Table 4210)



Note: Before period 7 2020, an existing booking could not be edited. Any changes required a new booking to be created resulting in duplication. Other changes over time which affect the comparability of the data are given on page 6.

## Definitions

- **Passenger assists:** The number of assists that have been requested through the National Passenger Assistance Booking System. This includes assists that were booked and then subsequently cancelled or not fulfilled. An assist is the help provided at one station. This may include assistance getting on or off the train or help with luggage. The data from April 2020 to March 2021 Period 7 onwards are based on journey leg information. Two assists are recorded per journey leg. One assist is counted at the origin station and one assist is counted at the destination station. Where a change of trains is required, two assists are counted at the interchange station. This results in the total number of assists always being an even number. Where an operator offers booked assistance less than two hours prior to travel the system treats this as unbooked and therefore these are not included in the booked assistance data presented in this factsheet.

Rail passenger assists and bookings, rail periods 11 to 13 (7 January to 31 March 2024)

- **Passenger bookings:** The number of bookings made through the National Passenger Assistance Booking System. One booking will have at least one journey leg and, therefore, at least two assists. The data presented here are the number of bookings that had assists requested for a given period or year. A booking made on 30 March 2023 for a journey taking place on 2 April 2023 will be counted in the data for 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 rather than the data for 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. The annual number of bookings for a year cannot be calculated from the period data as bookings can relate to assists in more than one period. The number of bookings does not equate to the number of journeys as one booking can include a return journey, while passengers may make separate bookings for individual journey legs.

## Changes over time

There have been changes over time which affect the comparability of the passenger assist data. These are:

- From April 2020 to March 2021 period 1, requirements were introduced to allow passengers to book assistance up until 22:00 the day before travel. Prior to April 2020, operators could require a notice period of up to 24 hours before travel.
- From April 2020 to March 2021 period 7, there was a change of booking system. Prior to this an existing booking could not be amended; any changes required a new booking to be created resulting in duplication. In addition, the data from the new system are based on journey leg information which results in two assists recorded per journey leg meaning that the total assist numbers are even.
- From April 2021 to March 2022 period 1, requirements were introduced to allow passengers to book assistance up until six hours prior to travel. In addition, the passenger assistance app was launched.
- From April 2022 to March 2023 period 1, requirements were introduced to allow passengers to book assistance up until two hours prior to travel.

## Data tables

Table 4210 - *Passenger assists and bookings* and Table 4213 - *Passenger assists by station operator* can be accessed on the [passenger assistance page](#) of the data portal free of charge in OpenDocument Spreadsheet (.ods) format and in csv format on request.

## Related research

Since 2017, [annual research on booked passenger assistance](#) has been conducted on behalf of ORR, surveying passengers to measure performance and satisfaction levels on an industry and operator level.

## Revisions

Ahead of the scheduled publication of April 2023 to March 2024 rail periods 5 to 7 data, it was identified that the data supplied contained unbooked assists. Since then, ORR has worked closely with Rail Delivery Group (RDG) to correct the data and to ensure ORR better understands the system and process for producing the passenger assist data. The following changes have been made to the data from April 2021 to March 2022 period 1:

1. Unbooked assists have been removed from the data.
2. Assists relating to journey legs that do not involve the use of a mainline train have been removed. This includes journeys on London Underground and particularly affects assists at Network Rail managed stations.
3. The method for calculating the annual number of bookings has been revised. Previously, the total was the sum of the bookings for each period in the year; however, bookings can relate to assists in more than period. The annual bookings data since April 2021 have been recalculated to prevent double counting.
4. Improvements have been made to RDG's data extraction process resulting in an increase in assists for April 2021 to March 2022 periods 1 to 7. This increase partly offsets the decreases described above.

Overall, the largest revision to previously published data is for April 2023 to March 2024 periods 1 to 4. This is due to the number of SFOs using the passenger assist staff app for recording unbooked assists increasing considerably from April 2023.

Nationally, the largest revision for a single period is for April 2023 to March 2024 period 4 where there are 57,920 fewer assists and 24,807 fewer bookings. For the year April 2022 to March 2023, there are 219,706 fewer assists and 147,594 fewer bookings. The largest revision for a single period and SFO is for April 2023 to March 2024 period 4 where there are 19,117 fewer assists at Network Rail managed stations. For the year April 2022 to March 2023, assists at Network Rail managed stations have been revised down by 85,033.

For more information on the scale of the revisions, please see the [revisions log](#).



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