

# SCOTLAND'S RAILWAY



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Scotland's Railway keeps passengers and freight moving - and communities connected - across a large and diverse network of more than 2,800 miles, which includes world-famous structures such as the Forth Bridge and Glenfinnan Viaduct. Our railway provides a vital lifeline, not just for commuters between our seven cities, but for our rural communities and just in time goods to supermarkets too.

## Safety

On 12 August 2020, Scotland's Railway suffered the devastating loss of a customer and two railway colleagues when a ScotRail passenger train derailed near Stonehaven. Driver Brett McCullough, conductor Donald Dinnie, and passenger Christopher Stuchbury died in the accident, while six other people on board the train suffered injuries.

This incident has had a profound effect on our industry, and we've been working to support the multi-agency investigations into what happened and support all those affected by the tragedy. Network Rail provided two updates to the Secretary of State for Transport on 28 August 2020 and 16 March 2021.

This tragic incident also highlighted the growing impact our changing climate is having on how we need to run our railway. Immediately after Stonehaven, Network Rail commissioned two independent taskforces led by Dame Julia Slingo and Lord Robert Mair to review how we should manage weather events and earthworks. Their reviews were published on 17 March 2021. Network Rail is reviewing the recommendations and is developing action plans.

We've created and fully embedded a safety taskforce in Scotland's Railway. Our focus is on engagement with our frontline colleagues and contractors and how we implement changes to improve their safety in planning and carrying out work on our railway.

Our lost time injury performance has been inconsistent in 2020/21 although we did see an improvement in the second half of the year. There have been 40 workforce and contractor injuries this year, resulting in our Fatality Weighted Index (FWI) being behind target.

We've seen a reduction in the number of pedestrian near-miss events in the past year. This has been delivered through a combination of education, enabling, enforcement and engineering. We're recording fewer injuries each period, however our FWI performance was still dominated by injuries resulting from slips, trips and falls. In November 2020 we ran a Sure-Footed campaign designed to reduce the number of these incidents across Scotland's Railway. In addition, road traffic accidents continue to present the biggest risk and a driving improvement plan is underway.

Scotland's Railway is changing the way it thinks about safety through leading a shift in safety culture to make sure we get everyone home safe every day. The first steering group meeting took place on 5 February 2021 and engagement sessions with our top 40 leaders and key influencers of our frontline colleagues have taken place.

## Train Service Delivery

In a normal year Scotland's Railway runs more than 2,500 passenger trains - carrying commuters and long-distance business and leisure travellers - and up to 50 freight services every day. At the height of the pandemic we adapted quickly to changing travel patterns and public health guidance, reviewing the timetable, making sure we were supporting passengers who needed to travel. Scotland's Railway Train Service Performance in 2020/21 showed real and sustained improvement.

Our public performance measure (PPM) performed well throughout the year, with strong underlying infrastructure performance, reduced passenger numbers and a lower number of train services all contributing to achieving 93.1 per cent. The PPM shifted from 88.8 per cent in April 2020 to 93.1 per cent in March 2021. Great performance is key to passenger satisfaction and achieving this milestone shows the strong progress we've made to give passengers and freight users a punctual and reliable train service. While achieving this is an important milestone, our target remains at 92.5 per cent moving annual average (MAA) for the rest of the Control Period to 2024, so we still have work to do to maintain this level of performance as passengers begin returning to Scotland's Railway.

We made progress throughout the year with several initiatives relating to improving train performance. The platform extension works at Milngavie station were completed, providing greater resilience and service reliability on the network. In addition, the review of the timetable

through the Scotland performance sub-group was asked to 'Build Back Better' to help implement a higher performing timetable than that in place before the pandemic, which will bring more resilience in the longer term.

## Efficiency

Overall financial performance on Scotland's Railway was worse than target, largely because of the impact of Covid-19 related costs and unplanned costs associated with extreme weather-related incidents in August 2020 and February 2021. Underlying business performance, however, remained strong, particularly in support of PPM measures, and work continues on forward planning for the remainder of Control Period 6 (CP6) and into the early part of CP7, with an emphasis on asset resilience and driving down costs, and working across boundaries with ScotRail and Transport Scotland on whole-industry efficiency.

Covid-19 costs included extra staff costs, vehicle costs, fogging costs (to disinfect premises) and reduced income from property and variable track access charges. Covid-19 has also resulted in delays to works at Queen Street (due for completion in 2021) and Kintore stations (completed October 2020) and track renewals, particularly the High Output track delivery team where specialist colleagues were unavailable during the early part of the pandemic.

Efficiency performance this year was better than target, delivering total efficiencies of £67 million. This was mainly due to improved unit rate delivery within earthworks, being

partially offset by increased track unit rates and deferral of signalling schemes and their associated efficiencies to later in the Control Period.

Recent reviews have highlighted the need to strengthen further the governance processes for efficiencies that were embedded at the start of the Control Period and an action plan has been mobilised and will be fully implemented by the end of June 2021.

Throughout the course of the last financial year, there has been a reduction in available risk funding mainly due to the impact of Covid-19 on Scotland's Railway and other cost movements across the portfolio. There is a projected £60 million remaining in risk funds for the remainder of the Control Period with on-going reviews considering how to reduce down costs and so increase the level within the fund.

## Sustainable Growth

Building on the announcement from the Scottish Government's Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity in July 2020, a rolling programme has been developed to create a greener Scotland by decarbonising Scotland's Railway by 2035. This will include electrification of large parts of the railway, replacement of rolling stock, along with gauge, depots and stabling, and enabling works to decarbonise Scotland's Railway and encourage passengers and freight users to switch from road to rail.

The delivery of our asset renewal programme was showing an improving trend from the start of the year but was impacted by the deferral of significant track renewal projects on the West Coast Main Line because of Covid-19. Due to planning timescales these projects could not be recovered in the financial year, however additional maintenance works were completed to sustain asset reliability in the short to medium term, minimising the risk of asset failures affecting the train service.

Infrastructure reliability met the target set for the year. However, the impact of climate change on our assets cannot be underestimated. Extreme weather in August 2020 saw heavy rainfall over a short time that significantly impacted the resilience of parts of the Scotland's Railway network, particularly around earthworks, drainage and structures. This included the earthworks failure at Carmont, Stonehaven and the destruction of a section of the Edinburgh-Glasgow line at Whitecross, which was washed

away when prolonged heavy rain caused a breach of the adjacent Union Canal. While investigations are ongoing, plans are being implemented to help prevent similar incidents in future.

## Customers and Communities

The spring 2020 National Rail Passenger Survey showed that passenger satisfaction at our managed stations continued to be strong, with Glasgow Central increasing to an overall score of 90 per cent and Edinburgh Waverley improving to 88.5 per cent. In the year, Scotland's Railway received 6,997 queries and 1,268 complaints from the public. Over 96 per cent of complaints were dealt with and closed within the 29-day target. This was an improvement of almost five per cent on the previous year. The total number of enquiries received was lower in the year, due in particular to the lack of station-related enquiries during periods of lockdown.

## People

Our people strategy recognises the opportunities of the Putting Passengers and Freight First (PPFF) organisational change programme and embedding the new structure implemented in 2020. PPFF gives the opportunity to set an agenda that's more closely aligned with the needs of Scotland's Railway, taking account of the socio-economic policies and drivers that are specific to Scotland, by moving decision making directly into the region. This also enables the forging of greater links with Scotland's communities, universities and colleges, including supporting career opportunities, and positioning Scotland's Railway as a diverse and inclusive community partner and employer of choice.

Recognising the challenging environment, including the recommendations made by recent reviews, and the effects of Covid-19 and decarbonisation, we're working to ensure continuous improvement alongside the most efficient use of taxpayers' money. We're focussing on strategic workforce planning, training and development for our people, as well as succession planning, early engagement and targeted recruitment to ensure business continuity and diversity in our workforce. Our aim is to empower our people always to be safe, to care about the railway, its users, each other, and put teamwork at the heart of all we do.

Two members of Scotland's Railway were awarded MBEs this year. Simon Constable, route operations manager and



Dave Williams, stores coordinator were recognised for their contributions to the Covid-19 effort, within the railway and the wider community, during this challenging time. Simon and Dave worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic to support and protect colleagues and offer vital help to vulnerable groups.

## Something we're proud of

One particular area of success for Scotland's Railway over the last year has been the engagement and interaction with all our colleagues on the Scotland's Railway bi-weekly Teams live calls. These calls are a really useful way to keep teams across the network informed. They connect leaders with colleagues right across the business, we share what's happening across the network, and how we're continuing to adapt to keeping the country moving. The Q&A platform provided by the technology we use is really helpful for addressing key questions and we answer as many questions as possible in the time available. For example, there was a suggestion early in the pandemic on adding messaging to personal protective equipment (PPE) to encourage the public to keep their distance. This proposal was swiftly put into action and newly branded high-visibility vests were rolled out to front line colleagues across Scotland's Railway, starting with level crossing teams who could be in close contact with the public.

## Something we need to improve

Safety is always a priority on Scotland's Railway. We are focussed on two areas for further improvement, slips, trips

and falls and road accidents. We are seeing too many colleagues being injured. As a result, there is a renewed focus on how we shape our safety culture and a renewed commitment to everyone home safe every day.

## Plans for the year ahead

Scotland's Railway's focus in the year ahead will be playing our part in helping the country recover from Covid-19. As the country begins to emerge out of lockdown, we'll have to make pragmatic decisions to balance service levels against the cost of running a railway for what we expect to be reduced passenger numbers.

To help attract customers back to the railway we have to provide a safe and reliable service and we're making strong progress in achieving that. There is though much more to do to protect the railway from the increasing frequency of adverse weather events. September 2020 to March 2021 were incredibly challenging for Scotland's Railway and there is a critical need for renewed focus on how we respond and manage severe weather in particular.

As part of the Scottish Government's ongoing investment in Scotland's Railway, Network Rail is supporting Transport Scotland in the development and delivery of its strategic transport projects review. Through a pipeline of projects, our railway will support Scotland's social, economic and environmental needs, realising the benefits of rail for communities and businesses across Scotland. We will also drive forward the next planning and delivery stages of the rolling programme of decarbonisation, supporting the Scottish Government's ambitions for net zero emissions.