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Train punctuality revealed by new rail figures

Posted 11/07/12

Network Rail and train operating companies have, for the first time, published data showing train punctuality to the nearest minute - as opposed to the nearest five or 10 minutes used by the industry standard public performance measure (PPM).
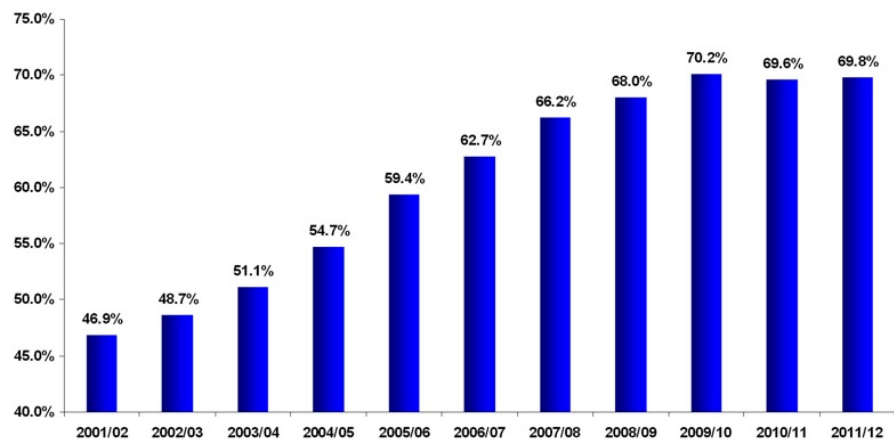
The figures show that in 2011/12 69.8% of trains arrived within a minute of the scheduled time - up from 46.9% in 2001/02 although down from the 70.2% recorded in 2009/10. According to the latest PPM figures, 91.6% of trains were on time over the past 12 months.

National train punctuality to within one minute

Network Rail said the data shows that during the past decade the railway has delivered a 50% improvement in the number of trains arriving early or up to 59 seconds after their timetabled arrival. Taking into account the large rise in services during the past 10 years, it claims this represents an 80% increase in 'right-time' arrivals - more than five million in 2011/12 compared to 2.78 million in 2001/2.

The release of the data has been hailed as the latest step by the industry to be more transparent with train operators now looking at how much more detail can be released. The aim is to provide current and historical data on the performance of individual services on the National Rail Enquiries website.

Network Rail said no other railway in the world publishes the measurement of the punctuality of its rail services within a minute with the majority using something similar to the UK's standard PPM punctuality measure. This records trains as being on time if they arrive within five minutes (for short distance services) or 10 minutes (for long distance) of the scheduled time. PPM was introduced in 1997 and measures delays whether the fault of the rail industry or due to third parties or external factors, such as vandalism, extreme weather or people being hit by trains.

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