

'Legalised daylight robbery': Rail firms slammed as new figures show train fares soared three times faster than cost of living since privatisation

- Cost of a standard ticket risen more than 200% in just 20 years
- Retail Price Index has risen by 66% over same period

By [Daily Mail Reporter](#)

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Rail firms have been accused of 'legalised daylight robbery' of commuters as a new report shows that since privatisation fares have risen three times faster than the cost of living.

In a fierce attack on the industry, the Transport Salaried Staffs Association (TSSA) said the Government had given the industry a 'licence to print money' which it had exploited to rip customers off ever since the break up of British Rail.

The TSSA published a list of the biggest rises, saying a walk-on fare from London to Manchester had jumped by 208per cent, to Exeter by 205per cent and to Cardiff by 196per cent.



Ripped off: Passengers have faced train fare rises of more than three times the cost of living since privatisation, a new report claimed

The Retail Price Index has increased by 66per cent in the same period.

TSSA general secretary Manuel Cortes said: 'Private rail firms were given a licence to print money in the 1990s and they have been ripping off passengers ever since.'

'This chart demolishes the Tories' claim when they sold off British Rail - namely that fares would get cheaper.'

'What we have seen is little more than legalised daylight robbery on a grand scale.'

'Passengers have suffered all the pain, while private operators have seen all the gains.'

'Now we are number one in Europe for the highest fares.'



'Daylight robbery': The rail industry came under fierce attack for putting some fares up more than 200 per cent since privatisation

Train companies disputed the report, saying it only covered a handful of the most expensive fares.

A spokesman for the Association of Train Operating Companies said: 'This is misleading because out of the millions of tickets on sale, the TSSA has only looked at a handful of the most expensive tickets which only a tiny minority of passengers buy.'

'Based on figures from the rail regulator, the average price paid for a single journey is £4.95 compared with £4.82 in 1995 when inflation is taken into account.'

She added: 'Once inflation is removed, the cost of a season ticket is actually cheaper now than it was 15 years ago, and fares have risen at a significantly slower rate since privatisation than during the last 15 years of British Rail.'

'The average annual real terms increase since 1996 is 1.2per cent; this compares to a 2.5per cent increase during the last 15 years of British Rail.'

'Fares during the last 20 years of British Rail rose at more than twice the rate they have done since privatisation. The average annual real terms increase since 1996 is 1.3per cent; this compares to a 2.7per cent increase during the last 20 years of British Rail.'

'It is also worth noting that there are 4,000 more services a day than there were at privatisation – an increase of 20per cent.'

A spokesman for the Campaign for Better Transport said passengers were getting a raw deal.

He said: 'The British railway network is the most expensive in Europe, but provides very bad value for money.'

'The industry may be able to refer to cheap fares, but there are usually a list of strings attached in order to take advantage of discounts, for example, having to book a long time in advance, only travelling a certain times.'

'These conditions make it very inconvenient for many passengers and distort the true cost of travelling.'

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that go on the same list as the energy companys, and the government then wont it, but wot will be done, zip as camerone will come in his car that we pay for and say, its all in a good cause,

- [dave](#) , grimsby, United Kingdom, 05/2/2013 22:56

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Comparing fares before and after privatisation does not give the full picture as the railways are also subsidised (and were previously subsidised) by the taxpayer. Until this subsidy is scrapped no comparison can be made.

- [Peter Pan](#) , Neverland, 05/2/2013 21:49

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not much to say that already hasn't been said before. Just can't wait for HS2, and the fallout when it flops. Surely the money spent on this white elephant waiting to happen, would be better spent upgrading the current network, buying new, less cramped, more efficient stock. Will it happen, not a chance.

- [mrbadexample](#) , worthing, United Kingdom, 05/2/2013 18:33

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Maggie did not privatise the railways - she actually thought it was impossible to. John Major was the Tory PM that passed the legislation. When Railtrack ran into difficulties Tony Blair decided on a sort-of-re- nationalisation called Network Rail where there are no shareholders but taxpayers pay all the Bills. (Currently £28 billion owing in debt). The operating services are run 'privately' although 2 are currently being run by the Government (eg East Coast Main Line) and most of the others by other EU countries nationalised railways such as Deutsche Bahn (DB). Deutsche Bahn run most of our freight services as well as Chiltern Railways so you could say the Railways have already been re-nationalised.

- [Brother Anthony](#) , Reading UK, 05/2/2013 18:12

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- [Brother Anthony](#) , Reading UK, 05/2/2013 18:09

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I checked a return fair to Torquay and it was £128 by train and £49 by National Express and the train wasn't much faster than the bus. I think I will stick to buses in future.

- [Panda](#) , Lincoln, United Kingdom, 05/2/2013 18:07

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As with all privately run franchises, the directors and shareholders will know the price of everything and the value of nothing. Why would these Brigands care when profits pour into their off shore bank accounts whilst you're stood on a cold soggy station platform waiting to board an already overcrowded box on wheels?

- [Trepoopuddle Martyr](#) , Helston Cornwall, United Kingdom, 05/2/2013 18:01

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Just to say that Governments have funded an extremely expensive Safety system on the Railways known the train protection and warning system (TPWS). It was introduced to comply with the Railway Safety Regulations, 1999 following the Southall and Ladbroke crashes and prevents trains passing Red Signals. The whole country was equipped by 2004 and crashes are now extremely rare if not non-existent. Before its introduction the Railways often had 3 crashes a year involving loss of life. The last crash involving a passenger death was in February 2007 in Cumbria (5 years ago). One could argue that travelling by rail has got exceptionally better because of this system.

- [Brother Anthony](#) , Reading UK, 05/2/2013 17:54

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None of Thatcher's privatisations were for the benefit of the people, they were tools that she used to destroy the trade unions. She cared not one jot for the common man.

- [jimboin](#) , Preston, United Kingdom, 05/2/2013 15:52

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Warning: This report was commissioned for a Trades Union that has an axe to grind. I've seen the report and there is no reference at all to the cheaper saver fares that have been introduced since 1995 and that the vast majority (80%) of people now buy. Look a little deeper, check the Virgin website, and you'll find that you can get a single from London to Manchester for £26 - less than half the price it cost in 1995. Book later and you'll pay more, but purchasing the day before, even on a peak time train will be far cheaper than claimed by TSSA

- [Fish](#) , Staffs, 05/2/2013 15:37

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