



## Overview of the Railway Crime

### Safety Performance Report

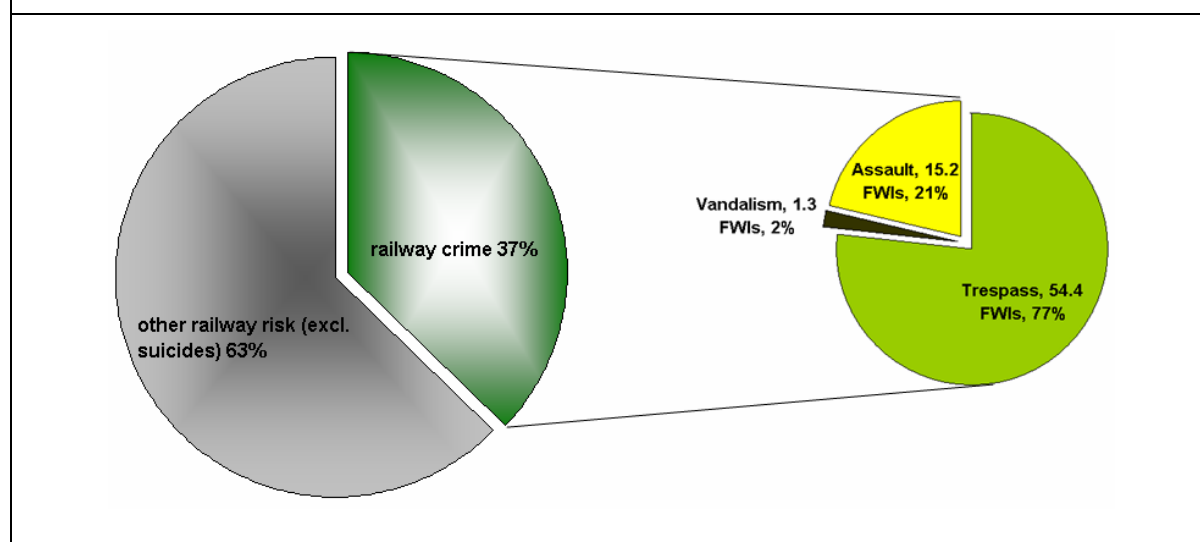
#### Introduction

On 27 May 2006, a 19-year-old student was killed near Oxenholme while travelling on a Glasgow to Paignton service. He had been stabbed by a fellow passenger. This event highlights the potentially serious nature of railway crime and the danger that subsequent media coverage could significantly effect public perceptions of personal security.

This overview provides a summary of the recent safety performance relating to railway crime, which is described in detail in the full railway crime safety performance report (available via the RSSB website: [www.rssb.co.uk](http://www.rssb.co.uk)). The report presents details of the levels of risk to passengers, the workforce and members of the public. Recent trends are identified to highlight areas of changing risk, which are affected by changes in public behaviour. The report also identifies the underlying causes that contribute to the risk from crime, along with the initiatives and research projects in hand to improve safety further.

The total risk attributable to crime is almost 71 fatalities and weighted injuries (FWI) per year. This represents 37% of the railway's overall risk profile. Chart 1 shows risk from crime in the context of all railway risk, using the same measure. The right-hand pie indicates that the majority of this comes from trespassers (77%), with the second highest risk arising from passenger, public and workforce assaults (21%). A recent review of BTP and SMIS data related to passenger assaults revealed that SMIS under-represents the level of passenger risk. We now have a programme to rectify this deficit. For further details, see the full report.

**Chart 1 Railway crime risk in context of overall railway risk (excluding suicide)**



#### Key safety facts

The report contains detailed analysis on all areas of railway crime. A number of key issues have emerged:

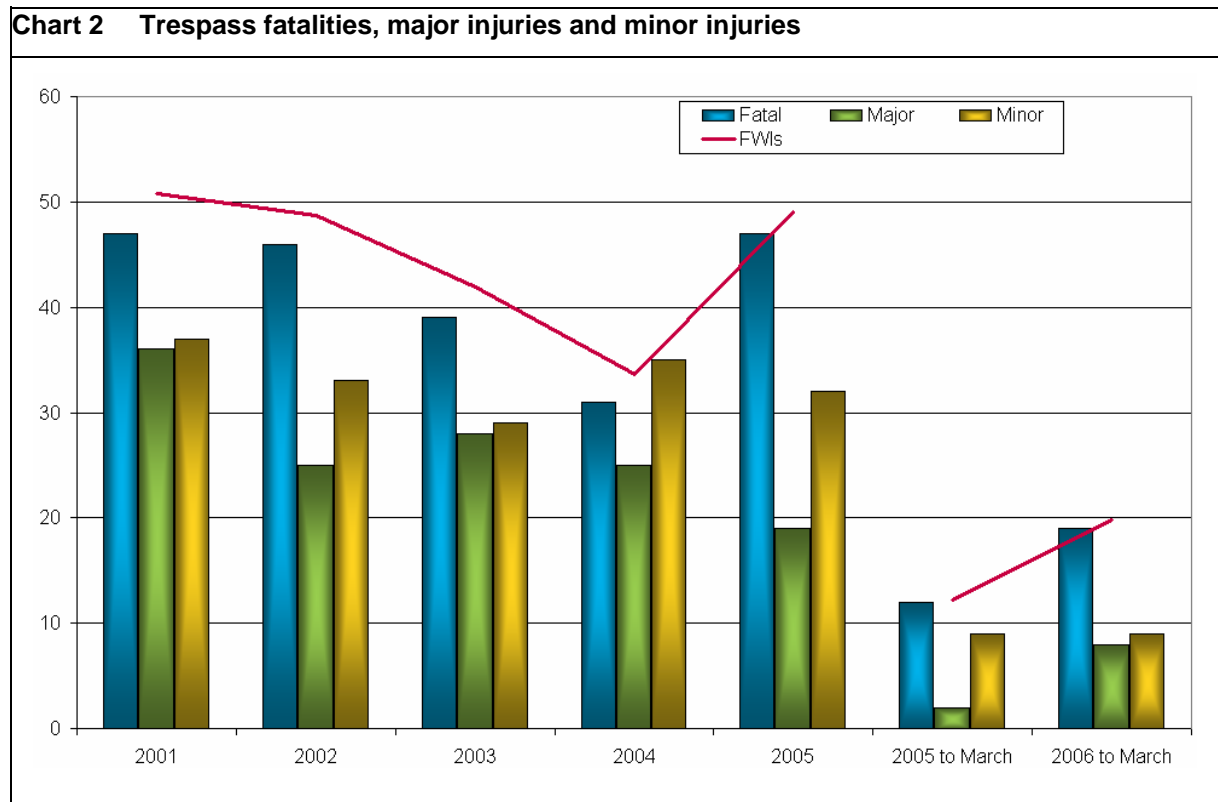
- **Trespass fatalities have returned to the levels last seen in 2001.**
- **There has been a continued increase in recorded assaults (up 4% on 2004).**
- **Trains struck by missiles have fallen by 12%.**
- **Train fires resulting from acts of vandalism are down 50%.**
- **British Transport Police recorded robberies fell by 15% in 2005.**
- **Sexual offences have reduced by 12%.**

## Trespass

Every year, a significant number of people lose their lives or sustain injuries while trespassing on the railway.

Chart 2 shows the trends in trespass fatalities, major injuries and minor injuries for the period 2001-2005, along with figures for the first quarter of 2006. Note that the death toll had been falling year-on-year, but 2005 saw a return to the levels last seen in 2001. This increase has continued since January 2006, the first three months of the year returning a higher rate than for the same period in 2005.

This is clearly an area of concern, as our industry is not meeting an aim of the Safety Strategy Plan, which states that we should maintain safety during the current period of change on the railway. It also implies that the initiatives brought in to reduce trespass are not succeeding as well as the industry perceived prior to the high levels recorded in 2005.



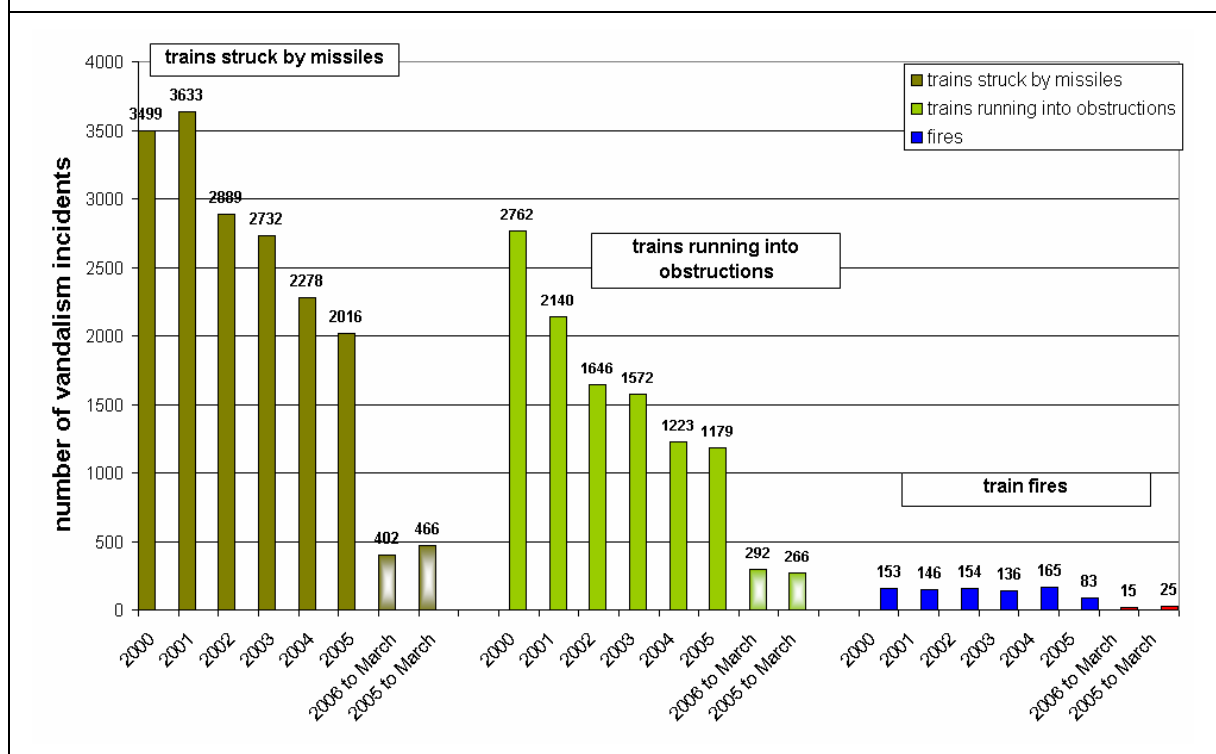
## Vandalism

The main problem with acts of vandalism is their potential to cause harm to others (as the result of a train accident or train fire, for example).

Recent trends in vandalism related to train accidents are presented in Chart 3, overleaf. It is evident that the situation has been improving steadily. If the incident levels recorded between January and March 2006 continue, the downward trend observed since 2000 is likely to be maintained in 2006.

In 2005, the number of trains struck by missiles fell by 12% - a very encouraging sign. Note too that the level of train fires resulting from vandalism fell by 50%. This is probably related to the presence of CCTV cameras in the new rolling stock introduced to replace Mark 1 electric multiple units in the south east.

**Chart 3 Vandalism causing train accidents**

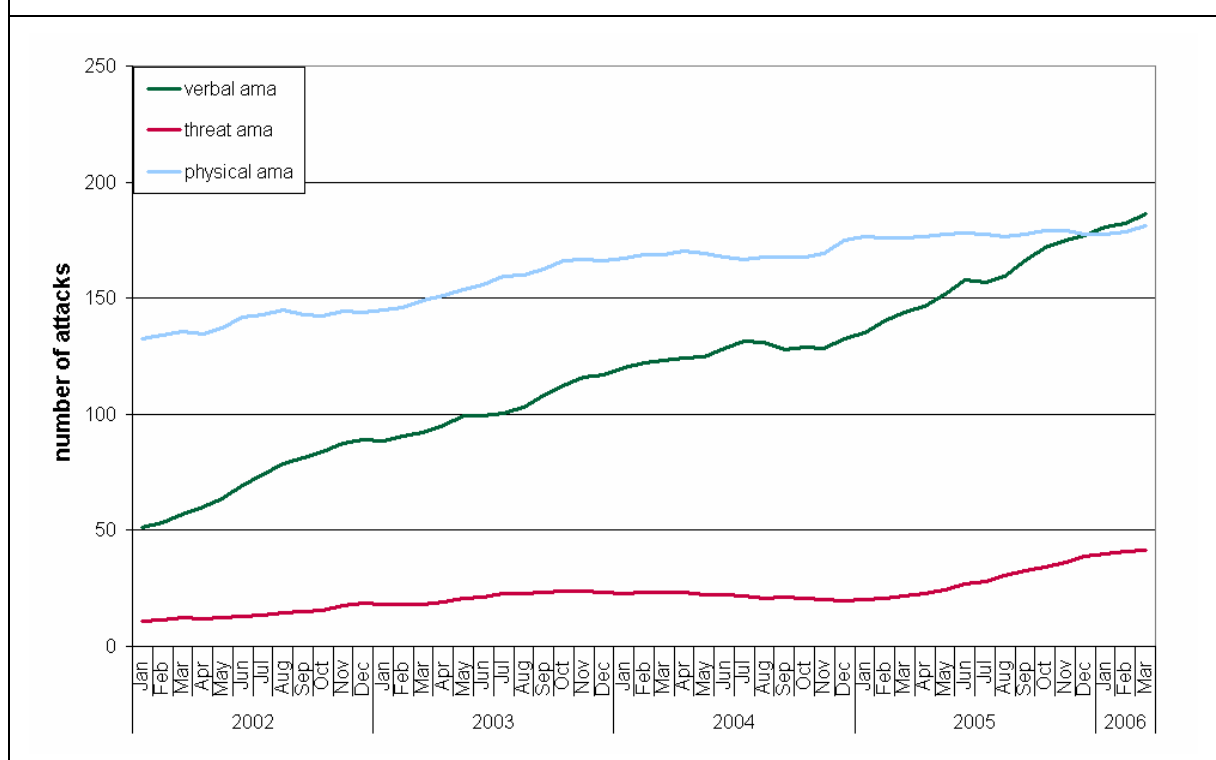


**Violence at work**

Five members of railway staff suffered major injuries from assaults in the first quarter of 2006. This is, unfortunately, in line with previous years (the total for 2005 was 12).

Chart 4 illustrates the recent trends in attacks, broken down by assault type (physical, threats and verbal abuse). It clearly shows that the encouragement of reporting – coupled with the instigation of a supportive management policy – has led to an increase in the reporting rate of verbal abuse and threats. The chart also shows that the annual moving average (AMA) of those assaults more likely to result in physical injury has, for the last sixteen months, remained constant (at around 177 per month).

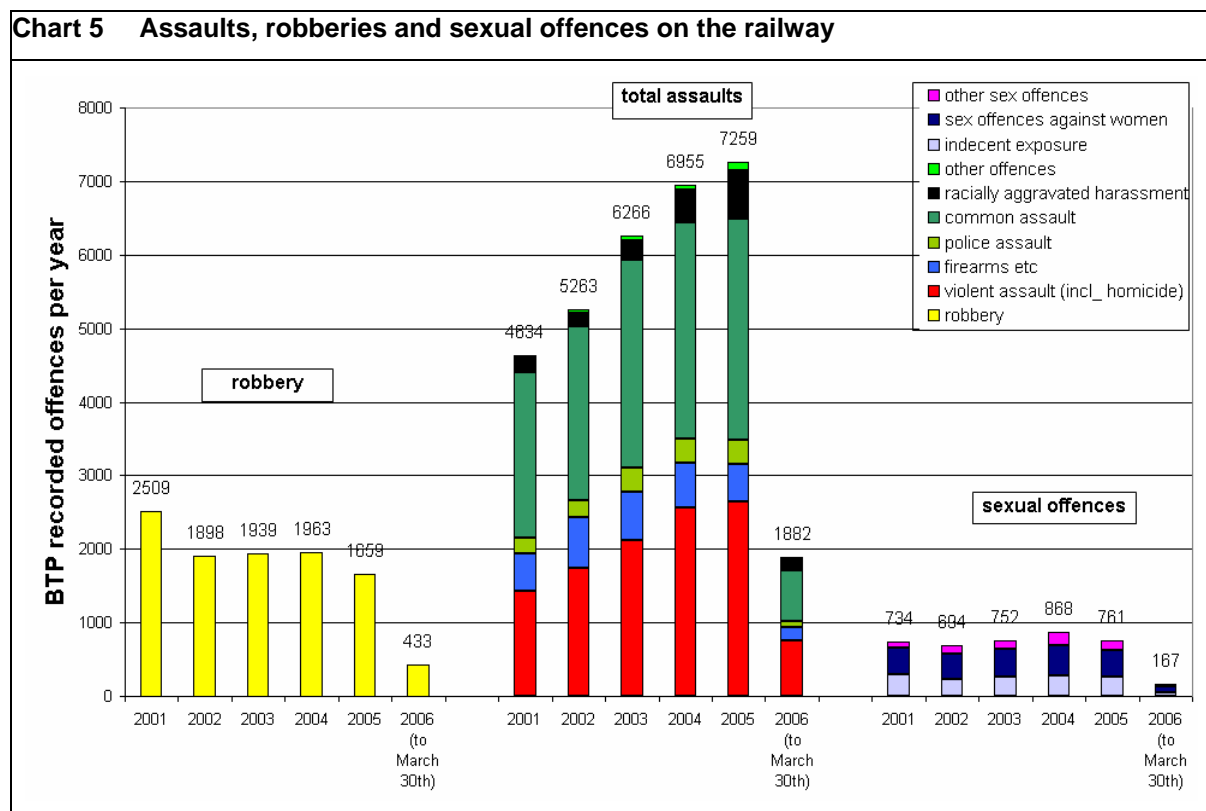
**Chart 4 Total attacks on the workforce by type**



## Crime against persons

Recent trends in assaults, robberies and sexual offences on the railway are shown in Chart 5. Note that robberies recorded by the BTP fell by 15% in 2005. This is the lowest figure seen in the analysis period, indicating a clear improvement at a time when passenger journeys have risen by 12%. Sexual offences witnessed a reversal and dropped by 12% in 2005, when compared to 2004. However, incidents of racially or religiously aggravated harassment rose by 48%. Some of this may be due to an increase in reporting following the BTP's encouragement of a zero-tolerance approach to this sort of crime, as well as an increased level of police activity resulting in more crimes being detected and, consequently, recorded.

Recorded assaults rose by 4% from 2004, with recorded violent assaults rising by 3% over the same period. Both categories now stand above their 2001 levels by 57% and 86% respectively. The sharpest increases occurred in 2003, coinciding with the first full year after the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard. This is broadly in line with national police figures, which rose significantly as British Crime Survey-measured violent crime fell. However, it is worth reiterating that the levels of assault only rose by a small margin in 2005 (4%). This may indicate that the high increases seen previously are now levelling out.



It should be remembered that railway crime accounts for about 37% of the risk on the railways. While there have been several areas of noted improvement, there is still much work to be done. However, our industry partners are tackling the issues with a range of proactive projects. Details of these local and national initiatives are included in the full report, which also includes contact details to promote the sharing of ideas across the industry. Many companies are currently working hard to reduce the level of crime and improve the safety of those who use and work on the railway.

### Further information

The full Railway Crime report can be downloaded from the RSSB website: [www.rssb.co.uk](http://www.rssb.co.uk).

To discuss this report, or any other safety performance report, please contact either:

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