



12 July 2017

## **Britain's railways get even safer**

Britain's railways continue to become even safer, according to the latest figures from rail industry body, RSSB.

The latest data covering the 2016-7 financial year clearly shows further reductions in the amount of harm in terms of injuries and fatalities to rail passengers, the workforce and the wider public on what was already the safest form of land transport, seeing 1.73 billion passenger journeys.

It has also been an unprecedented 10 years without a train collision or derailment killing passengers or rail staff, with recent years also seeing a reduction in risk from accident causes such as signals passed at danger.

An update to EU-wide data also saw the UK continue to be the safest of the 10 biggest railways in Europe.

The latest figures also point to evidence that stations are becoming safer environments with substantial reductions in slips, trips and falls causing injury to passengers.

However, RSSB has been keen to point out that it's impossible to remove all risk, and that the railway is not immune to misfortune. Incidents can and do continue to occur, sometimes with fatal consequences. The industry recognises this and continues to challenge itself to improve.

Despite a very positive bigger picture, RSSB's *Annual Safety Performance Report* does show some adverse trends. With sustained progress on rail safety issues, road traffic accidents to rail staff has emerged as the main source of fatality risk to the railway workforce and as a key area of focus. The number of recorded incidents of harassment and common assault has also increased, possibly in part due to better reporting.



Other key statistics in the report include:

- 39 people were killed in accidents connected to the railway during the 2016-7 financial year:
  - 4 passengers died on stations in incidents at the platform-train interface
  - 1 passenger died on a train after leaning out of a window and being struck by railway infrastructure
  - 6 members of the public died in accidents at level crossings, 4 pedestrians, and 2 vehicle occupants
  - 1 member of the workforce died in a road traffic accident
  - 27 people were killed while trespassing on the railway
- There has been a marked increase in the number of assaults between passengers – even when normalised for the increase in passenger journeys made, partly driven by better reporting
- There were 237 suicides or suspected suicides, considerably fewer than last year, supported by interventions by staff to help vulnerable people

RSSB’s Director of System Safety and Health, George Bearfield said, “This year’s health and safety performance figures are hugely encouraging and reflect well on both the increasingly progressive and mature safety processes industry deploys, and the professionalism of the rail workforce as a whole.”

“A safe railway is a productive railway, and so it is in everyone’s interests to ensure vigilance and focus is fixed firmly on the risks highlighted, and for industry to continue to work together across company boundaries to bring about further improvements.”

**-Ends-**



## Notes to Editors:

You can download the report and high-resolution versions of the charts from our website at:

<https://www.rssb.co.uk/risk-analysis-and-safety-reporting/safety-performance-reports>

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## About RSSB

Through research, analysis, and insight RSSB supports our members and stakeholders to deliver a safer, more efficient and sustainable rail system.

Our vision is to be a centre of excellence, valued by its members and stakeholders as an essential contributor to their success

Our independent evidence based approach is built on strong technical capability, and the enabling of collaborative industry engagement for the benefit of the whole rail system

Our strategic priorities are to support:

- Healthy and safe collaboration and inform industry decisions to reduce risk and harm
- Enhanced performance and efficiency updating standards, modernising systems, informing and enabling innovation
- The application of sustainability principles by collating and sharing tools and best practice

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