

RSSB – ANNUAL SAFETY PERFORMANCE REPORT 2015-16

Introduction

In this Reps' Bulletin the Railway Safety and Standards Board (RSSB)'s *2015-2016 Annual Safety Performance Report* (ASPR) that was published on 14th July 2016 will be considered with the intention of highlighting workforce issues.

Reps may wish to read this Bulletin alongside those published last year which covered the ASPR 2014-15 (H&S/111/Aug 2015) and ASPR 2013-14 (H&S/109/June 2015), both of which are available on TSSA's website.ⁱ

As with the earlier publication, the 2015-16 Report also includes a range of details, including:

- comparisons with the safety performance of European railways;
- intermodal comparisons showing that mainline rail travel is safer than other forms of transport
- SPAD incidents (reduced to 277 in 2015-16 from 298 in 2014-15). However, 70 of the SPADs in 2015-16 related to freight trains which when normalised by the number of train miles,

puts the rate of freight SPADs consistently higher than for passenger and other trains combined. RSSB notes that "In recent years, the normalised trend in freight SPADs has been increasing."ⁱⁱ

This is additional to a discussion about trends related to the safety of passengers alongside a very sobering consideration of incidents affecting members of the public (not passengers) in areas such as suicides, trespassers and the use of level crossings.

The ASPR is an important document that picks up safety trends from "incidents connected with the operation of the mainline railway in Great Britain, but is extended to include fatalities and injuries to the workforce occurring in road traffic accidents while driving on duty, and fatalities and injuries in yards, depots and sidings (YDS)."

The latest ASPR covers the financial year ending in March 2016, and, like previous years, it is designed to both

inform those in the industry who manage risk as well as railway employees, trade unions, safety reps, passengers, government ministers and others.

For union reps working in the industry, the document spells out a series of issues that should require their attention for potential further action.

Where can I find the Report?

The ASPR is available on the RSSB's website. There are two reports:

- Full Report
- Key Charts Report

Both are available at:

<http://www.rssb.co.uk/safety-risk-model/annual-safety-performance-report>

The reports are also available, along with a video of a webinar which seeks to highlight key facts and answer some questions, at:

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

A further document, *Learning from Operational Experience Annual Report* that goes with the ASPR has not so far been published for the period 2015-16.

Headline Statistics in the ASPR

The Full Report gives some headline statistics that includes:

- 0 passenger or workforce fatalities in train accidents for the ninth consecutive year;

- 8 passenger fatalities in individual incidents at stations, including 6 at the platform-train interface;
- 0 reported workforce fatalities!;
- 37 public fatalities, including 30 people who were trespassing and 3 deaths at level crossings
- 252 suicides or suspected suicides (287 in 2014-15) but with a further 71 people left injured (including 33 with major injuries);
- 304 major injuries to passengers or members of the public and a further 22 major injuries to trespassers;
- 157 (182 in 2013-14) major injuries to members of the workforce (including 34 in YDS).

What are the trends in workforce safety?

Behind the headlines there are other details presented in the Report that identify trends in workforce safety.

Amongst these trends are that:

- **Fatalities:**
 - 1).** Since April 2005 there have been 24 fatalities whilst on duty, including 19 infrastructure workers and four people killed whilst driving road vehicles;
 - 2).** **2015-16 is the first financial year on record during which there have been no workforce fatalities;**

- **Major injuries** (as defined by RIDDOR 1995, Schedule 1):

1). There were **157 workforce major injuries in 2015-16**, the lowest in the five years of data published in the ASPR (ie, since 2011-12);

2). Infrastructure workers (defined as “those whose work involves inspecting, maintaining and renewing the track, signalling and telecommunications equipment, and other railway infrastructure, such as earthworks and bridges”) experienced 58 major injuries whilst **working on or about the running line**, the lowest in a decade:

- 28 incidents attributed to slips, trips and falls, the lowest level since 2008-9;
- almost a third (19 incidents) were due to contact with an object, lower than the 24 reported in 2014-15 but otherwise the highest number since 2009-10;
- 5 were due to machinery/tool operation, higher than the 4 incidents reported last year;

Since 2006-7, slips, trips and falls have represented 47% of all major injuries whilst on or about the running line with a further 30% originating from contact with an object.

Despite the number of major

injuries in this category being the lowest in a decade, it should be noted that major injuries predominate in the injury profile for running line work, accounting for 69% of the harm since 2006/07.

3). Road driving risk is becoming an increasingly important element that affects workers as witness the two fatalities due to this cause in 2014-15 (included within a total of 6 since 2006-07, of whom 5 were infrastructure workers).

Whilst there were no workforce deaths this year, the number of reported road driving injuries during 2015-16 stands at 142 (including 7 major injuries), significantly higher than the 124 (including 4 major injuries) recorded in the previous year.

The industrial sector of the 142 injured workers was:

	2014/5	2015/6
TOC	15	25
FOC	2	3
Contractors	8	3
Other	24	16
Network Rail	75	95
Total	124	142

Over the past 10 years, the greatest proportion of road driving incidents has involved staff working for Network Rail

(67%), most of whom being employed as infrastructure workers. However, the Contractors category also comprises infrastructure workers, adding a further 6% of reported injuries amongst this group of employees.

The categories TOC, FOC and Other account for around one quarter of reported injuries. A number of these events involve train drivers, station staff and other members of the workforce travelling by taxi to work locations.

3). For staff working on trains or at stations, there were 52 major injuries. The most frequent events were:

- slips, trips and falls (18)
- platform train interface (11)
- on board injuries (7)
- assault and abuse (5)
- manual handling (6).

As RSSB comment, "At 52, the number of workforce major injuries in 2015/16 increased by 12 compared with 2014/15, and is above the average of 46.9 for the period" since 2006-07

What's more, since 2006/07, 30% of major injuries have been caused by slips, trips and falls. The 2015-16 figure of 18 is the second highest in the past 10 years.

In addition, on-board incidents have the next highest contribution to major injuries, accounting for 16% over the period shown.

The ASPR also highlights the increase in the number of major injuries due to manual handling which in 2015/16 is at its highest in the last 10 years, with six major injuries being incurred.

4). Amongst staff involved with train operations (related to shunters, train crew or other staff when they are on or about the track and engaged in activities related to the movement of trains as distinct from the previous category), there was one major injury on a train identified in this group by the ASPR in 2015-16.

Additionally, page 121 of the Report highlighted 55 minor injuries of which:

- 38 were to drivers or other train crew,
- 10 occurred to shunters,
- 7 occurring to train maintenance staff.

5). In Yards, depots and sidings there were 34 major injuries, 26 of which were as a result of slips, trips and falls. 4 occurred after contact with an object.

6.) Freight operations led to 4 major injuries, 3 of which were attributable to slips, trips and falls.

- **Assaults**

1). Unlike the 2013-14 ASPR, the latest Report does not contain anything like the same level of detail on assaults and neither does it categorise them into physical assault, threats or verbal abuse;

2). Workforce assaults leading to injury or shock/trauma were detailed as follows:

	2014-5	2015-6
In Stations	530	473
On Trains	313	278
Totals	843	751

3). Included in these figures are the 5 assaults on staff working on trains or stations that led to major injuries (see above);

4). In 2015-16 the number of assaults leading to injury or shock were at 54% of the level seen in 2006-07;

5). Over the last 10 years, around 60% of assaults have occurred in stations;

6). Assault and abuse contributes the greatest proportion of minor injury risk, with more harm happening at

stations rather than on trains.

- **Minor Injuries** (as defined by RIDDOR 1995, Schedule 1):

1). The total number of reported minor injuries for all groups of staff stood at 5694 in 2015-16, 745 of which were rated as Class 1 (Class 1 means that the injured party was off work for more than three days, not including the day of the injury).

By way of comparison, in 2014-15, the number of reported minor injuries stood at 6136, 705 being rated as Class 1.

2). For staff working on or about the running line, the total number of minor injuries was 1,323, broken down into:

- Class 1 = 207
- Class 2 = 1116

3). Road driving caused 113 minor injuries of which:

- Class 1 = 39
- Class 2 = 74

4). For staff on trains and at stations, the total stood at 2909 in 2015-16. This total figure was broken down into:

- Class 1 = 299
- Class 2 = 2610

5. For staff in train operations, the total number of minor injuries for 2015-16 stood at 55 as follows:

- Class 1 = 7
- Class 2 = 48

5). Freight operations led to 173 minor injuries:

- Class 1 = 27
- Class 2 = 146

6). Staff working in yards, depots and sidings experienced 1137 minor injuries:

- Class 1 = 163
- Class 2 = 974

- **Shock and trauma:**

1). There were 746 reported incidents in 2015-16 (833 in 2014-15);

2). This included:

- 7 incidents amongst staff working on or near the running line (Class 1 = 0, Class 2 = 7);
- 22 road driving incidents, all at Class 1;
- 444 incidents amongst staff on stations and trains (Class 1 = 6 and Class 2 = 438);
- 2 incident in a yard, depot or siding;
- 7 cases of shock/trauma for staff engaged in freight operations (Class 1 = 2, Class 2 = 5).

Reps Action

The advice and recommended actions for TSSA reps are:

a). Familiarise yourself with the RSSB reports;

b). Review any accident reports that have been made by your colleagues so that you can see whether the trends in ASPR relate to your workplace – or whether they show something different where you are based;

c). Get involved with any investigation that takes place after an accident or incident occurring to those people you speak up for (including for near misses);

d). Participate in your local safety committee.

e). Be aware of the wider context because the ASPR reports accidents and incidents and does not report how workers are affected by past contact with asbestos and other disease causing substances. Neither does it pick up on trends caused by health risks which the ORR has identified as of particular concern in the areas of hand-arm vibration, stress management and musculoskeletal disorders.

Acknowledgements and references

This Bulletin has been written based on the following documents: RSSB's *Annual Safety Performance Report 2015-16: A reference guide to safety trends on GB railways* (Full Report and Key Facts & Figures Report). A link to the report is to found earlier in this Bulletin.

ⁱ Available at: [http://www.tssa.org.uk/en/rep-
area/rep-bulletins/health--safety/index.cfm](http://www.tssa.org.uk/en/rep-
area/rep-bulletins/health--safety/index.cfm)

ⁱⁱ See Paragraph 11.3.3, page 162 of ASPR 2015-16
at: <http://www.rssb.co.uk/Library/risk-analysis->

[and-safety-reporting/2016-07-annual-safety-
performance-report-2015-2016.pdf](and-safety-reporting/2016-07-annual-safety-
performance-report-2015-2016.pdf)