

RSSB – ANNUAL SAFETY PERFORMANCE REPORT 2017-18

Introduction

In this Reps' Bulletin the Railway Safety and Standards Board (RSSB)'s *2017-2018 Annual Safety Performance Report* (ASPR) that was published on 12th July 2018 will be considered with the intention of highlighting workforce issues.

Reps may wish to read this Bulletin alongside those published in previous years (all available on TSSA's websiteⁱ):

ASPR 2016-17 (H&S/123/Sep 2017)
ASPR 2015-16 (H&S/117/Jul 2016)
ASPR 2014-15 (H&S/111/Aug 2015)
ASPR 2013-14 (H&S/109/June 2015),

As with the earlier publications, the 2017-18 Report also includes a range of details, including:

- comparisons with the safety performance of European railways which showed that Britain's railways are, again, the safest amongst the ten largest EU 25 railways but is fourth safest out of all the nations;ⁱⁱ
- intermodal comparisons showing that mainline rail travel is safer than all other forms of land transport;ⁱⁱⁱ

- SPAD incidents (increased from 270 in 2016-17 to 294 in 2017-18):
 - 10 SPADs received a 'potentially severe' risk ranking, which is three more than in 2016-17;^{iv}
 - 71 (compared to 64 in 2016-17) of the SPADs in 2017-18 related to freight trains (none of them were ranked as 'potentially severe' but 6 were classed as 'potentially significant').The ASPR notes that, "When normalised by the number of train miles, the rate of freight SPADs is consistently higher than for passenger and other trains combined. In the last six years, the normalised rate of freight SPADs has shown an upward trend."^v
- In addition to frequency, SPAD risk tracks the chances of escalation to an accident, and the potential consequences of SPADs. At the end of 2017/18, SPAD risk stood at 34% of the September 2006 baseline level, compared with 45% at the end of 2016/17.^{vi}

In addition, there is 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. There is also a recognition of how dealing with the aftermath of these incidents can leave staff shocked and traumatised, possibly unable to return to their previous role, whilst there is a brief summary of industry efforts to reduce the number of suicides, including reference to working with partners (such as the trade unions) and contracts with the Samaritans which has seen 15,300 frontline personnel train on how to intervene in suicide attempts whilst 2,300 personnel have had Trauma Support Training.^{vii}

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).”^{viii}

The latest ASPR covers the financial year ending in March 2018, 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. A further Reps Bulletin will address health and wellbeing issues which

feature in the ASPR and ORR publications.

Where can I find the Report?

The ASPR is available on the RSSB’s website. There are two reports:^{ix}

- Full Report
- Key Charts Report

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

A further document, *Learning from Operational Experience Annual Report* that goes with the ASPR has not so far been published for the period 2016-17 or 2017-18 (the reports from 2009 to 2015/16 are on the RSSB’s website).^x

Headline Statistics in the ASPR

The Full Report gives some headline statistics that includes:

- 0 passenger or workforce fatalities in train accidents or collisions for the eleventh consecutive year;
- In total, there were 49 (39 in 2016-17) accidental fatalities, 526 major injuries, 12,094 minor injuries and 970 cases of shock/trauma;
- Of the 49 fatalities:
 - one workforce fatality which occurred in a depot during train maintenance.;
 - four were passengers (all at the Passenger Train Interface (PTI)). In ten years, there have been 38 fatalities at the PTI);^{xi}
 - 44 were members of the public (36 of whom were engaged in acts of trespass

- There were also 249 deaths as a result of suicide or suspected suicide (239 in 2016/17).
- Of the 526 major injuries:
 - 318 were passengers (266 in 2016-17);
 - 164 staff (165 in 2016-17);
 - 44 public (including 12 trespassers).

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:**
One worker was killed in a depot whilst involved in train maintenance;
- **Major injuries** (as defined by RIDDOR 1995, Schedule 1):
 - 1). There were 164 workforce major injuries in 2016-17**, (165 in the previous year);
 - 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 57 major injuries whilst **working on or about the running line**, down from 72 in 2016-17;
 - 29 of all serious injuries in 2017-18 were attributed to slips, trips and falls, down from 36 reported in the previous year which had been the lowest level since 2008-9;

- 27 incidents were due to contact with an object (includes manual handling), lower than 32 reported in 2015-16;

3). Road driving risk relates to those members of the workforce who “travel by means of a motorised vehicle between sites while on duty or travelling to and from their home to a non-regular place of work, including door-to-door taxi provision.”^{xii} It does not include commuting from home to the worker’s usual place of work.

The first thing to emphasise is that road driving is becoming an increasingly important element that affects workers as the fact that 7 workers (including 6 infrastructure workers) were killed between 2011/12 and 2016/17.

There were 3 major injuries from road driving recorded in 2017/18 (10 in 2016/17). Combined with minor injuries and instances of shock/trauma (see later), the industrial sector of the 128 injured workers was:

	2015 /16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18
TOC	25	15	12
FOC	3	Nil	Nil
Contractor	3	51	36
Network Rail	95	111	80
Total	142	177	128

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

(65%), most of whom were employed as infrastructure workers. However, the Contractors category also comprises infrastructure workers, adding a further 18% of reported injuries amongst this group of employees.

The categories TOC and FOC account for 17% 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.

4). For staff working on trains or at stations, there were 49 major injuries (84% at stations), up from 42. The most frequent events were:

- slips, trips and falls (18)
- platform train interface (9)
- on board injuries (6)
- assault and abuse (7)
- contact with object (8).^{xiii}

RSSB note that since 2008/09, 31% of major injuries have been caused by slips, trips and falls. At 18, the figure for 2017/18 was an increase on the number seen last year.

Incidents at the platform-train interface account for 20% of major injuries, the second highest amount over the period shown.

RSSB also report in this category that the number of major injuries, when combined with those classed as minor (2,878) or attributed to shock (550), meant that 89% of harm occurs at the PTI (boarding or alighting).^{xiv}

5). 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 categories), there was one major injury to a worker during 2017-18 (2 in 2016-17).

6). In Yards, depots and sidings there were 46 major injuries (38 in 2016/17), 22 of which were as a result of slips, trips and falls (same as 2016/17) and 18 (9 in 2016/17) due to contact with object/ manual handling.^{xv}

7.) Freight operations led to 4 major injuries.

- **Assaults**

1). Unlike the 2013-14 ASPR, the last three years' Reports have not contained anything like the same level of detail on assaults and neither does it categorise them into physical assault, threats or verbal abuse;

2). For staff at stations or on trains, there were 7 major injuries caused by assault and abuse in 2017/18, the highest since 2011/12. Those figures are included in the following table which shows workforce assaults leading to injury or shock/trauma:

	2014 15	2015 16	2016 17	2017 18
In Stations	530	473	535	?
On Trains	313	278	351	?
Totals	843	758	856	910

The 2017/18 figures are not broken down but the RSSB^{xvi} notes that in the latest year:

- The number of workforce assaults leading to injury or shock/trauma has increased by 6% in 2017/18 to the highest level in six years;
- This appears to be driven by a 44% increase in harmful assaults towards station staff since last year;
- The harm from assaults increased by 20% in 2017/18 from that experienced in 2016/17.

Staff on:	Total
Running Line	4
Road Driving	26
Trains & Stations	550
Trains Ops	14
Freight Ops	4
Yards & Depots	10

- **Minor Injuries** (as defined by RIDDOR 1995, Schedule 1):
The total number of reported minor injuries for all groups of staff stood at 5694 (5676 in 2016-17), 833 (737)^{xvii} of which were rated as Class 1^{xviii} which includes:

Staff on:	Total	Class 1	Class 2
Running Line	1443	226	1217
Road driving	99	30	69
Trains & Stations	2878	378	2500
Trains Ops	17	---	---
Freight Ops	100	21	79
Yards & Depots	979	157	822

- **Shock and trauma:**
1). There were 803 reported workforce incidents in 2017/18. This included:^{xix}

Reps Action

The advice and recommended actions for TSSA reps are:

- Familiarise yourself with the RSSB reports;
- 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;
- 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);
- Participate in your local safety committee.
- 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.

Acknowledgements and references

This Bulletin has been written based on the RSSB's *Annual Safety Performance Report 2017/18: A reference guide to safety trends on GB*

ⁱ Available at: <http://www.tssa.org.uk/en/rep-are/rep-bulletins/health--safety/index.cfm>

ⁱⁱ See Page 36, ASPR at: <https://www.rssb.co.uk/Library/risk-analysis-and-safety-reporting/annual-safety-performance-report-2017-18.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ See Page 8 of ASPR

^{iv} See Page 88 of ASPR

^v See Page 138 of ASPR

^{vi} See Page 6 of ASPR

^{vii} See Page 114 of ASPR

^{viii} See Page 9 of ASPR

^{ix} See: <https://www.rssb.co.uk/Pages/risk-analysis-and-safety-reporting/Safety-performance-reports.aspx>

railways. A link to the report can be found earlier in the notes below.

^x See: <https://www.rssb.co.uk/risk-analysis-and-safety-reporting/accident-investigation-and-learning/learning-from-operational-experience>

^{xi} Page 44 of ASPR

^{xii} See Page 67 of ASPR

^{xiii} See Page 54 of ASPR

^{xiv} See Page 54 of ASPR

^{xv} See Page 126 of ASPR

^{xvi} See Page 55 of ASPR

^{xvii} See Page 22 of ASPR

^{xviii} Class 1 means that the injured party was off work for more than three days, not including the day of the injury

^{xix} RSSB are currently unable to split shock/trauma into Class 1 or Class 2