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ScotRail's Top 10 Busiest Trains

Report March 2017

1. The train counts process – introduction

1.1 The information being released on ScotRail's ten busiest services is based on passenger carrying capacity and 'snapshot' manual passenger count information provided by ScotRail for all of its services, as part of its franchise obligation.

1.2 ScotRail's franchise obligation is to use reasonable endeavours to allocate its train fleet and resources in the most effective way to provide passengers with a reasonable expectation of a seat within 10 minutes of boarding a train, and to minimise any forecast overcrowding.

1.3 Snapshot manual passenger counts carried out by ScotRail are used to determine the passenger carrying capacity for each service. ScotRail is obliged under the franchise to undertake passenger counts surveys; however, the surveys are only a 'snapshot' for each service and therefore variations in loadings can occur. The 'snapshot' manual counts are carried out by ScotRail to determine demand on specific services.

1.4 The passenger carrying capacity and passenger numbers are incorporated into a Train Plan which ScotRail is obliged to prepare and submit to Transport Scotland for consideration & approval, for each timetable change in May and December.

1.5 The information contained in the Train Plan for December 2016 has been used to determine ScotRail's ten busiest services. The figures used for each service represents the highest passenger load on the train after 10 minutes throughout the journey. **It excludes trains where the level of overcrowding in the journey is for less than ten minutes.** This compares with twenty minutes in England & Wales.

2. The busiest services

ScotRail has provided Transport Scotland with details of the train counts which show the ten busiest services on the ScotRail network

1. Edinburgh-Glasgow Central via Shotts, 1721

This train runs with a planned loading of 185 passengers, seated and standing. The maximum recorded occupancy is 270 passengers (146% of planned loading); the busiest part of the route is between Haymarket and Livingston South (27 minutes). The previous train at 1657 carries 136 passengers; the next train at 1750 carries 136 passengers.

Shotts electrification will enable Class 385 trains to serve this corridor from May 2019, meaning that a three-carriage electric service will replace a two-carriage diesel unit.

Alternative services: the Airdrie-Bathgate Line provides trains between Edinburgh Waverley and Livingston North every fifteen minutes.

2. Glasgow Central-East Kilbride, 1701 (during the summer)

This train runs with a planned loading of 185 passengers, seated & standing. The maximum recorded occupancy is 249 passengers (135% of planned loading). The busiest part of the route is between Glasgow Central and Pollokshaws West (9 minutes). The previous train at 1647 carries 213 passengers; the next train at 1721 carries 203 passengers.

Short-term initiatives include an additional two-carriage unit provided during the winter (October to March). There is an ongoing review of fleet deployments, and passengers also have the option of another peak service to East Kilbride at 1733 (179 passengers). Also, most weekday peak services are four or six carriages. On Saturdays, the majority of trains (and all trains between 1047 and 1817), have been strengthened to four carriages. On Sundays, all but one of the trains on the East Kilbride Line have been strengthened to four carriages (290 seats).

Rolling stock cascades made possible by electrification projects will include south Glasgow diesel routes from May 2018. **A four-carriage C156 train is scheduled to operate from December 2017.**

3. Neilston-Glasgow Central, 0807

This train runs with a planned loading of 282 passengers, seated & standing. The maximum recorded occupancy is 375 passengers (133% of planned loading). The busiest part of the route is between Muirend [0820] and Glasgow Central (13 minutes). The earlier train at 0755 carries 325 passengers; the next non-congested train, at 0905, carries 167 passengers. (There is also a service at 0843 which is reported as being congested, although for less than ten minutes between Mount Florida & Glasgow Central).

Short-term initiatives include a 4-carriage Class 380/1 train (282 seats), to be introduced on this route from early 2018, and the Class 385 fleet is planned to serve this corridor from December 2018.

4. Neilston-Glasgow Central, 0824

This train runs with a planned loading of 282 passengers, seated & standing. The maximum recorded occupancy is 367 passengers (130% of planned loading). The busiest part of the route is between Mt Florida [0844] and Glasgow Central (12 minutes). The previous non-congested train at 0755 carries 325 passengers; the next non-congested train, at 0905, carries 167 passengers. (There is also a service at 0843 which is reported as being congested, although for less than ten minutes between Mount Florida and Glasgow Central stations).

Short-term initiatives include a 4-carriage Class 380/1 train (282 seats), to be introduced on this route from early 2018, and the Class 385 fleet is planned to serve this corridor from December 2018.

5. Edinburgh-Glenrothes w/Thornton, 1753, via Dunfermline

This train runs with a planned loading of 282 passengers, seated & standing. The maximum recorded occupancy is 337 passengers (120% of planned loading). The busiest part of the route is between Haymarket [1757] and Inverkeithing (21 minutes). The previous non-congested train at 1707 (via Dunfermline) carries 215 passengers; the next non-congested train via Dunfermline, at 1825, carries 135 passengers.

In terms of the congested sector proper, there are also trains between Haymarket and Inverkeithing at 1753 (to Glenrothes w/Thornton via Dalgety Bay); 1808 (to Dundee) and at 1815 (to Aberdeen; note that this service is operated by the CrossCountry franchise).

Potential short-term initiatives include a planned cascade of rolling stock in December 2018 and May 2019. On this basis, the majority of Fife services will be operated by 3 carriage rather than 2 carriage trains, allowing 20% more seats in the morning and evening peaks. Also, more direct services between Fife and the Borders will be provided, providing more cross-Edinburgh travel opportunities.

6. Balloch-Airdrie, 0707

This train runs with a planned loading of 282 passengers, seated & standing. The maximum recorded occupancy is 333 passengers (119% of planned loading). The busiest part of the route is between Anniesland [0741] and Glasgow Queen St (15 minutes). The previous train at 0637 carries 236 passengers; the next train, at 0737, carries 227 passengers.

Alternative services: in the previous twenty minutes, and including trains requiring a transfer, there are four more trains between Anniesland and Glasgow Queen St. In the following twenty minutes there are two further services.

7. Edinburgh-Dunblane, 1603

This train runs with a planned loading of 273 passengers, seated & standing. The maximum recorded occupancy is 323 passengers (118% of planned loading). The busiest part of the route is between Haymarket [1609] and Polmont (23 minutes). The previous train at 1533 carries 149 passengers; the next train, at 1633, carries 124 passengers.

The Class 385 fleet will serve this corridor, delivering additional capacity from December 2018. Dunblane will benefit from a planned half hourly service to Perth, Stirling and Glasgow – one limited stop HST and one regional service – and the continuation of the existing half hourly service to Edinburgh (one limited stop HST and one regional service).

Alternative services: in the half-hour previous to this train there are two other services between Haymarket and Polmont, and two more trains in the following half-hour.

8. Glasgow Central-East Kilbride, 1847

This train runs with a planned loading of 185 passengers, seated & standing. The maximum recorded occupancy is 212 passengers (115% of planned loading). The busiest part of the route is between Glasgow Central and Crossmyloof (7 minutes). The previous train at 1819 carries 151 passengers; the next train, at 1917, carries 212 passengers, although with more train capacity.

Alternative services: there is a service to Crossmyloof at 1827 (this train goes through to Barrhead) and another at 1857 (which is also going through to Barrhead).

9. East Kilbride-Glasgow Central, 0759

This train runs with a planned loading of 555 passengers, seated & standing. The maximum recorded occupancy is 624 passengers (115% of planned loading). The busiest part of the route is between Thornliebank [0819] and Glasgow Central (12 minutes). The previous train at 0743 runs with 329 passengers; the next train, at 0812, runs with 443 passengers.

Alternative services: over the congested part of the route proper, there are services from Thornliebank to Glasgow at 0746 and 0834.

10. Dalmuir-Larkhall, 0818

This train runs with a planned loading of 281 passengers, seated & standing. The maximum recorded occupancy is 305 passengers (109% of planned loading). The busiest part of the route is between Anniesland [0832] and Glasgow Central (14 minutes). The previous train at 0751 runs with 161 passengers; the next direct train, at 0847, runs with 102 passengers. An earlier train runs, with a change at Hyndland, with 305 passengers.

Alternative services: there is an Anniesland-Glasgow Queen St train at 0820 and another at 0842, although this involves a change at Hyndland.

TABLE OF BUSIEST TRAINS

Busiest Trains	Origin Time	Origin	Destination	Class	Carriages	Total planned loading, seating and standing	Maximum Recorded Occupancy (passengers)	Section of route where surveys show passenger volume most exceeds seats available (generally >100%)	Passengers in excess of planned loading	Loading Used over the peak section: Passengers v Planned Loading	Investment Initiatives
1	1721	Edinburgh	Glasgow Central	C156	2	185	270	Haymarket – Livingston South. Alternative service provision is available via Livingston North, although these are also busy trains	85	146%	New electric C385s will operate on this route from May 2019
2	1701	Glasgow	East Kilbride	2* C156 Winter 1* C156 Summer	4W/2S	370W 185S	249	Glasgow Central to Pollockshaws West	64	86%W/135%S	ScotRail continually review operations to add carriages to fleet as part of capacity planning obligations. A four-carriage C156 will operate this service year round from December 2017
3	0807	Neilston	Glasgow Central	C314	3	282	375	Muirend – Glasgow Central	93	133%	This is a four-car service from early 2018; and new electric C385s will operate on this route from December 2018.
4	0824	Neilston	Glasgow Central	C314	3	282	367	Mount Florida – Glasgow Central	85	130%	This is a four-car service from early 2018; and new electric C385s will operate on this route from December 2018.
5	1753	Edinburgh	Glenrothes with Thornton	C170S	3	282	337	Haymarket - Inverkeithing	55	120%	Potential introduction of more C170 services adding capacity alongside this service from December 2018
6	0707	Balloch	Airdrie	C320	3	281	333	Anniesland-Glasgow Queen St. Note four more trains in the previous twenty minutes and two more in the following twenty minutes, although these are also busy trains	52	119%	ScotRail continually review operations to add carriages to fleet as part of capacity planning obligations
7	1603	Edinburgh	Dunblane	C170E	3	273	323	Haymarket – Polmont	50	118%	New electric C385s will operate on this route from December 2018
8	1847	Glasgow Central	East Kilbride	C156	2	185	212	Glasgow Central – Crossmyloof Note an additional train to Crossmyloof twenty minutes previously, and another ten minutes after, although these are also busy trains	27	115%	ScotRail continually review operations to add carriages to fleet as part of capacity planning obligations
9	0759	East Kilbride	Glasgow Central	3* C156	6	555	624	Thornliebank – Glasgow Central	69	112%	ScotRail continually review operations to add carriages to fleet as part of capacity planning obligations
10	0818	Dalmuir - Larkhall	Larkhall	C318	3	281	305	Anniesland – Glasgow Central.	24	109%	ScotRail continually review operations to add carriages to fleet as part of capacity planning obligations

NOTE:

1. ScotRail's franchise obligation is to use reasonable endeavours to allocate its rolling stock in the most effective way to provide passengers with a reasonable expectation of a seat within 10 minutes of boarding a train.
2. Passenger load figures are based in 'snapshot' passenger counts



**TRANSPORT
SCOTLAND**
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

Transport Scotland

Rail

Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road,
Glasgow, G4 0HF
info@transport.gov.scot

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