

RSSB – ANNUAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT 2021/22

Introduction

In this Reps' Bulletin the Railway Safety and Standards Board (RSSB)'s *Annual Health & Safety Report 2021/22* (AHSR) will be considered with the intention of highlighting workforce issues. The Report itself looks at all areas that affect health and safety on the railways of Britain and includes accidents that have involved rail users and members of the public, issues that have affected the running of trains and initiatives that seek to reduce risk.

You may be aware that prior to the 2018/19 report, the RSSB's document was known as the Annual Safety Performance Report (ASPR) but the revised format reflects the Leading Health and Safety on Britain's Railway (LHSBR)¹ strategy which sets out a framework for how the GB rail industry will work together to make the railway better, safer and healthier.

The AHSR is made up of a series of reports under different headings:

- Railway Safety in Context
- Improving our capability 2021/22

- Workforce health and wellbeing
- Public behaviour
- Station operations
- Occupational road risk management
- Level crossings
- Fatigue risk management
- Workforce safety
- Infrastructure and rolling stock asset integrity
- Work-related violence and assaults
- Train operations
- Freight

All of these publications appear on the RSSB's Website and are designed to report progress on the LHSBR.²

What are the headlines in rail safety in 2021/22?

The AHSR's "Railway Safety in Context" paper begins by looking back to some of the tragic railway accidents of the past – like Clapham Junction (1988), Ladbroke Grove (1999) Hatfield (2000) and Potters Bar (2002) – and warns of the need to be careful at a time of change within the industry.

It also draws attention to the metrics of 2021/22 that include encouraging data

¹ Available at: <https://www.rssb.co.uk/en/safety-and-health/leading-health-and-safety-on-britains-railway>

² See: <https://www.rssb.co.uk/safety-and-health/risk-and-safety-intelligence/annual-health-and-safety-report>

around passenger usage, tons of freight moved and distances travelled by rail when compared to the previous year that was dominated by the worst of the Covid Pandemic.

The report notes, however, that with the exception of freight, all the other areas are still below the figures for 2019/20. And, even including Freight, they are still lower than they were ten years ago.

The RSSB's figures go on recognise that rail travel is still the safest form of transport in Britain and ranks the country as having the lowest number of railway workforce and passenger fatalities in Europe.

The overview then goes onto list the headlines from 2021/22, reporting that:

- **Fatalities:** 2 members of staff and 29 other people died as a result of accidents in 2021/22. In addition to the two railway workers, the fatalities were:
 - 5 people who died in accidents at stations
 - 1 person killed in an assault at a station
 - 15 deaths while trespassing
 - 8 fatally injured level crossing users
- **Reportable injuries:** 98 members of staff received specified injuries reportable under the RIDDOR legislation³

- **Injuries:** 1,392 people received severe injuries, including 344 members of the workforce.
- **Suicide:** 261 people died as a result of suicide or suspected suicide. This is an increase on the 227 recorded last year.

What does the railway workforce Safety Overview look like over the last four years?

This table has been created from the information in the Safety Overview and gives figures for the railway workforce :

| Financial Year | 2018 /19 | 2019 /20 | 2020 /21 | 2021 /22 |
|----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <i>Fatalities</i> | 2 | 3 | 5 | 2 |
| <i>Specified Injuries</i> | 112 | 108 | 100 | 98 |
| <i>Severe Injuries</i> | 442 | 466 | 311 | 344 |
| <i>Non severe Injuries</i> | 4771 | 4775 | 2933 | 2536 |
| <i>Incidents of shock</i> | 864 | 796 | 637 | 806 |

Table 1

What more can we learn about the workforce fatalities in 2021/22?

There were 2 workforce fatalities in 2021/22:

- On 19 January 2022, a member of on-duty telecoms staff was involved in a fatal road traffic collision on the A1088 near Elmswell;

³ RIDDOR is the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013. More details, including types of reportable incidents and

specified injuries to workers can be found at: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/reportable-incidents.htm>

- On 1 February 2022, a train driver was struck and killed by a passing train after leaving their cab in the sidings at West Worthing.⁴

How do the fatality figures since 2018/19 break down?⁵

| Fatalities by worker type | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Infrastructure worker | 5 |
| Train crew | 4 |
| Yard, depot or siding staff | 1 |
| Station staff | 1 |
| S&T staff | 1 |

Table 2

| Fatalities by location type | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Running line | 5 |
| Yard, depot or siding | 2 |
| On train | 2 |
| Station | 2 |
| Road traffic accident | 1 |

Table 3

What type of specified injuries were reported under RIDDOR?⁶

| Specified Injuries in Financial Year and by type | 2018 /19 | 2019 /20 | 2020 /21 | 2021/ 22 |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Slips, Trips and Falls | 54 | 47 | 54 | 51 |
| Contact with object | 27 | 28 | 25 | 20 |
| Electric shock | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Manual handling/awkward movement | 0 | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| Platform edge incidents | 9 | 8 | 12 | 8 |

⁴ Page 12, RSSB AHSR 2021/22 In Context

⁵ Date from Page 3, AHSR 2021/22 Workforce Safety

| | | | | |
|------------------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Road traffic accidents | 3 | 4 | 4 | 5 |
| On-board injuries | 11 | 10 | 4 | 4 |
| Other accidents | 7 | 7 | 0 | 7 |
| Total | 112 | 108 | 100 | 98 |

Table 4

How do the workforce specified injuries feature in different areas of the AHSR?

The Workforce Safety report that is part of the AHSR has focused on running line accidents and those injuries that have occurred in yards, depots and sidings. To give a fuller picture, RSSB directs the reader to other parts of its publication for results in connection with:

- Station operations
- Train Operations
- Road Risk
- Violence and Trauma

The number of specified injuries are reported in each of the reports as follows:

| Report in Financial Year | 2018 /19 | 2019 /20 | 2020 /21 | 2021/ 22 |
|--------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Running Line | 57 | 43 | 38 | 37 |
| Station operations | 23 | 26 | 25 | 29 |
| Train operations | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Road risk | 3 | 3 | 3 | 5 |

⁶ Page 19, AHSR 2021/22 Workforce Safety

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| <i>Violence and trauma</i> | 4 | 11 | 1 | 7 |
| Total | 88 | 84 | 67 | 78 |

Table 5.

Note: The figures for yards, depots and sidings have not been made available other than in the Fatalities and Weighted Injuries (FWI) form. The Freight report does not include figures for workforce harm. TSSA will be seeking additional information from RSSB in these areas.

Injuries other than RIDDOR specified

In addition, some of the AHSR component reports also give details about those injuries that don't come under the RIDDOR classification. On Page 2 of this Bulletin we reported in Table 1 the number of cases of Severe and Non Severe Injuries as well as Incidences of Shock. In this next table we present information that is available from the different areas in Table 5:

| <i>Non RIDDOR specified injury in Financial Year</i> | 2018 /19 | 2019 /20 | 2020 /21 | 2021 /22 |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| ⁷Station Operation: | | | | |
| Severe Injury | 30 | 111 | 71 | 88 |
| Non severe injury | 1277 | 1375 | 799 | 1090 |
| Shock and Trauma | 326 | 278 | 250 | 344 |

⁷ Page 26, AHSR 2021/22 Station Operations

⁸ Page 17, AHSR 2021/22 Train Operations

| <i>Non RIDDOR specified injury in Financial Year (cont)</i> | 2018 /19 | 2019 /20 | 2020 /21 | 2021 /22 |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| ⁸Train Operation: | | | | |
| Severe Injury | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Non severe injury | 17 | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| Shock and Trauma | 25 | 36 | 18 | 14 |
| ⁹Road Risk: | | | | |
| Severe Injury | 19 | 17 | 12 | 12 |
| Non severe injury | 1277 | 1375 | 799 | 1090 |
| Shock and Trauma | 326 | 278 | 250 | 344 |
| ¹⁰Violence and Trauma: | | | | |
| Severe Injury | 34 | 32 | 18 | 32 |
| Non severe injury | 390 | 425 | 231 | 361 |
| Shock and Trauma | 490 | 476 | 324 | 499 |

Table 6

⁹ Page 11, AHSR 2021/22 Occupational Road Risk

¹⁰ Page 10, Work Related Violence and Trauma

What about Near Misses?

On top of the accident figures are those about near misses, occasions when someone – or a group – was lucky enough to avoid being killed or seriously injured. The AHSR does not go into details of when and where these instances took place but it does give a set of figures. We are listing them to make the point that being vigilant and ensuring procedures are followed is what keeps people safe:

| Financial Year | 2018 /19 | 2019 /20 | 2020 /21 | 2021 /22 |
|----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Near misses | 61 | 56 | 36 | 28 |

Table 7¹¹

What is being done about issues reported in the AHSR?

We have presented the numbers so that you can see the level of harm that railway employees experienced in the Financial Year 2021/22 and when compared to previous years.

There isn't enough space in this Bulletin to be able to list all of the actions being taken around the different areas of the AHSR and so for that reason we intend to issue a follow up Bulletin next month.

In the meantime, if you are interested in a particular subject, please do not hesitate to have a look at the reports and acquaint yourself with their contents. Some of the reports may be relevant to the TSSA members that you, as a rep, seek to look after whilst others may give you feedback on

surveys that you or your colleagues may have participated in, (for instance, the RSSB's first mental health survey that is discussed in the Work-Related Violence and Trauma report). They may also leave you asking questions about why measures being described have not found their way into where you work. You may also find an interest in a particular subject and want to look into it some more.

RSSB Industrywide bodies

Under the objectives laid out in the RSSB's LHSBR strategy there are a series of measures that are being taken to both understand and then reduce the levels of workplace injury. Those measures go beyond the accident figures reported in this Bulletin and include the subjects of Fatigue Risk Management and Workforce Health and Wellbeing, significant issues in the railways and both of which feature as component reports in the AHSR.

What the AHSR does is effectively act as an annual report about how health, safety and welfare is being dealt with on Britain's railways against stated objectives.

It is also worth advising members that behind the LHSBR is the System Safety Risk Group (SSRG) which includes employers and trade unions, and which has a series of functions that seeks to be a forum for collaboration between the industry's management and the representatives of its workers. The SSRG also has a

¹¹ Data from Page 19, AHSR 2021/22 Workforce Safety

number of sub groups that focus on elements of the LHSBR. Many of those bodies include trade union appointed representatives who often have professional knowledge of the subject matter.¹²

In parallel with the SSRG, there is also the Rail Wellbeing Alliance (RWA) that seeks to promote and coordinate industry wide work about mental wellbeing, musculoskeletal disorders, fatigue and occupational health hazards. It also has a series of sub-groups. TSSA is a member of the RWA and some of the sub groups because in this way we seek to represent the interests of our members.¹³

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 AHSR 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 AHSR reports accidents and incidents and does not report how workers are affected by past contact with asbestos, silica dust or other disease causing substances.

Acknowledgements and references

We want to acknowledge that in producing this Bulletin, we have used information available in the RSSB's *Annual Health & Safety Report 2021/22*.

¹² More information on the SSRG and its sub groups can be found at: <https://www.rssb.co.uk/what-we-do/groups-and-committees/safety/system-safety-risk-group>

¹³ More details about the RWA are available at: <https://www.rssb.co.uk/what-we-do/groups-and-committees/health-and-wellbeing/rail-wellbeing-alliance>