

CrossCountry performance update

For the four week period 16 October -12 November our Public Performance Measure (PPM) was 85.4%, compared with 84.3% for the same period last year. The moving annual average stands at 87.6%.

PPM was below 90% on 19 occasions.

For the period 18 September – 15 October our PPM was 87.5%, compared with 92.7% for the same period last year. The moving annual average was 87.6%. PPM was below 90% on 16 occasions.

The lowest PPM of 76.8% was recorded on 6 October due to a fatality at New Milton (Bournemouth area).

For the period 21 August - 17 September our PPM was 90.0%, compared with 92.2% for the same period last year. The moving annual average was 88.0%.

PPM was below 90% on 10 occasions and twice below 75% - on 26 August when a freight train derailed at Bordesley (Birmingham) and on 12 September when high winds, particularly in the north east, caused problems with falling trees and overhead lines

Train Tickets - CrossCountry unveil revolutionary mobile App

CrossCountry has launched a new mobile App that not only provides real time travel information across ALL rail networks - you can download your ticket to it too. 'Train Tickets' is the first App to deliver live departure times and mobile ticketing in one go.

Available by texting 'Travel' to 87080 or scanning the QR code below into your smartphone, the Train Tickets App allows customers to plan journeys, buy tickets for any journey in Britain as well as receive m-tickets for certain routes.

The App also provides access to live departure boards, making it possible to keep up with the latest information whilst planning or during your journey.

The addition of m-tickets, supported on certain routes, is in the form of 2D barcodes and readable tickets. Users simply activate m-tickets before boarding their train; Train Managers can then verify using a barcode scanner or by confirming the animated colour sequence on their ticket machines.



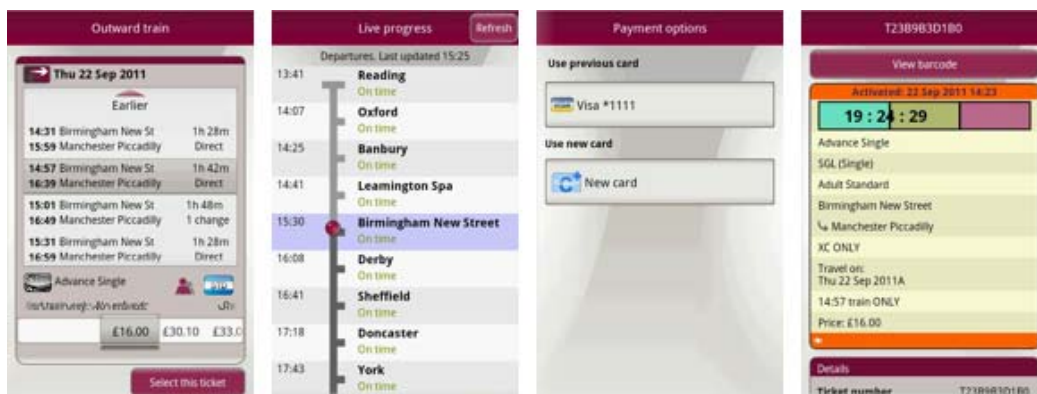
Where m-tickets are not available, customers can collect their tickets using a booking reference number at most UK rail stations.

The Application (which is free to download) also has the option to link in Application purchases to the user's web account, giving them a single convenient place to view all their ticket purchases, or print out purchase records for expense claims.

We do not charge booking or credit card fees on tickets bought on our website or via our new App.

Train Tickets allows consumers to completely bypass ticket machines, making their journeys as effortless and enjoyable as possible, from buying the ticket to boarding the train. Over 71,000 people are already using Train Tickets.

The 'Train Tickets' App supports iPhone, Blackberry, Android and Nokia smartphones as well as most everyday handsets.



CrossCountry gets Wi-Fi

In November we signed a contract with the global supplier of on-train Wi-Fi systems, Nomad Digital, to install the service onto our HSTs and Voyagers.

Work to install the system will begin early next year, with the five HSTs being the first to be fully fitted by the spring. The larger fleet of 57 Voyager trains will also be fitted out during 2012.

We had been conducting a trial of different Wi-Fi systems throughout 2011 to ensure that the best system possible was chosen. The unique characteristics of our services meant the chosen system had to deliver reliable connectivity for customers throughout their journeys.

The installation of Wi-Fi is being delivered alongside the mobile 'phone signal boosting modifications to the Voyager fleet, which will be completed early next year.



Bi-mode Voyagers, a comment from CrossCountry

"With the award of the Thameslink rolling stock contract to Siemens, it was not surprising that attention might turn to other railway projects which might help influence the future of Bombardier in Derby.

The idea of developing the Voyager to allow it to draw power from the overhead line has been looked at over the last few years because of the environmental benefits it could bring. It would provide a train capable of working on and off the electrified network, making greater use of electrification as it extends across more routes, and indeed avoiding the need for it in some places like maintenance depots.

The DfT has asked the industry to look quickly at whether there is a good business case for developing such a project – which would involve building an extra vehicle with a pantograph and modifying the whole train to accept electricity from the overhead line. That is the extent of the story you may have read about in newspapers.

If things progress, we will update you."

Your opinions count

Like any good business we are keen to understand peoples' opinions of our franchise. We already undertake research into non-users to see how we can improve, and to make rail journeys more attractive to them; and monitor this alongside the Passenger Focus National Passenger Survey. To expand this further, during August we undertook the first survey of our stakeholders.

Using an online survey form we asked a number of key stakeholders for their thoughts and levels of satisfaction. We split the survey into three distinct sections to gauge general opinions, how our business is delivering and how effective we are at communicating.

- Over 60% of respondents thought CrossCountry was a 'good' train company, with less than 8% disagreeing;
- 80% thought our services provide socio-economic benefits where they operated
- 74% agreed our staff were approachable and helpful;
- Only 12% didn't think our trains were clean and well maintained, and 58% regarded them as punctual and reliable;
- 72% thought they received enough information from us, and only 20% thought we didn't engage effectively with them; and
- 26% didn't feel we responded to their comments, while 14% said they did not receive feedback after making suggestions.

In addition to the research, many stakeholders took the time to provide comments on how we could improve and these predominately covered increased capacity for customers and stops at more stations.

There was also a clear desire for greater engagement with stakeholders, with more regular meetings and an increased frequency of newsletters or publications.

Overall it was pleasing to see a high level of overall satisfaction with CrossCountry. We will now take this information and incorporate it into how we plan to communicate with our stakeholders and customers during 2012.



Onboard catering products refreshed

As winter is here we've taken the opportunity to refresh the range of hot food available in First Class.

The current Chicken & Asparagus Tart has been replaced with our version of a traditional Shepherds Pie; made with slow-cooked minced lamb, onions and carrots, served with garden peas and mashed potato.

The vegetarian option has also changed, with a new Spinach & Ricotta Tortellini made from Tortellini pasta with ricotta and tomato, served in a creamy spinach sauce with mixed pepper garnish.

We have also improved the breakfast option, with a new range of instant porridge available in Maple Syrup, Strawberries & Cream and Plain flavours.



Senior NR appointment for CrossCountry

Network Rail has appointed senior manager John Boon to look after its relationship with CrossCountry nationwide.

John will report directly to Dyan Crowther, Director of Operational Services responsible for overseeing the new Route Directors as part of its devolution process.

Speaking after the appointment was announced, John said: "For a national operator like CrossCountry, getting the best from devolution will be crucial and I am excited about my new role which will focus on forging stronger Network Rail engagement, collaboration and delivery to CrossCountry."

December timetable to give extra stops

Our December timetable will see some minor changes to benefit our customers.

The principal change this time will be a number of reduced journey times between Birmingham, Derby and Nottingham, which have been introduced to meet requests from customers and stakeholders. These include:

- Most xx37 Nottingham – Birmingham New Street services will leave Derby slightly later at xx10 but will arrive in Birmingham at xx54. This change will result in reduced journey times for customers in Burton-on-Trent, Tamworth and Wilnecote;
- Northbound services from Willington have been revised to improve commuting opportunities to Derby and Nottingham;
- The majority of xx19 Birmingham New Street – Nottingham services will arrive at Derby six minutes earlier than currently. Departing Derby at xx05, these services will give earlier arrival times at Long Eaton, Beeston and Nottingham; and
- Our Southampton/Reading – Newcastle services will arrive in Derby five minutes earlier at the new time of xx05. This will give a standardised journey time of 35 minutes between Birmingham New Street and Derby.

As part of the new-look timetable, extra stops are being made at the following stations (SO = Saturdays only):

Stafford	–	07:31 Birmingham to Manchester 12:07 Manchester Piccadilly to Exeter St Davids 09:40 Penzance to Manchester Piccadilly
Winchester	–	13:35 Newcastle to Eastleigh
Alnmouth	–	13:46 Southampton to Edinburgh Waverley (arrives 20:35)
Haymarket	–	18:59 Glasgow Central to Newcastle 18:52 Glasgow Central to Edinburgh (SO)
Tiverton	–	07:01 Paignton to Manchester Piccadilly (SO)
Doncaster	–	19:35 Newcastle to Birmingham (SO)

Many of the changes we've introduced followed discussions with stakeholders; such as the new stop at Alnmouth which will create a connection at Newcastle out of the 1700 from Kings Cross. Each autumn we make available our planned timetable for the following year and invite stakeholders to let us know where they feel we can make improvements. We then analyse the information and, if the suggestion is deliverable and has a business case, will include this in our bid to network Rail for a future timetable.

If you have any comments on our timetables, or would like us to consider changes in future timetable, then please let us know and we will email you a copy of our December 2011 timetable. Our contact details can be found at the end of this edition of In Focus.

Voyagers become an iconic image

If 'art imitates life', then our Voyagers have clearly become the iconic image of high speed rail travel.

This artwork recently appeared at Leeds station as part of Network Rail's promotion of its large scale projects, and will be appearing in displays around the country. This campaign highlights their work with the Northern Hub to deliver reduced journey times between Leeds and Manchester.

The striking 'Cheetah' design incorporates images of trains and rail infrastructure, the most obvious of which are our Voyagers in the legs and body.



