

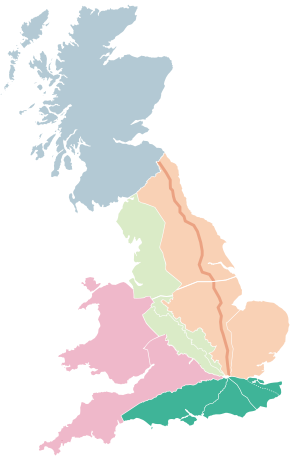


Southern



John Halsall,
managing director, Southern

16 July 2020



Kent



Network Rail
High Speed



Sussex



Wessex

We're one of five regions and are here to serve passengers and freight users. Our region comprises Wessex, Sussex and Kent routes, as well as Network Rail High Speed. We're also responsible for managing the major stations of Waterloo, Clapham Junction, London Bridge, Victoria, Charing Cross, Cannon Street and Guildford.

The creation of the Southern region, as part of Network Rail's vision of 'Putting Passengers First', will bring about transformational change with real devolution of decision-making, resource and accountability. This change promotes better alignment to economic and political geographies and is a vital step to make sure investment meets the needs of our passengers and stakeholders.

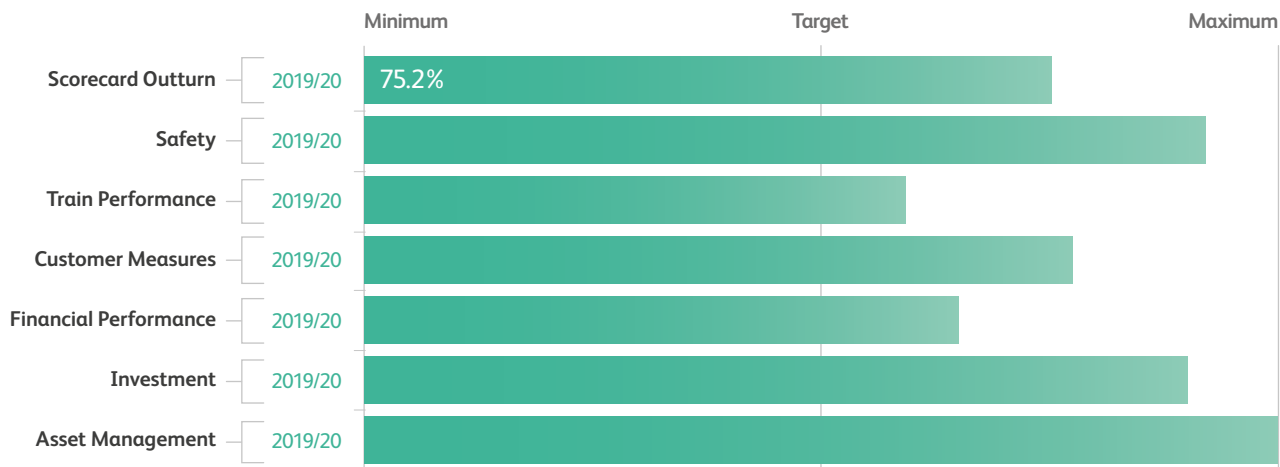
➤ Train Performance

On Time performance for Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) started very well with a record set at the start of the year. But performance dropped mid-year for several reasons. Firstly, we had the hottest day on record resulting in some blanket speed restrictions and heat-related overhead wire failures. This was closely followed by a power failure resulting in a number of stranded trains. Then a period of heavy rainfall caused several landslips across Sussex and three major storms caused significant disruption.

Overall, performance has improved and our on time performance metric climbed 1.8 per cent compared to last year. We have developed an improvement plan for 2020/21 focussed on improving resilience in key areas.

Key scorecard targets

Southern continued



Southeastern and Kent Route had a strong start to the year with a series of record-breaking months, putting the moving annual average (MAA) in its best position in six years. A successful autumn was followed by torrential rain and periods 10-12 were very challenging, causing the MAA to fall. Some recovery in period 13 led to a year end on time figure of 68.9 per cent (1.4 per cent better than target) and, as with GTR, we have a strategy focussing on key areas of delay to passenger journeys.

The whole year public performance measure (PPM) for South Western Railway (SWR) remained relatively consistent for the first six periods of the year, despite significantly high numbers of trespass and fatalities. The introduction of trespass and welfare officers have reduced the impact of external events to their best during the year. A few significant incidents, as well as the derailment at Eastleigh, severe flooding and exceptionally high winds, then reduced the MAA notably to end the year at 80.5 per cent. Both Network Rail Wessex and SWR have recently agreed to the Joint Performance Strategy to deliver significant performance improvement in future years.

Significant improvements

In Kent we've finished more than 50 infrastructure projects, such as removing minor rail defects, improving reliability to signalling equipment and points and increasing remote condition monitoring to help repair faults quicker.

We have renewed key junctions to improve reliability at Hither Green, New Cross Gate, North Kent East, Angerstein and Ashford. We have also upgraded multiple junctions.

In Sussex, we've completed a variety of infrastructure initiatives, including signalling improvements at key junctions to prevent track circuit failures, the renewal of signalling cables and fixing webcams to monitor signal aspects before faults happen.

During February 2020 half term, we closed the Bexleyheath line (pictured) for nine days to do major work to protect passengers from disruption caused by landslips, investing £6.6m to provide a safe, permanent solution after four landslips in the past decade.

Towards the end of 2019 we invested £67m on the Brighton Main Line as part of a £300m government-funded programme to boost infrastructure resilience on one of our busiest routes. It aims to reduce delays significantly, meaning more reliable journeys.



In Kent, train performance has been better, and we are delivering on most of our performance targets. Reducing the number of train cancellations on GTR services remains a focus and we will be working hard with our operators to do even better. We are also exploring how we can make the network more resilient, as extreme weather earlier this year really challenged our older embankments and cuttings, leading to line closures.

Southern continued



On Wessex route, a new Joint Performance Improvement Centre (JPIC) is focussing on the basics of running a railway, including how we can recover quickly when things go wrong, keeping passengers informed and making sure lessons are learned for the future.

Although underlying performance on Wessex route has improved, it is nowhere near good enough and we acknowledge that we have let passengers down. We have seen some significant failures that have had a particularly disruptive effect on the train service, plus an increase in trespass incidents and fatalities, as well as industrial action. We are working hard to address these issues.

Safety

Across Southern region, we've introduced police and welfare officers at hotspots to prevent people from trespassing or taking their own life. There are currently 140 welfare and trespass officers covering 48 stations with a further five mobile teams covering extra stations.

The officers have made nearly 100 interventions where individuals have been in distress. It's estimated that if 31 of the incidents had materialised, 65,000 minutes of delay would have been incurred, affecting 1,395 trains and over 1,045,000 passengers would have experienced delays or cancellations.

Case study

Putting Passengers First

We have been focussing hard on passengers' needs at our major stations. As gateways to the rail network, a passenger's experience at a station can significantly influence their overall journey satisfaction. We are focussing on getting the basics right, making sure stations are clean and tidy, that lifts and escalators work, and staff are readily available to help. Building on the benefits of giving all station staff the same uniform so they can help all passengers regardless of their enquiry, this 'One Team' approach has been adopted at London Bridge, Charing Cross and Cannon Street stations, with Waterloo, Clapham Junction and Guildford to follow. Satisfaction levels continues to rise as a result.

In response to passenger concerns, we have also developed the PIDD Plus programme (Passenger Information During Disruption) to improve the flow of information to passengers when things go wrong so that they feel informed and can make more informed decisions about their journey.

➤ The year ahead (2020/21)

Although the picture is complicated by the impact of Coronavirus, we plan major infrastructure enhancements. These include a vital £150m upgrade to Gatwick Airport station to increase capacity, improve accessibility and transform the passenger experience. The plans include doubling the station concourse, adding five new lifts, eight escalators and widening two platforms.

We are also planning to invest in train depots and make our stations more accessible for those who find the railway difficult to use.

Passengers in Kent and South East London should benefit from more reliable journeys, as we invest £1.25bn to replace old equipment with new technology as part of the South East Upgrade.

This includes replacing 429km of track, investing £162m in new signalling and another £170m replacing switches and crossings.

Major projects include signalling renewals on the Greenwich and Blackheath lines as well as in Hither Green.

We're also planning to invest £3.9m at Crawley station to install a new footbridge and two new lifts, making access between the station entrance, ticket office and both platforms much easier for customers with reduced mobility.

During the Coronavirus crisis, we are focussing on two strategic objectives - keeping our people and their families safe, while continuing to run critical rail routes for passengers who need to travel and vital freight supplies to help fight the pandemic.

Network Rail staff in the Southern region and elsewhere are playing a critical role during this unprecedented challenge by working tirelessly to ensure vital supplies are distributed around the country and essential workers can get to and from their workplaces.

Each week we operate around 600 freight services across the country and our freight operators run longer, heavier and more freight services to strengthen the UK supply chain. Working with our partners, we continue to supply food to our supermarkets, vital fuel to power stations and remove household waste by rail.



We also carry on supplying sand, aggregate and building materials to many housebuilding and engineering projects, as well as our own rail projects.

Frontline specialists such as signallers and maintenance teams are critical as the railway cannot operate without them.

Many thanks are due to everyone playing a crucial role to keep freight trains moving and essential workers to support the UK economy during the pandemic.

Case study

Efficiencies

The Wessex route reduced speed restrictions significantly in 2019/20 and we are focussed on removing more to improve reliability for passengers. Through increased technology use and targeted maintenance, we have delivered benefits to passengers through fewer delays associated with speed restrictions and saved money by reducing the number of speed restrictions we need to remove. Removing a speed restriction can be costly as it often involves specialist plant and machinery, as well as access to the railway which is disruptive to both our passenger and freight users.