

Railway Target Service Levels

The level of service appropriate for any rail route depends on the type of journey being undertaken (from the daily commute to the occasional tourist excursion) by the majority of passengers using the route and the distance they are travelling.

Commuting and business routes

In order to attract the maximum number of car users, the service should be 'turn up and go'. However, this concept varies depending on the distance of the journey and the time that would be taken by other modes of transport.

Research has shown that there is a relationship between the time headway between trains and the train transit time versus the equivalent car journey time. This indicates that the shorter the journey, the shorter the headway has to be.

In general it has been found that the following headways on routes to major employment centres are appropriate:-

journeys up to 20 miles – 15 minute headway

journeys up to 50 miles – 30 minute headway

journeys over 50 miles – 60 minute headway

Other rail routes

All other routes should be timetabled to allow same day return journeys while allowing a reasonable time at the destination. In general a maximum 3-hourly headway would be appropriate.

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