

Flooding disrupts performance across Scotland's Railway

March 6, 2020



One of Scotland's wettest months on record disrupted train punctuality across the country as severe flooding impacted on services for customers.

Everyone across Scotland's Railway worked flat out to keep people moving, with Edinburgh and Glasgow both seeing more than three times their usual February rainfall.

The figures for the most recent period of performance (2 February – 29 February) show that 86.5 per cent of trains met the rail industry standard public performance measure (PPM).

Weather incidents alone accounted for a four per cent drop in PPM, halting a run of three consecutive periods of improvement in punctuality. But for the impact of weather, PPM would have been higher than 90 per cent for the first time since June 2019.

This means that the PPM MAA (Moving Annual Average), a key performance target for the Scottish Government, is 88.2 per cent – dropping slightly from a 19-month high of 88.5 per cent.

Customers had unprecedented access to information, with ScotRail working closely with Network Rail Scotland to show the impact of the weather across social media platforms.

A specially created web page during Storm Ciara, and content on social channels, reached more than one million people, with everyone on the frontline of Scotland's Railway delivering for customers.

Despite the impact of the weather, Abellio's £475 million investment in new and upgraded trains is delivering improvements. All 70 of the class 385 Hitachi electric trains are in service and 13 fully refurbished InterCity trains have been delivered.

And Scotland's Railway is increasing investment in improving resilience to weather events.

Network Rail is set to spend over £35m a year between 2019 and 2024 on projects to enhance and renew drainage systems and earthworks across Scotland.

Increased use of new technology is also helping to tackle the challenge posed by storms like Ciara Dennis, with additional remote-monitoring devices – including fibre optic listening systems and CCTV – being deployed to improve early detection of problems and to reduce response times.

Alex Hynes, Managing Director of Scotland's Railway, said: "This was an exceptionally challenging period on Scotland's Railway and unfortunately the weather prevented us delivering the level of service that our customers expect and deserve.

"Our people across the country worked flat out and did everything possible to keep services moving and get people to where they needed to be.

"It's still a fantastic time to be part of Scotland's Railway, after recent improvements in customer satisfaction, and more new and upgraded trains across the network, following Abellio's £475 million investment."

Photo credit: ScotRail