

Freight rail usage and performance 2019-20 Q4 stats

May 28, 2020



The volume of rail freight moved in the UK dropped to 16.6 billion net tonne kilometres in the 2019-20 financial year – the lowest in 23 years.

That's according to the freight rail usage and performance stats revealed this week by the Office of Rail and Road.

The Q4 freight statistics have been affected by the coronavirus pandemic, although the impact is small given the number of days affected up to the end of March 2020.

The report says a more noticeable impact is expected in the next statistical release.

Of that moved:

- 41% was domestic intermodal.
- 28% was construction.
- 8% metals
- 6% oil and petroleum
- 3% international
- 2% coal
- 12% other.

Construction freight moved by rail has been rising steadily every year since 2012-13 and has increased by 52% in that time.

Of the decreases, most notable was coal, which dropped 68% to 0.37 billion net tonne kilometres in 2019-20.

In 2019-20, the total amount of freight lifted in Great Britain fell to 68.1 million tonnes, which is a 10% decrease from the level in 2018-19 – the lowest total since the miner’s strike in 1984-85.

Click [here](#) to read the full report.

In response to the report, RMT General Secretary Mick Cash said: “These latest rail freight statistics are worrying to say the least and it’s vital that the rail freight industry is not allowed to wither on the vine as it has proven to play a vital role in our response to the COVID19 crisis, moving vital medical supplies and food to keep our country moving.

“The Government must ensure we get rail freight back on the rails and that this vital sector is fully supported as part of an integrated transport strategy that will become even more vital as part of the country’s post COVID revival.”

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