Summary of the National Heavy Rail Census
Carried out in November 2015

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Highlights from the 2015 Rail Census

141,477 journeys were taken on the day of the Census – a 13% increase on 2014.

12 stations handled in excess of 5,000 passengers, up from 10 in 2014. Connolly, Pearse, Heuston and Tara continued to be the busiest stations handling one third of all passengers on census day.

Kent station, in Cork city, was the only station outside of the Greater Dublin Area to feature in the top ten busiest stations.

Maynooth re-entered the top 10, having fallen to 12th in 2014. Apart from Heuston it is the only non-DART station in the top 10.

The 10 busiest stations on the network accounted for just under half (47%) of all passenger movements on the network.

25 stations in the country generated less than 100 journeys on Census day. Of the quietest stations, 12 experienced less than 30 journeys.

Carrick-on-Suir was the least used station on the network on Census day with only 1 boarding during the entire day.

30% of all stations experienced less than 200 daily journeys.

For the fourth year running, the busiest train in the country on Census day was the 08:00 DART service from Greystones to Malahide, with a total of 1,336 passengers using this service. The peak passenger load on this service occurred between Booterstown and Sydney Parade, when 923 passengers were on board.

The most heavily loaded Commuter service was the 07:12 from Drogheda to Bray, which carried 691 passengers between Howth Junction and Connolly.

The busiest train in the country was the 08:00 DART from Greystones service carrying a total of 1,336 passengers.

Maynooth re-entered the Top 10 busiest stations.

25 stations in the country generated less than 100 journeys on Census day.

Approximately 84% of total journeys undertaken nationally on Census day were in the Greater Dublin Area.
Overall the number of daily journeys on the rail network increased by 14% on 2014.

DART accounted for almost 46%. Commuter services for 39% and Intercity for 11% of all journeys made on Census day.

64,905 journeys were made on the DART on Census day 2015, around 10,000 or 18% more than in 2014.

Approximately 1,000 more passengers boarded Heuston services in 2015 than in 2014.

The Northern line (including DART) carried 43% of total passenger flows on the network during the morning peak hour, down from 46% in 2014.

The maximum passenger flow during the morning peak hour was on DART services travelling towards Dublin between Clontarf Road and Connolly.

Mirroring 2014 trends, 2015 saw a pronounced increase in boardings on Heuston services in the 07:00-08:00 period. There were more modest increases in boardings in the remaining peak periods. Meanwhile there was a slight decrease in off-peak boardings on Heuston services relative to 2014.

In 2015 the peak hour for boarding on DART and Kildare line services was between 08:00-09:00. On the Northern and South Eastern lines, the peak hour was 07:00-08:00.

Journeys in the GDA account for approximately 84% of total journeys undertaken nationally on Census day – this remains unchanged from 2012, 2013 & 2014.

The numbers of rail journeys taken outside of the GDA on Census day increased by almost 7% relative to 2014.

Almost 5,000 passenger journeys were made on Cork Commuter lines on Census day, an increase in 15% on 2014.

There was a decrease in cross-border trips from 2014 to 2015 of approximately 19%
Passenger Journeys 2015

- **2015**
  - DART: 46%
  - Commuter Services: 39%
  - Intercity: 11%

- The Northern line carried over 43% of total passenger flows on the network during the morning peak hour.
- Approximately 84% of total journeys undertaken nationally on Census day were in the GDA.
- Rail journeys taken outside of the GDA increased by almost 7%.

Further Information:
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The Rail Census

Data Qualification

The Rail Census is a snapshot of rail usage on a single day. While this survey is broadly representative of a typical weekday it is important to remember that it does not present systematic use or provide information on variations in rail usage by day of week or seasonally.

Variation in rail usage from one day in a particular year to another day in the next year may be influenced by a range of factors. Some of these factors include operational changes such as amendments to timetables and frequencies of services, while other factors are outside the control of the operator, such as the weather or the macroeconomic environment.

Although proving a robust annual trend, the data represents a snapshot only and does not provide a full picture of rail usage over the course of an entire year. The findings in this report should be interpreted in this context.

The National Heavy Rail Census

- The National Heavy Rail Census, funded by the National Transport Authority, records rail patronage at every train station in the country on one day of the year.

- The 2015 Census is the fourth National Census. Prior to 2012, the Census was carried out in the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) only.

- The Census was conducted by surveyors counting the number of individuals boarding and alighting each service at each station for an entire day (19th November 2015).

- The month of November is chosen as a month which is unaffected by holidays and when most places of work and education are in full session.

- Operating conditions on the day of the census were normal with no severe delays, cancellations or disruptions on the rail network. Therefore it is reasonable to conclude that the Census was undertaken on a generally representative day. However it should be noted that severe weather and service disruptions had a significant impact on passenger journey numbers on census day in 2014. This should be given consideration when comparing years.