



Public Service Obligation Contracts

Annual Performance Report

2019

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Overview of Public Service Obligation Contracts

The National Transport Authority has entered into public transport services contracts with a number of public transport operators, both State-owned and private companies, for the provision of bus and rail services that are socially necessary but not generally commercially viable. These contracts include payments to operators to meet the real cost of providing services. Accordingly, those services are often referred to as Public Service Obligation or “PSO” services.

There are two types of public transport services contract. They are:

- Net cost contracts under which the operator retains all fare revenue.
- Gross cost contracts under which the Authority retains all fare revenue.

Some contracts are awarded without a competitive tendering process. They are known as Direct Award Contracts. The Authority has Direct Award Contracts with Dublin Bus, Bus Éireann and Iarnród Éireann. The Authority’s contracts in respect of Local Link rural transport services comprise a mix of net cost, direct award contracts and gross cost competitively tendered contracts. This report details the activity and performance of contracted bus and rail services in 2019, excluding Rural Transport Programme services.

New Direct Award Contracts in 2019

The Authority entered into direct award contracts with Dublin Bus and Bus Éireann for a further five-year period from 1 December 2019.

In the case of Iarnród Éireann, the Authority entered into a further 10- year direct award contract from 1 December 2019 as it is statutorily required to do.

The new direct award contracts provide for the transition from net cost contracts to gross cost contracts during 2020 and 2021. They also include additional measures to encourage improvements to operational performance at an individual route level.

New Competitively Tendered Contracts in 2019

Following an international tender process, the National Transport Authority and Transport Infrastructure Ireland awarded Transdev Ireland the Luas light rail network Operations and Maintenance (O&M) contract. The O&M contract was implemented from 1 December 2019.

The remaining phases of the transfer to Go-Ahead Ireland of a number of local and orbital bus routes in Dublin were completed between January and March.

Go-Ahead Ireland was confirmed as the successful tenderer for the operation of a new bus service between Swords and Ashbourne (Route197). Services on the new route began in November.

In December, the phased transfer to Go-Ahead Ireland of commuter bus routes between Kildare and Dublin got underway with the operator taking over the operation of enhanced Routes 125, 126 and 130. Details of route enhancements are outlined later in this report.

City Direct was awarded a contract for the operation of two new urban bus routes in Kilkenny City (Routes KK1 and KK2). The new routes entered into service just before Christmas.

Table 1 lists the principal operators of tendered bus services at the end of 2019.

Table 1 - Principal operators of tendered bus services(as of December 31st 2019)

Operator	Routes operated
Go-Ahead Ireland	24 urban and 3 regional routes in Dublin and Kildare
Go-Ahead Ireland	Route 197 between Swords and Ashbourne
Bus Éireann	Routes W1, W2, W3, W4 & W5 in Waterford City
JJ Kavanagh & Sons	Route 139 between Naas and Blanchardstown
City Direct	Routes KK1 / KK2 in Kilkenny City
Andrew Wharton Coach Hire	Route 975 between Cavan and Longford
M&A Coaches Limited	Route 828 between Portlaoise and Cashel
Bernard Kavanagh & Sons Limited	Route 817 between Kilkenny and Dublin

New Routes and Service Enhancements in 2019

Contracted bus and rail services are regularly revised to stimulate growth in public transport use and to respond to changing demand.

The Authority formally approves all proposed revisions in advance of their implementation.

The Authority considered 136 proposals for changes to bus and rail services. The principal approved changes implemented or proposed changes in planning in 2019 are described in the following paragraphs.

Dublin Bus

- Revised timetables were introduced on Routes 13, 25A, 25B, 38/A, 39A and 70, enhancing the frequency of midweek off-peak, evening and weekend services.
- Route 155 was introduced between Bray and Ikea via Dublin City Centre.
- Route 66e was introduced between Maynooth and Dublin City via Green Lane, Leixlip.
- Route 53a was introduced to provide a social link to the North East Inner City area.
- 24-hour services were implemented on Route 41 (Lower Abbey Street – Swords Manor via Dublin Airport) and Route 15 (Clongriffin – Ballycullen Road via Dublin City Centre).
- Additional services were added on a number of routes during peak hours to meet increased demand including Routes 25, 25b, 54a, 67x, 69, 84x and 140.

Go-Ahead Ireland

- The transfer of routes from Dublin Bus was successfully completed.
- Frequency was increased on Routes 17, 18, 75, 75A, 76, 76A, , 104, 114, 220, 236, 236A and 270

- A new service operating between Swords and Ashbourne was implemented in November following a competitive tender. Route 197 operates 17 daily return services on Monday to Saturday, and 14 return services on Sunday and public holidays.
- Transfer of services from Bus Éireann on the Dublin Commuter routes began in December, with services operating on the N7 corridor. Key features include: -
 - 30-minute frequency between Newbridge and Dublin via Naas, Johnstown & Kill every day with additional peak time services;
 - Evening services operate hourly through to last bus at 01:05 from Dublin on Monday to Saturday;
 - Additional services from Athy and Kilcullen, including new off-peak connecting services to Naas for onward travel on Route 126; and
 - New services for Rathangan on Saturday and Sunday.

Iarnród Éireann

- A later evening service from Dublin to Mullingar was introduced in September by extending the Dublin Connolly to Maynooth service.
- A morning service on the Galway – Heuston line was advanced and an additional stop made in Kildare to provide additional capacity.

Bus Éireann (Dublin Commuter Area)

- Timetable improvements were made on Routes 101 and 101x to meet increased demand and to improve punctuality and reliability to reflect increased traffic issues.
- Transfer of services from Bus Éireann to Go-Ahead Ireland on the Dublin Commuter routes began in December, with services operating on the N7 corridor as detailed above.

Bus Éireann (Regional Cities)

Cork

- Frequency on Route 220 was increased from 2 to 4 buses per hour, and services were provided throughout the night, offering the first 24-hour urban bus service in the State.
- Route 216 (Mount Oval – City Centre – Cork University Hospital) was extended to a new terminus at Monkstown and hours of service were extended to deliver an enhanced frequency to the growing populations of Passage West and Monkstown. This enhanced service in conjunction with Route 223 provides three services per hour to and from Cork City.
- A new service, Route 225, was introduced linking Haulbowline – Ringaskiddy – Carrigaline – Ballygarvan and Cork Airport. The new service provides: -
 - Daily services between 04:00 and 00:30 hours;
 - 30-minute service throughout the day;

- Increased connectivity between Carrigaline and Ringaskiddy and addition of Ballygarvan to the public transport network;
- Low floor, fully accessible vehicles.

Galway

- Improved services were implemented on Route 424 & 419 to provide enhanced frequency throughout the day, including evenings and weekends.

Limerick

All city routes (301 – 306) received enhanced timetables and additional resources to provide significant improvements in frequency, punctuality and reliability.

Waterford

The transfer of the Waterford City routes from the Bus Éireann Direct Award Contract to a competitively tendered contract were completed in 2019. Under this programme, continued improvements were made to services to improve punctuality, reliability and customer experience.

Large Towns

- A new service (Route D2) was introduced on the Drogheda Town network. Together, Routes D1 (Drogheda - Bettystown - Laytown) and D2 (Drogheda – Bettystown – Laytown via Coast Road), provide a combined frequency of every 15 minutes between Laytown, Bettystown and Drogheda.
- Two urban routes were implemented in Kilkenny City. Route KK1 runs from Loughboy Retail Park to the N77 Roundabout, and serves Upper Patrick Street, McDonagh Junction, and Castlecomer Road. Route KK2 runs from Purcellsinch to St Luke’s Hospital, with stops at Dublin Road, Newpark Shopping Centre, McDonagh Station, Nowlan Park, and Loreto. The routes share a path through the city centre, serving Parliament Street, Market Yard and John Street Upper. Key features of the new routes include: -
 - Each route operates every 30 minutes Monday to Saturday;
 - Services on Sunday operate by the hour, with services every half hour during the core part of the day;
 - Late night services operate on Friday and Saturday nights; and
 - All bus stops are newly paved with “Kassel” kerbs to facilitate wheelchair access to the low-floor buses.
- Planning work continued on the development of new urban bus services for Carlow, Mullingar and Portlaoise and for improved services in Athlone, Drogheda, Dundalk and Sligo towns.

Bus Éireann (Interurban)

- Route 458 (Ballina - Sligo – Enniskillen) was fully revised with increased frequency across all days and improved punctuality.

Passenger Numbers and Kilometres operated

Overall, there was an increase in passenger journeys of 25.5 million in 2019, when compared to 2018, which is an increase of 9.5%. Table 2 below details the number of annual passenger journeys on contracted services in 2019, compared to 2018.

Dublin Bus recorded a slight drop in passenger journeys in 2019, when compared to 2018. This was due to the continued migration of a number of routes from Dublin Bus to Go-Ahead Ireland in the Outer Dublin Metropolitan Area (ODMA) as part of the Bus Market Opening process. When these routes are excluded from the calculation, passenger journeys on Dublin Bus grew by over 9 million.

2019 saw a large increase in passenger journeys under the 'Others PSO Services' heading. The process of migration of ODMA routes from Dublin Bus to Go-Ahead Ireland, which started in the second half of 2018, was completed in the first half of 2019. This makes up the majority of the annual increase.

Passenger journeys grew by 4.6 million on Bus Éireann PSO services, despite the fact that six routes in Waterford City migrated to operation by Bus Éireann under a separately tendered BMO contract. Passenger journey figures for the Waterford City services have been recorded under the heading 'Other PSO Services' from the mid-2019 migration date onwards.

2019 was also a good year for Heavy Rail and Light Rail patronage. Passenger journeys on Iarnród Éireann services increased by 2.1m (4.4%). An increase of 6.5m passenger journeys was recorded on Luas, which is an increase of over 15% compared to 2018.

The 'Other PSO Services' heading covers passenger on all other contracted PSO public transport services, including Bus Éireann Waterford City services, but excluding Rural Transport Programme services.

Patronage figures for Rural Transport Programme services are also shown for information in Table 2, with an increase of 200,000 passenger journeys recorded in 2019.

Table 2 – Annual passenger journeys on principal contracted services (millions)

Year	Dublin Bus	Bus Éireann*	Iarnród Éireann	Luas Light Rail	Other PSO Services	Rural Transport Programme	Totals
2018	140.0	35.3	48.0	41.8	1.6	2.3	269.0
2019	138.3	39.9	50.1	48.3	15.4	2.5	294.5
Increase	-1.7	4.6	2.1	6.5	13.8	0.2	25.5

**Direct Award Contract only. Bus Éireann Waterford tendered services included within 'Other PSO Services'*

Figures 1, 2 & 3 below show trends in periodic passenger journey figures. Note that routes tendered under Bus Market Opening (BMO) arrangements are excluded from Dublin Bus and Bus Éireann totals in Figure 1.

Figure 1 – Periodic passenger journeys by main PSO route grouping 2018-2019

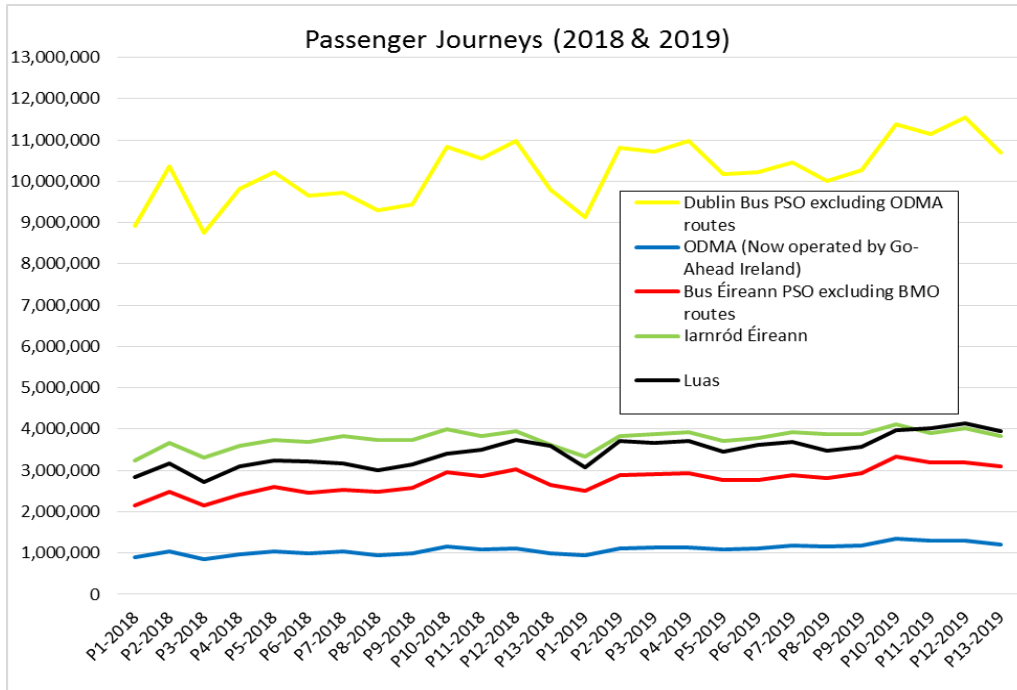


Figure 2 – Bus Éireann periodic passenger journeys by route subgroup 2018-2019

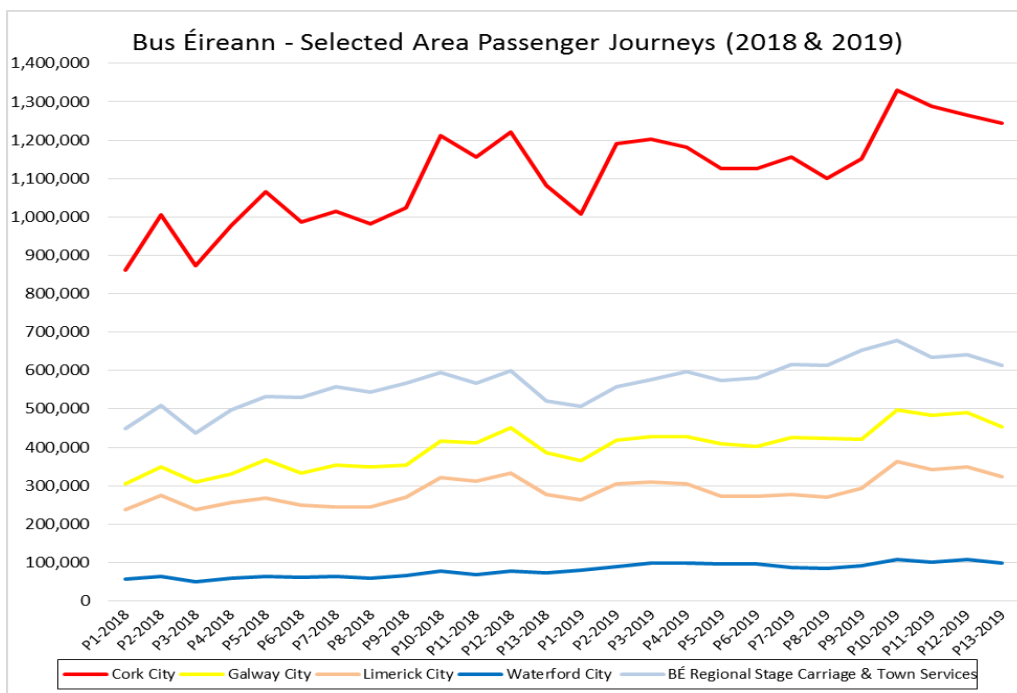


Figure 3 – Dublin Commuter Bus Routes (Bus Éireann plus Go-Ahead Ireland) periodic passenger journeys 2018-2019

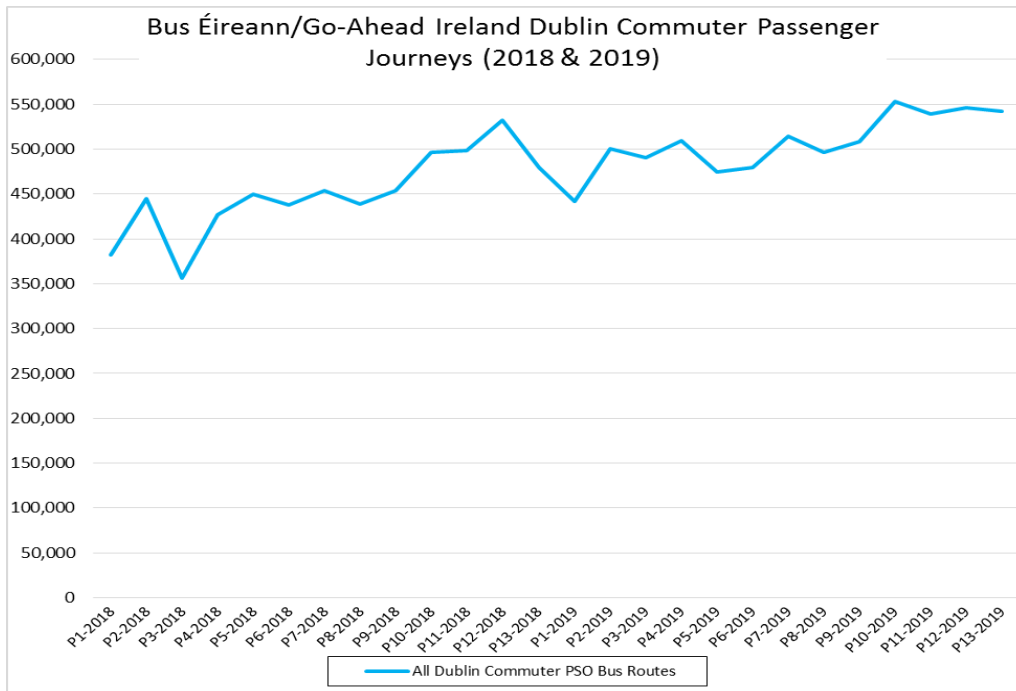


Table 3 below shows the annual operated vehicle kilometres for each contract in 2019, compared to 2018.

Annual operated vehicle kilometres (millions)							
Year	Dublin Bus	Bus Éireann*	Iarnród Éireann	Luas	Go Ahead ODMA	Other tendered PSO Services	Total
2018	46.7	42.7	16.2	4.1	0.9	0.8	111.3
2019	44.7	44.4	17.7	4.4	8.3	1.4	120.8
% Change	-4.3%	3.9%	9.2%	8.0%	864.0%	75.1%	8.6%

*Direct Award Contract only. Bus Éireann Waterford tendered services included within 'Other PSO Services'

Note – The methodology for calculating Dublin Bus operated vehicle KM figures has been amended compared to previous NTA reports to improve consistency across contracts.

Punctuality By Contract And Region

Low frequency bus routes are defined as services that operate less than 4 times per hour on a weekday, outside of peak periods.

The Punctuality of Low Frequency Routes is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Low Frequency Punctuality (\%)} = \frac{\text{Number of Actual Departures on Time}}{\text{Number of Actual Departures}} \times 100$$

For low frequency bus routes, a departure from a bus stop is classified as 'on time' if the bus departs not more than one minute early or not more than five minutes and fifty nine seconds late, when compared to the scheduled departure time.

Low frequency bus route punctuality is measured at every stop along each route. The bus shares the majority of its route with general traffic with no special priority measures. In Dublin, bus priority measures exist on only 30% of the network.

One of the elements of the BusConnects project involves building a network of new bus corridors to improve journey times and journey time reliability. This project, along with numerous other performance improvement initiatives involving bus operators, will facilitate improvements in punctuality performance in the months and years ahead. A good example of such improvement is in the London area. In 1990/91, low frequency network punctuality was 63%. This gradually improved during the 1990's, and was at 68% in 2000/01. Over the following decade, punctuality rose to over 80%, and remains at this level to date.

High frequency bus routes are defined as services which operate at a frequency of 15 minutes or greater on a weekday, outside the peak periods.

High Frequency Routes differ from Low Frequency Routes, as passengers on High Frequency Routes are less likely to base their journey on the bus schedule and are instead more likely to just turn up at the bus stop and wait for the next bus to arrive. These passengers are generally more concerned with the average amount of time they must wait at the stop for the next bus to arrive, as opposed to whether the bus is running to schedule.

On this basis, the NTA measures the regularity of High Frequency Routes using a metric called Excess Wait Time (EWT). This metric provides a measure of the average time a passenger must wait for the next high frequency bus, in excess of the wait time which would be expected as per the schedule for that route. For a passenger who arrives at a stop for a high frequency bus route without checking the schedule, the EWT will calculate how much longer you have to wait for the next bus, in comparison to a baseline situation where all buses are calculated to the timetabled gap (headway) between services. Therefore, the regularity of High Frequency Routes is calculated as follows:

$$\text{EWT (mins)} = \text{Average Actual Waiting Time (mins)} - \text{Average Planned Waiting Time (mins)}$$

Excess Wait time is also used as the punctuality measure for Luas services, while punctuality of Iarnród Éireann services is measured by the number of trains departing within 5 or 10 minutes of the scheduled departure time. The Minimum Performance Standard for Excess Wait Time on Luas services requires a much lower EWT value than for bus services. Much of the Luas network runs on track that is segregated from general traffic and Luas is generally afforded traffic signal priority through junctions. In addition, Luas tickets are purchased and validated off the vehicle, allowing for more consistent dwell time at stops.

Figures 4 to 12 show punctuality performance on low frequency and high frequency routes by contract for 2019, with 2018 results included (where possible) to show trends. Further detail, including route by route punctuality data, is available on the Public Transport Services section of the NTA website.

Figure 4 – Low frequency punctuality performance for major bus contracts 2018-2019

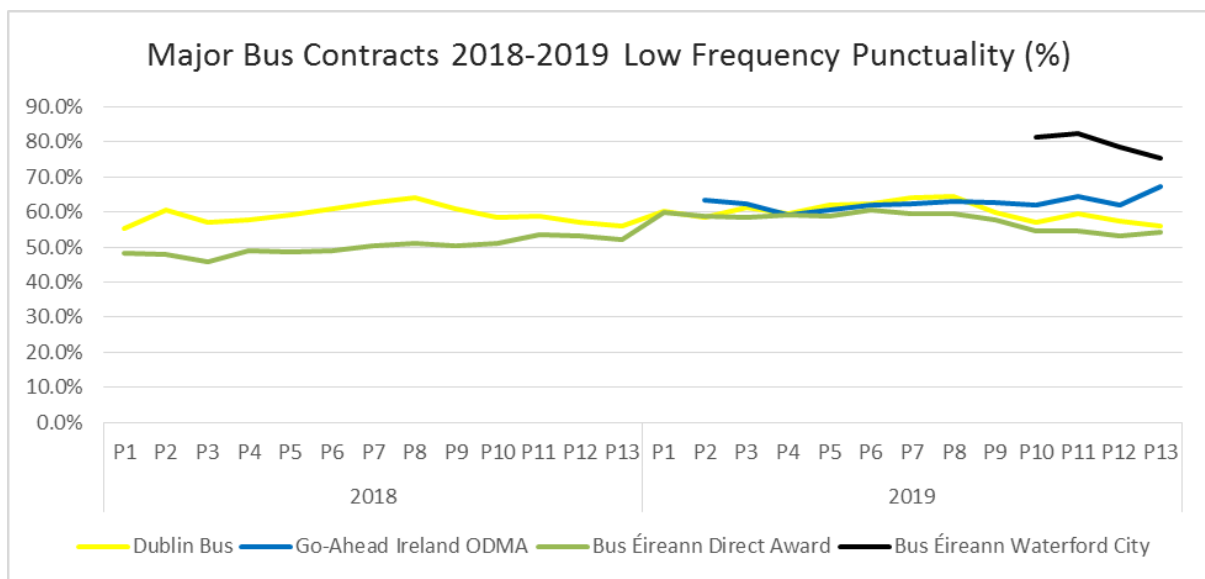


Figure 5 – Dublin Bus low frequency punctuality performance 2018-2019

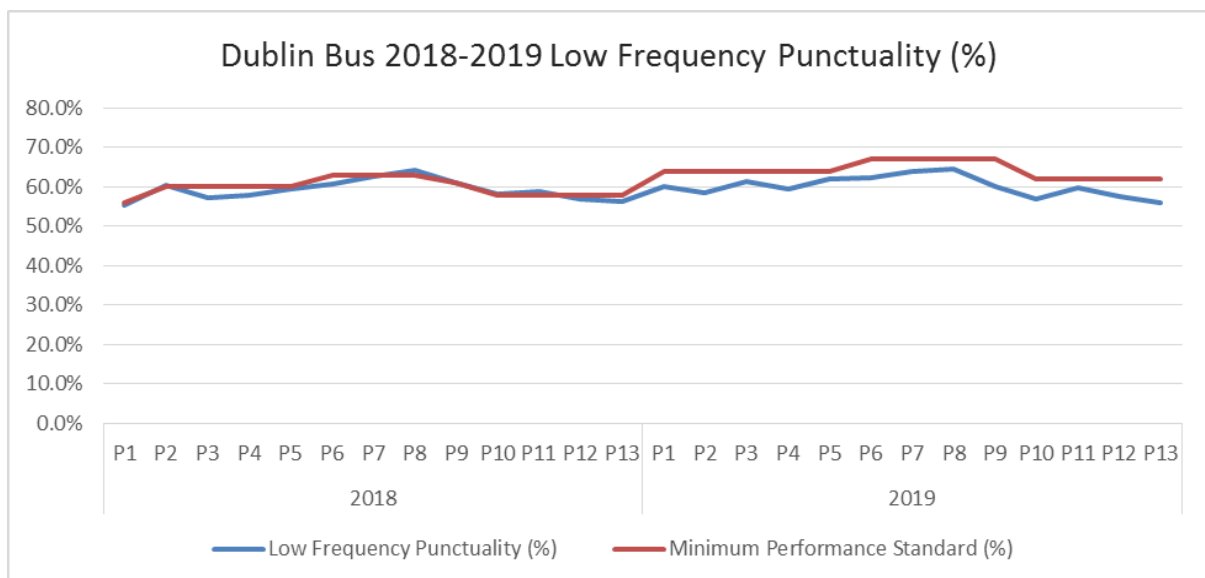


Figure 6 – Go-Ahead Ireland (ODMA) low frequency punctuality performance 2019

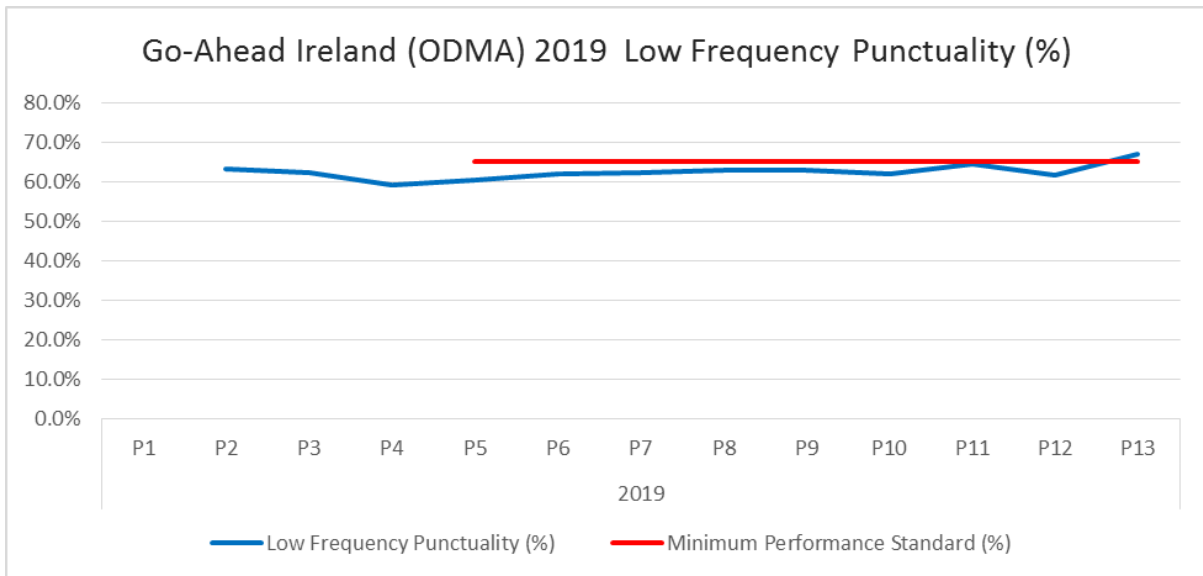


Figure 7 – Bus Éireann Direct Award Contract low frequency punctuality performance 2018-2019

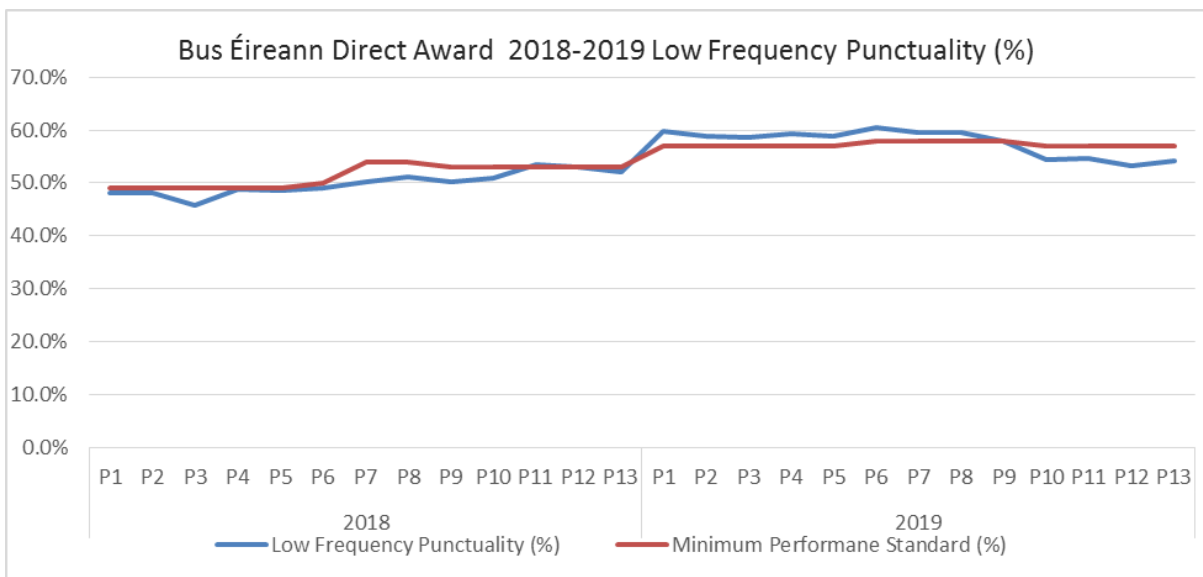
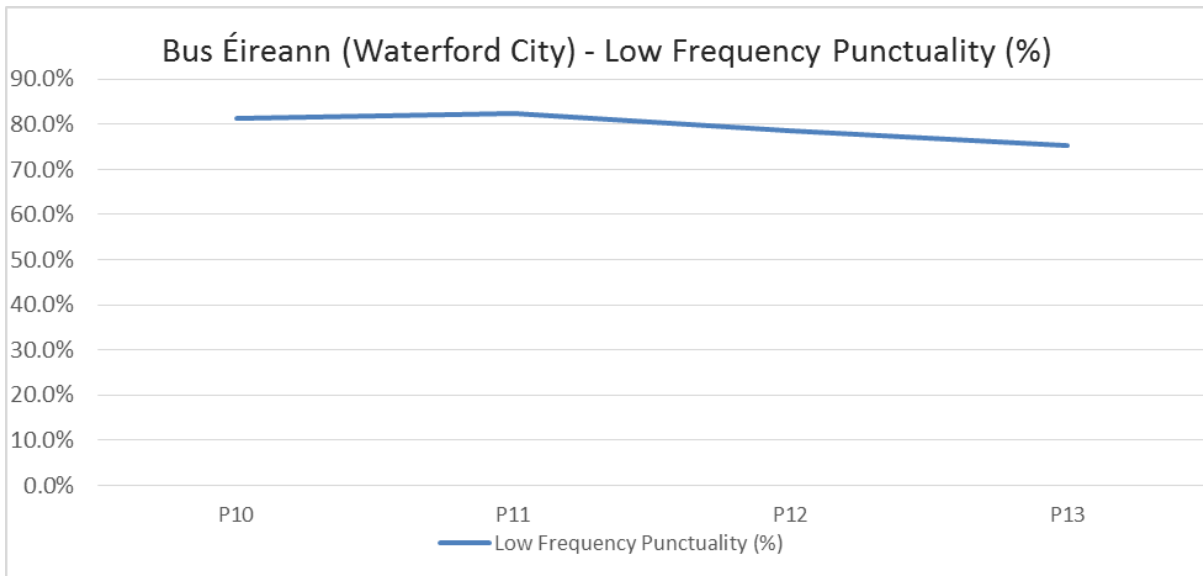


Figure 8 – Bus Éireann Waterford City Contract low frequency punctuality performance 2019



Note – A punctuality minimum performance standard of 65% came into operation for BÉ Waterford City in P13 2019

Figure 9 – Iarnród Éireann punctuality performance 2018-2019

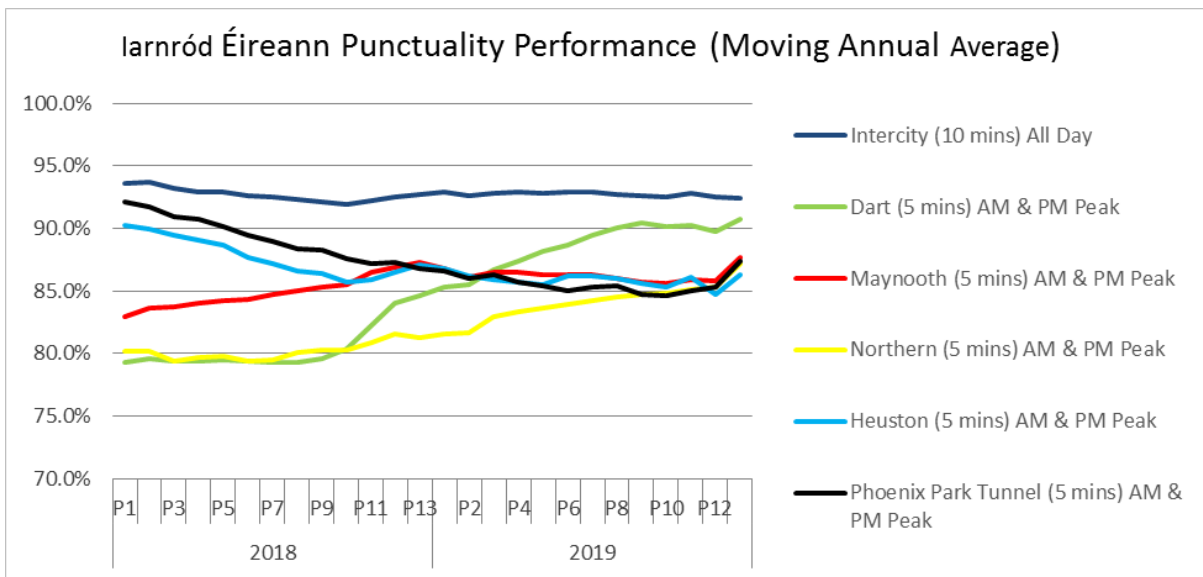


Figure 10 – Dublin Bus High Frequency Regularity (Excess Wait Time) 2019

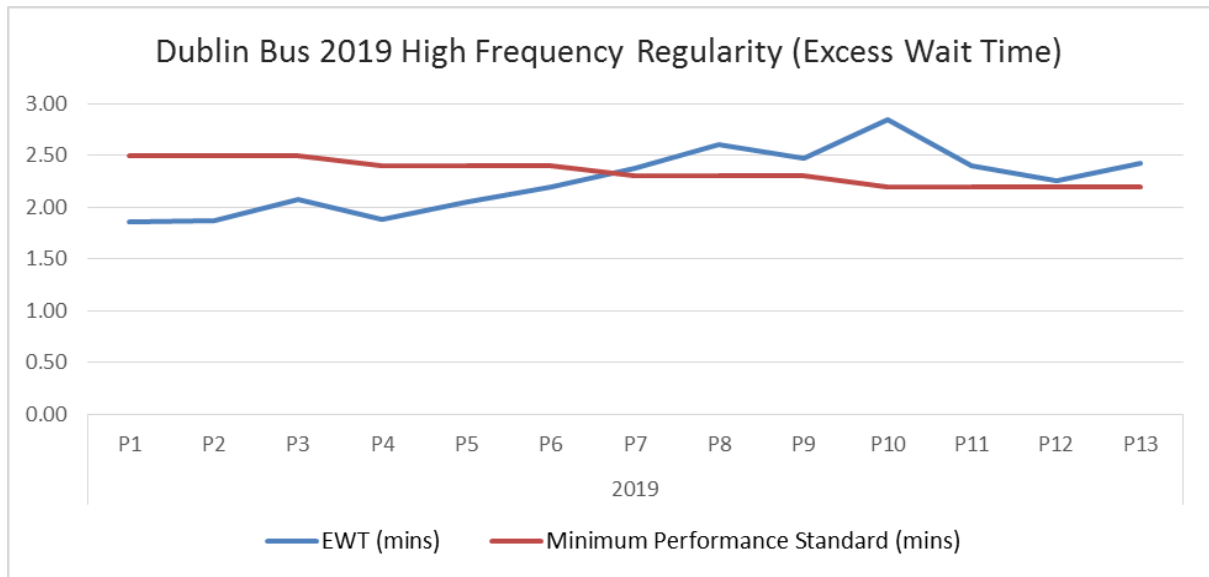


Figure 11 – Bus Éireann Direct Award Contract High Frequency Regularity (Excess Wait Time) 2019

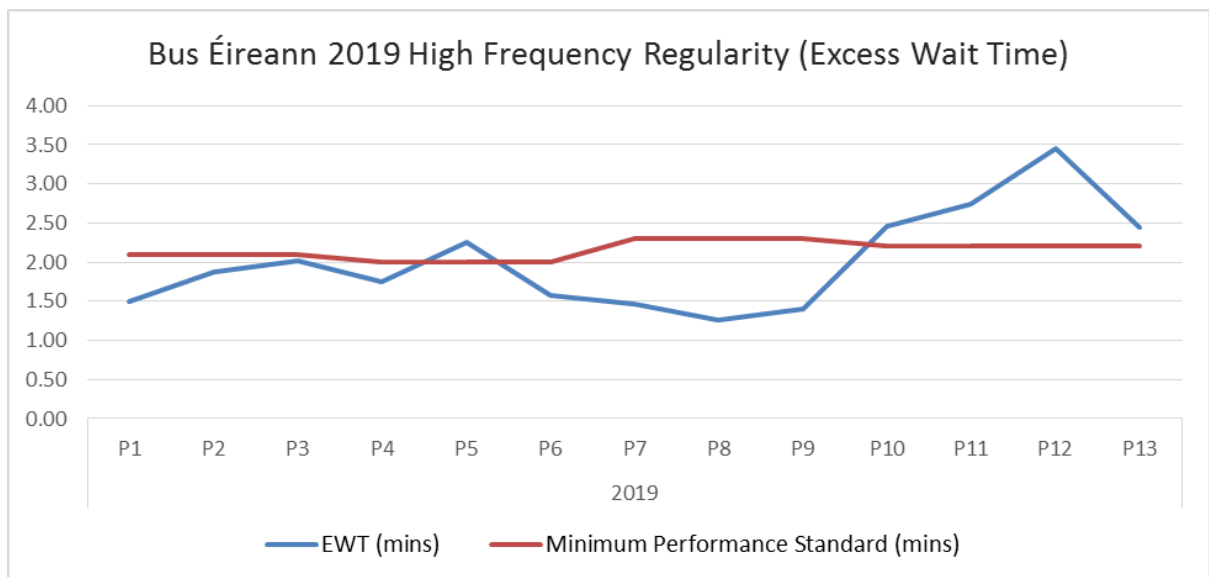
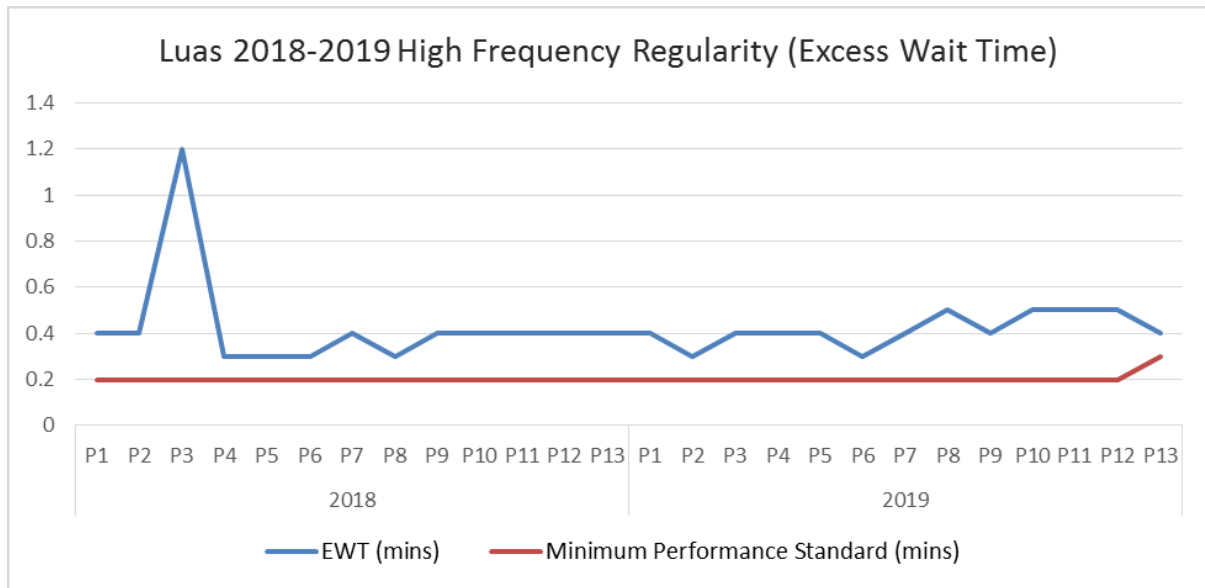


Figure 12 – Luas High Frequency Regularity (Excess Wait Time) 2019



A sharp increase in EWT on Luas services is seen in P3 2018, due to the effects of Storm Emma.

Reliability by Contract (Lost Kilometres)

Reliability of public transport services is assessed using a metric called “Lost Kilometre Rate (%)”. This metric for bus services is calculated as follows:

Step 1:

Number of Lost Kilometres (Km) = Total Scheduled Services (Km) – Total Services Operated (Km)

Step 2:

$$\text{Lost Kilometre Rate (\%)} = \left(\frac{\text{Number of Lost KM (Km)}}{\text{Total Scheduled Services (Km)}} \right) \times 100$$

- The *Total Scheduled Services* is based on the route and timetable(s) for every bus service, as agreed with the NTA under each relevant PSO contract.
- The *Total Services Operated* is determined by the AVL (Automatic Vehicle Location) system which is installed on each bus to record the route and distances travelled.
- The *Number of Lost Kilometres* does not include bus services (whole or partial routes) which could not be operated for reasons outside of the control of the operator (for example, road closures due to a major event, extreme weather resulting in unsafe road conditions etc.). These exceptions are identified by the bus operator and approved by the NTA.

Minimum Performance Standards (MPS) are set out in operating contracts. By the end of 2019, the minimum performance standard for Lost Kilometres on all of the main PSO bus operating contracts was 2%. Similar systems are used to determine Lost Kilometres for Heavy Rail and Luas services. The MPS for Luas is 0% and the MPS for Heavy Rail services is 2%. All operators are now liable for payment deductions if they fail to meet contractual lost kilometre standards.

A sharp increase in Lost Km on Luas and Iarnród Éireann services is seen in P3 2018, due to the effects of Storm Emma. This is not seen in the bus Lost Km graphs as Lost KM for Storm Emma have been removed from the data in line with the bus Lost KM calculation criteria listed above.

Figures 13 – 18 below show Lost Kilometre trends in 2019, with 2018 figures included for comparison purposes. Further detail is available on the Public Transport Services section of the NTA website.

Figure 13 – Dublin Bus reliability performance 2018-2019

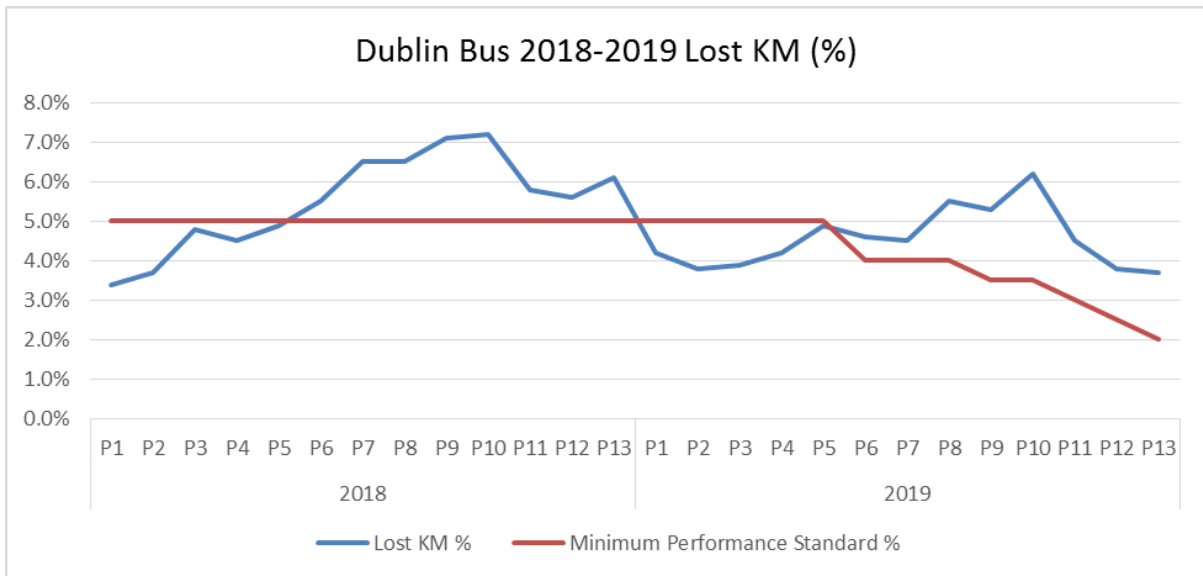


Figure 14 – Go-Ahead Ireland ODMA reliability performance 2019

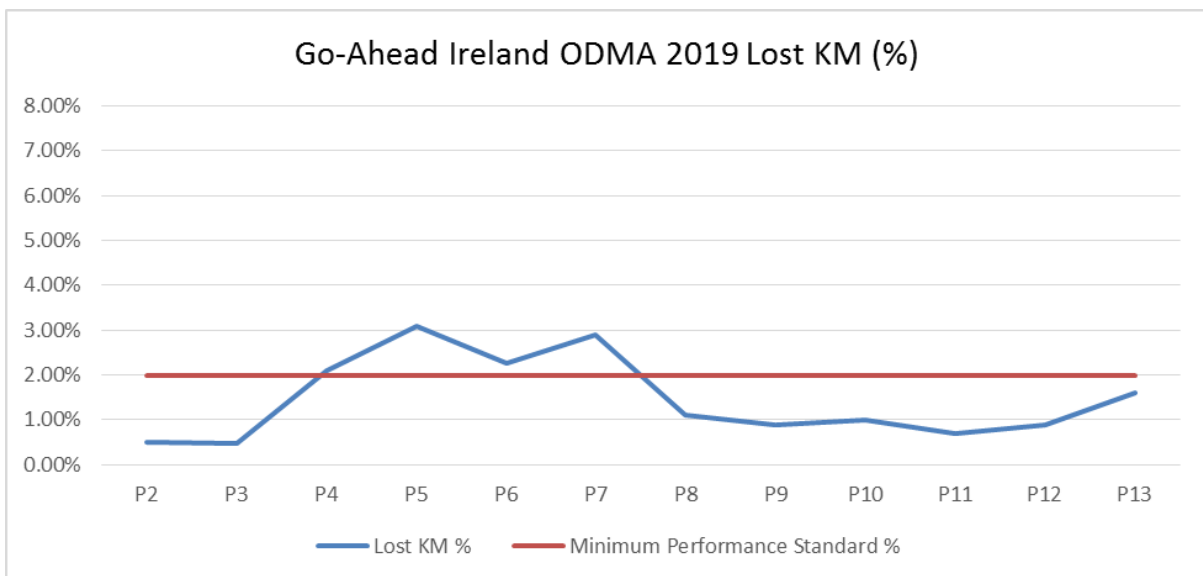


Figure 15 – Bus Éireann Direct Award Contract reliability performance 2019

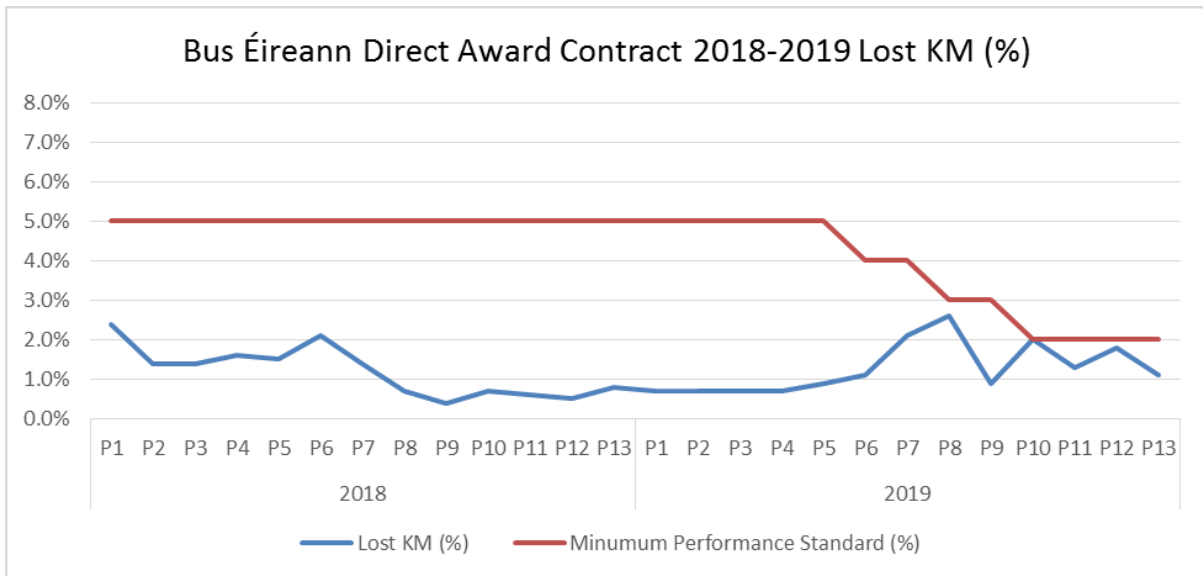


Figure 16 – Bus Éireann Waterford City reliability performance 2019

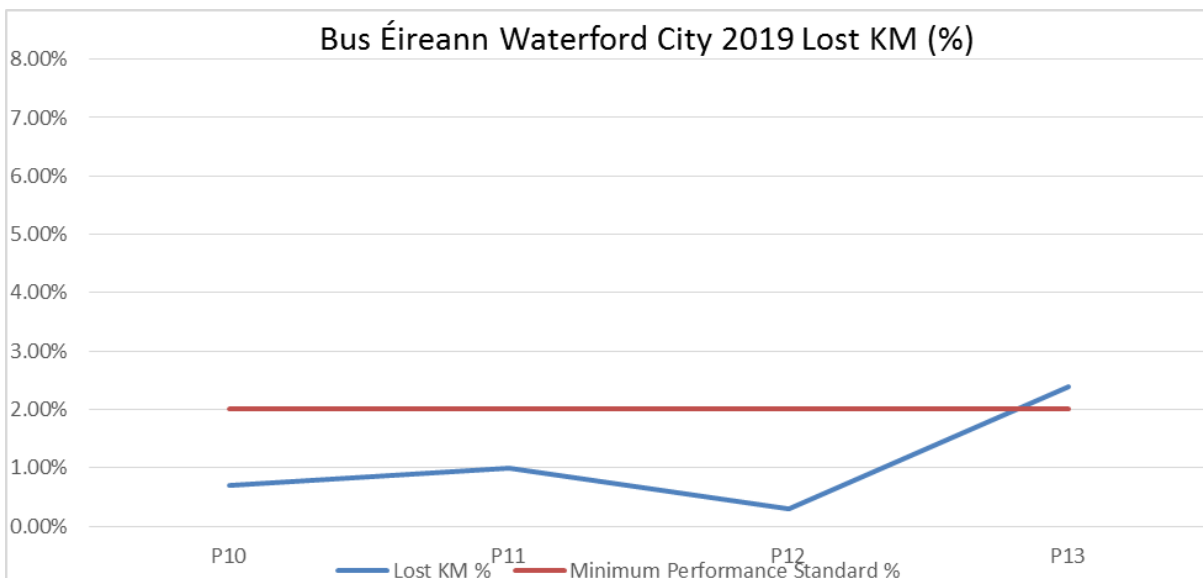
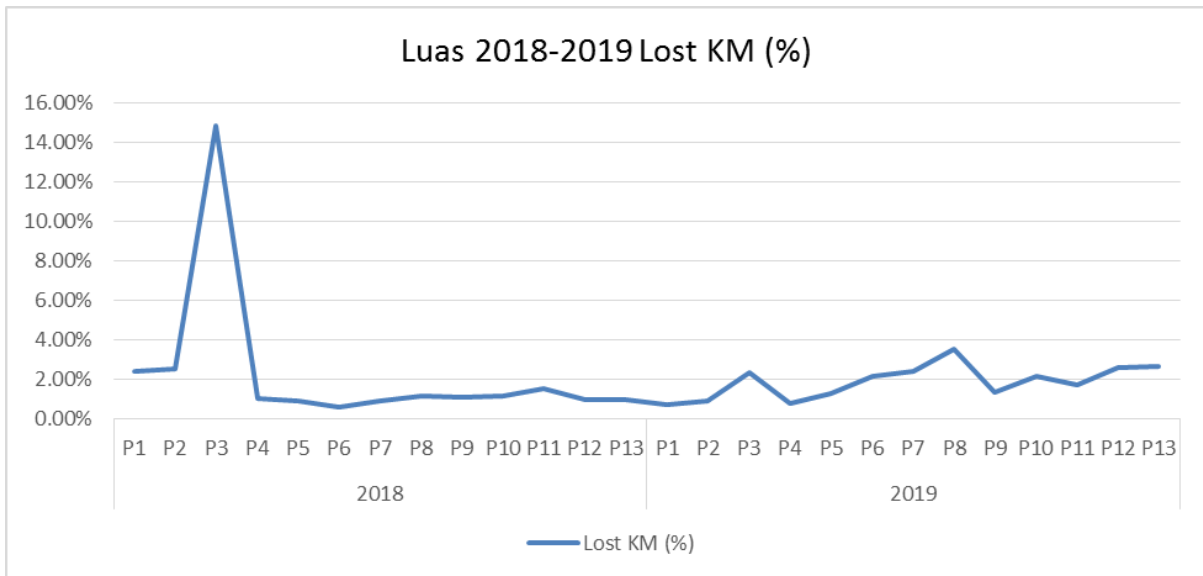
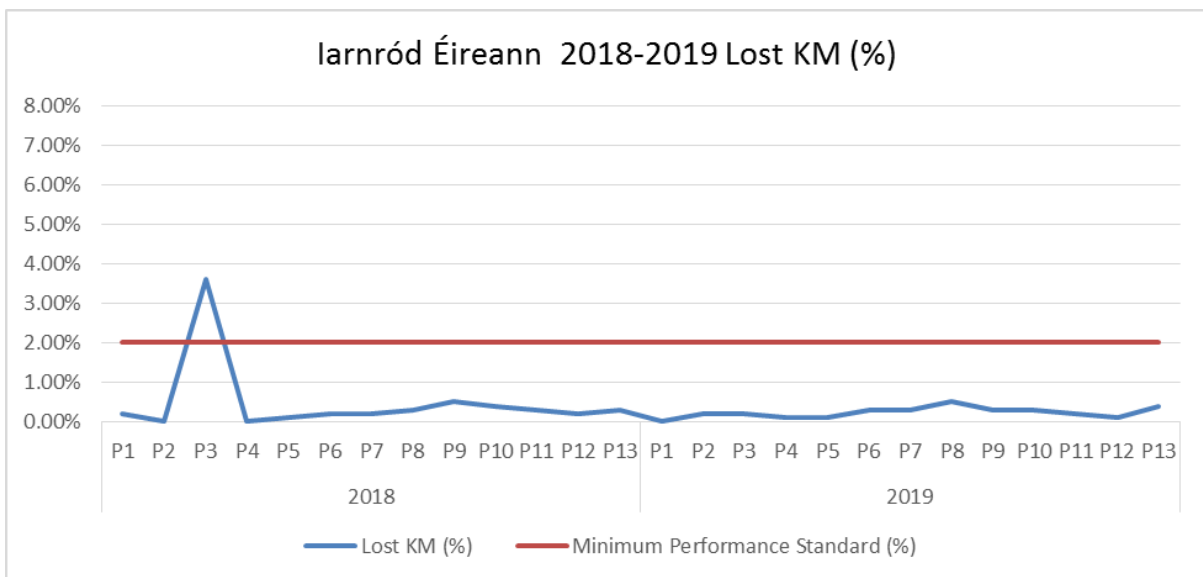


Figure 17 – Luas reliability performance 2018- 2019



Note - Luas Lost KM figures do not take into account any bus replacement services that operated when Luas was not operating. A sharp increase in Lost Km on Luas services is seen in P3 2018, due to the effects of Storm Emma.

Figure 18 – Iarnród Éireann reliability performance 2018- 2019



Note - A sharp increase in Lost Km on Iarnród Éireann services is seen in P3 2018, due to the effects of Storm Emma.

Customer Service Quality by Contract

The NTA utilises a number of data sources to assist in monitoring and improving service quality for public transport passengers. Bus Mystery Passenger Surveys are undertaken by the NTA on a continuous basis. The Mystery Passenger Survey Programme will expand to include NTA Mystery Passenger Surveys on Luas and Iarnród Éireann services in 2020. Up to 2019, such surveys have been undertaken directly by Iarnród Éireann and Transport Infrastructure Ireland.

Passenger complaint rates per 100,000 passengers are also measured, and passenger query and complaint response times are monitored. Other important elements of the passenger experience are also reported on by each operator (e.g. details of service curtailments etc.).

Figures 19-24 below detail the 2019 complaint rates per 100,000 passengers for each of the PSO operators, with figures shown for 2018 for comparison purposes where possible. It is important to note that some complaints included in these figures may not be fully attributable to the operator. For example, complaints regarding frequency on a public transport route, or issues at certain bus stops that the operator has no responsibility to maintain. Further details, including route by route complaint rates for bus services, are available on the Public Transport Services section of the NTA website.

Figure 19 – Dublin Bus complaint rate per 100,000 passengers 2018- 2019

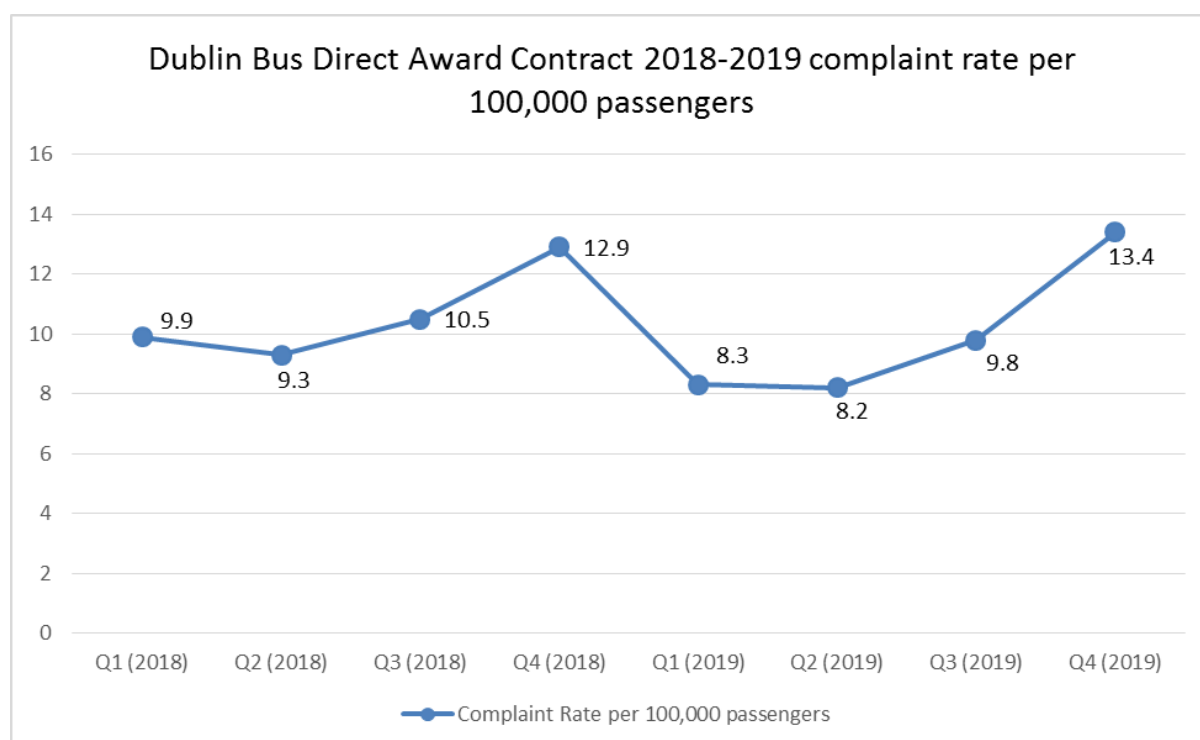


Figure 20 – Go-Ahead Ireland ODMA complaint rate per 100,000 passengers 2019

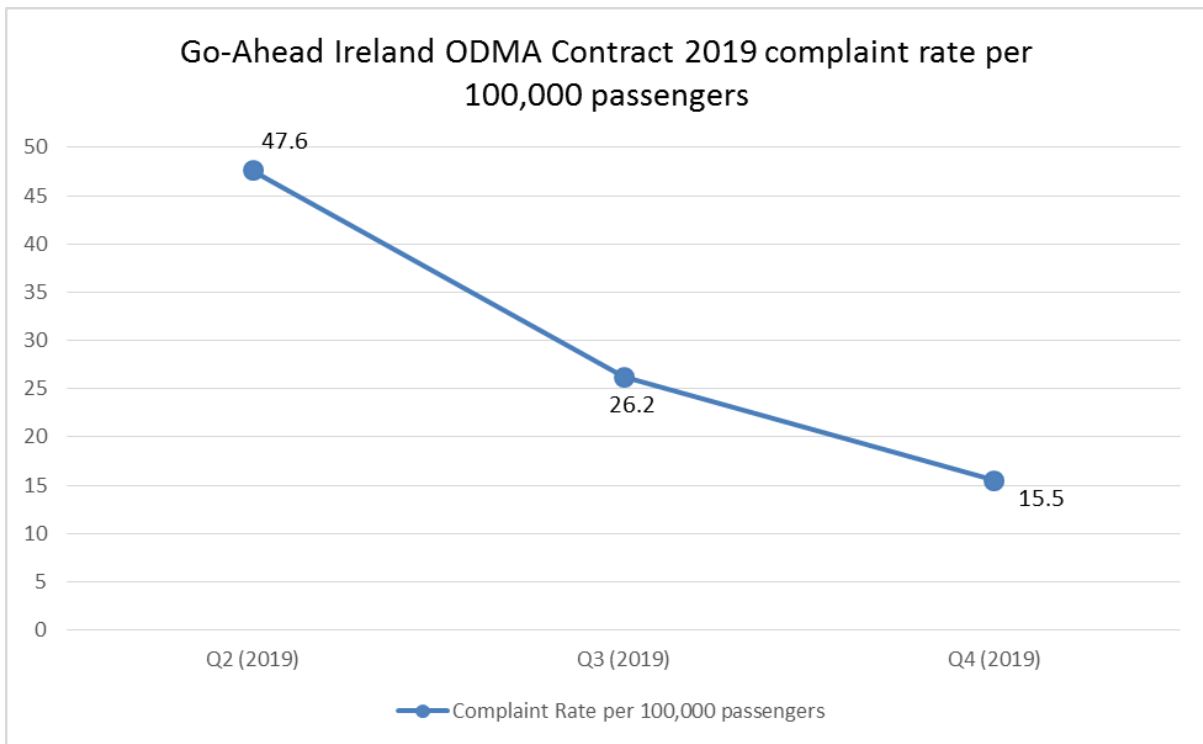


Figure 21 – Bus Éireann Direct Award Contract complaint rate per 100,000 passengers 2018-2019

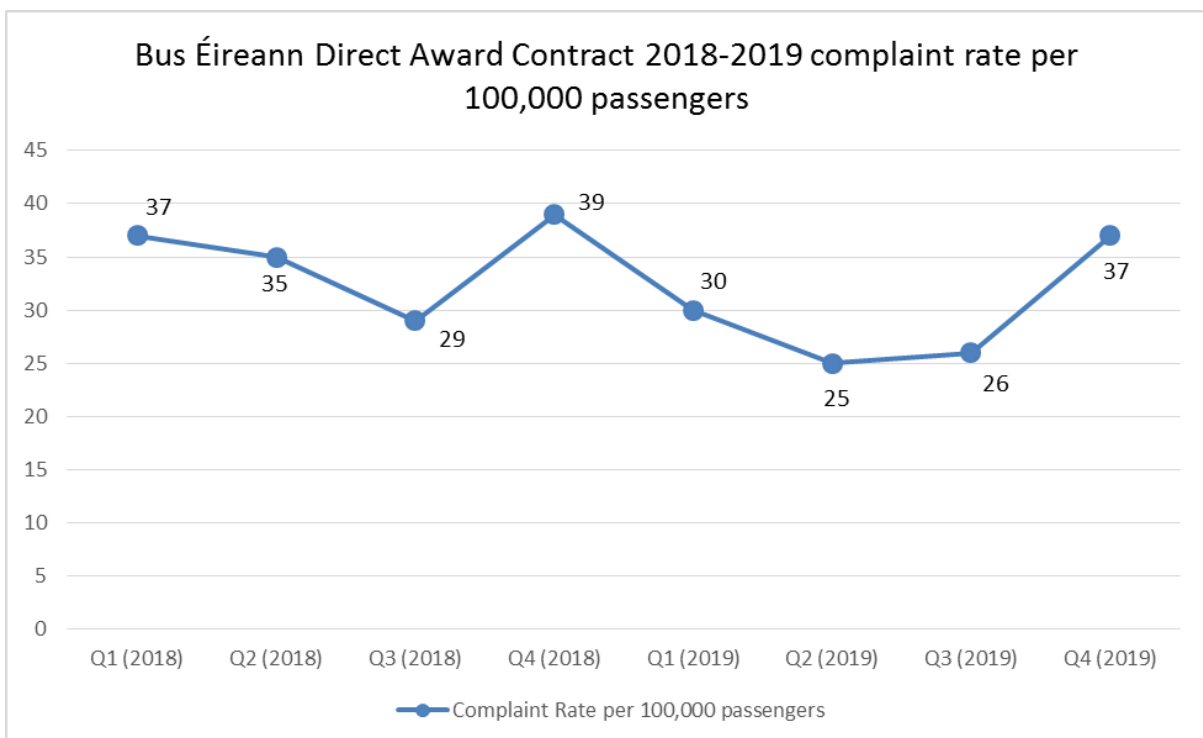


Figure 22 – Bus Éireann Waterford City Contract complaint rate per 100,000 passengers 2018-2019

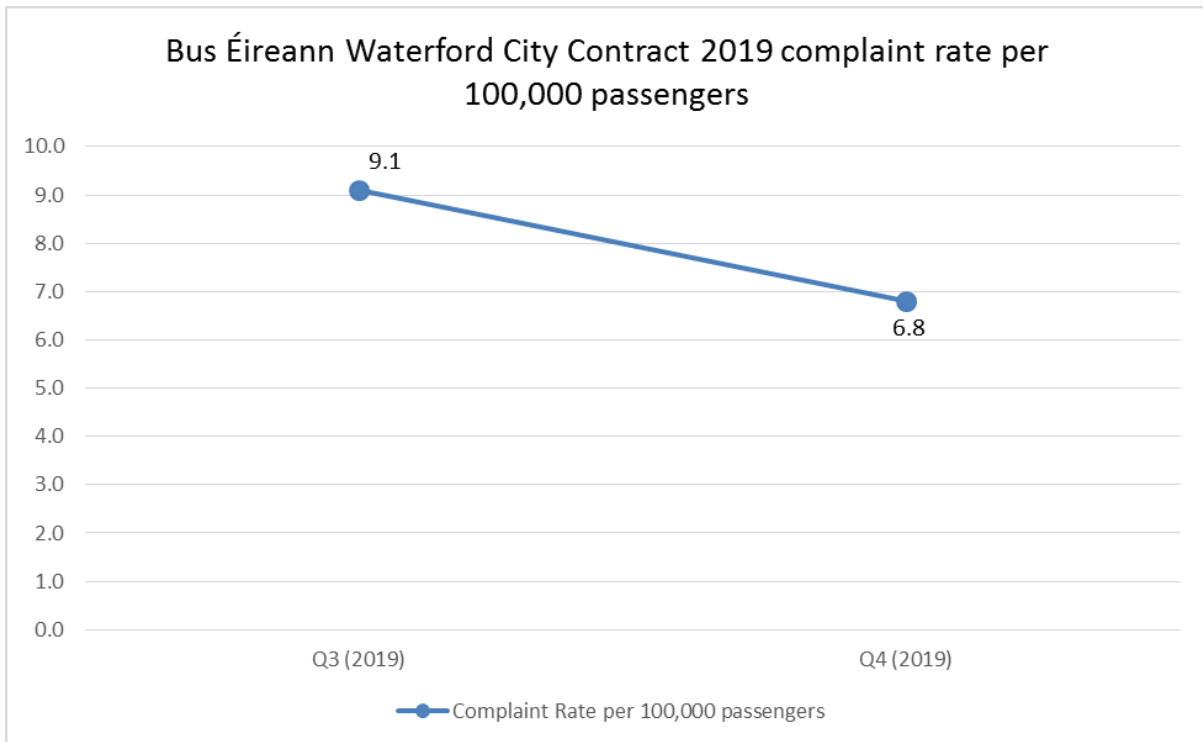
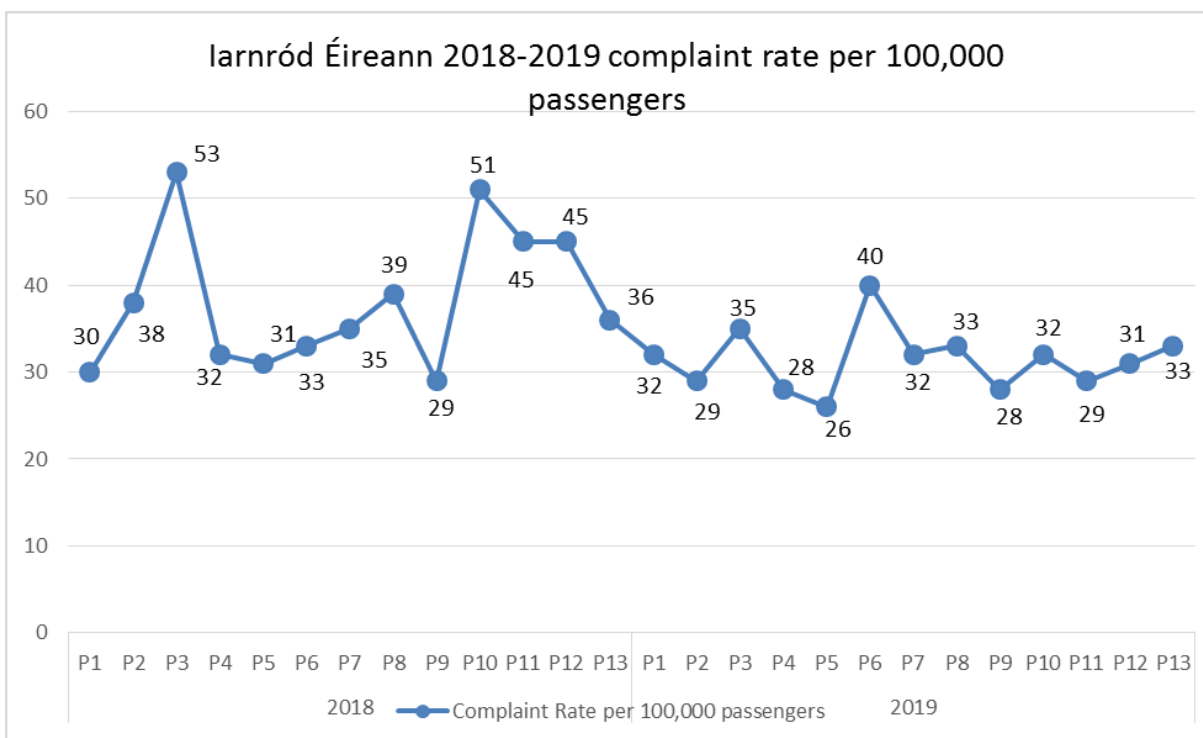
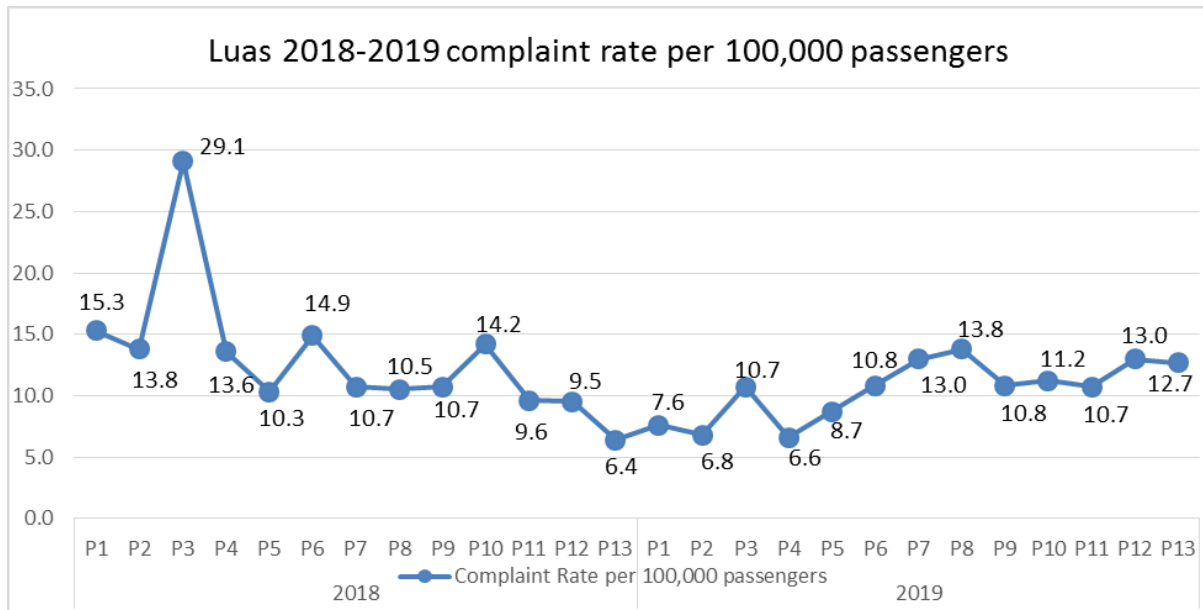


Figure 23 – Iarnród Éireann complaint rate per 100,000 passengers 2018-2019



Note – There was an increase in complaints in P3 2018, coinciding with disruption due to Storm Emma.

Figure 24 – Luas complaint rate per 100,000 passengers 2018-2019



Note – There was an increase in complaints in P3 2018, coinciding with disruption due to Storm Emma.

PowerPoint presentations of detailed results of NTA Bus Mystery Passenger surveys undertaken in 2019 are available in the Public Transport Services section of the NTA website. Some highlights for each operator in 2019 are listed below.

Dublin Bus

- Drivers are highly regarded in terms of attitude, presentation and driving style;
- Accessible ramps are being operated as requested in 100% of surveyed occurrences;
- Fares are displayed clearly at the entrance of over 97% of buses;
- Ticket machines and leap card readers are reliable; and
- Buses are generally regarded as clean or lightly littered.

Bus Éireann Direct Award Contract

- Drivers are highly regarded in terms of attitude, presentation and driving style;
- Fares are displayed at the entrance of over 94% of relevant buses;
- Buses are generally regarded as clean or lightly littered, with these metrics steadily improving since 2016;
- Ticket machines and leap card readers are generally reliable; and
- Information provided at travel centres/stations is generally delivered accurately and in a polite and professional manner.

Go-Ahead Ireland ODMA

- Drivers are highly regarded in terms of attitude, presentation and driving style;
- Accessible ramps are being operated as requested in 100% of surveyed occurrences;
- Ticket machines and leap card readers are reliable; and
- Buses are generally regarded as clean or lightly littered.

Bus Éireann Waterford City

- Drivers score well in terms of attitude, presentation and driving style;
- Fares are displayed at the entrance of over 97% of surveyed buses;
- Ticket machines and leap card readers are reliable; and
- Buses are generally regarded as clean or lightly littered.

Details of Contractual Incentive Payments and Deductions

All PSO operating contracts include schedules of Key Performance Indicators. Performance-related payment deductions are made where an operator fails to meet Minimum Performance Standards. Further measures aimed at improving performance include the introduction of incentive payments, where operators can benefit financially when Minimum Performance Standards are exceeded.

Performance-related incentives will be phased in for Irish Rail, Dublin Bus and Bus Éireann Direct Award Contracts from late 2020 onwards.

The figures outlined in Table 4 show the performance related deductions incurred and incentive payments received by each operator in 2019. Incentive payments for the Bus Éireann Waterford City BMO contract exceeded deductions in 2019. Performance related deductions exceeded incentive payments for all other bus and Luas contracts in 2019.

Table 4 – Performance Related Incentive Payments & Deductions

Operator / Contract	2019 performance related incentive payments	2019 performance related deductions	2019 performance related Deductions/Incentives balance
Iarnród Éireann	Not applicable	€0.00	€0.00
Dublin Bus	Not applicable	€1,847,223.61	€1,847,223.61 deduction
Bus Éireann (Direct Award)	Not applicable	€540,742.75	€540,742.75 deduction
Go-Ahead Ireland ODMA	€14,938.33	€151,441.59	€136,503.26 deduction
Bus Éireann Waterford City	€6,097.98	€1,444.19	€4,653.79 payment to Bus Éireann
Luas	Not applicable	€591,600	€591,600 deduction