

**13th July 2001**

## **Big Growth in Passengers Using Edinburgh Commuter Services**

For the third year running the number of passengers commuting over the Forth Bridge into Edinburgh during peak hours has increased substantially.

Based on counts taken for the SRA in early 2001, the number of passengers on morning peak services travelling across the Forth Bridge into Edinburgh rose by a quarter compared with the Autumn 1999 survey, to a total of 3,250.

Despite the dramatic growth, the levels of overcrowding increased only slightly because ScotRail has provided additional capacity on the route, and at the start of this Summer's timetable, introduced another service from Dundee. At 3%, the level of overcrowding in the Spring 2001 count was up 0.2% on its Autumn 1999 level of 2.8%. This represents the maximum level of overcrowding deemed acceptable by the SRA over morning and evening peaks taken together.

SRA Chief Executive Mike Grant said:

"I am pleased to see the continued growth on this increasingly popular commuter line. And I am encouraged by the proactive management approach ScotRail has taken to try to ease overcrowding. Clearly in the future more capacity will be needed and we will be discussing with ScotRail, the Scottish Executive and the Local Authority how this can be provided."

Note To Editors: how the 'Passengers In Excess of Capacity' regime (PIXC) works

1. The SRA monitors overcrowding on commuter services into Edinburgh across the Forth Bridge, and also commuter services into London. The Passenger Transport Executives monitor capacity on services into Glasgow, Merseyside, Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield and Leeds.
2. The regime that the SRA uses is called 'Passengers In Excess of Capacity' (PIXC). This applies to weekday commuter trains arriving in Edinburgh or London between 07:00 and 09:59 and those departing between 16:00 and 18:59.
3. PIXC is derived from the number of passengers travelling in excess of capacity on all of the services divided by the total number of passengers travelling, expressed as a percentage. The SRA has set limits on the level of acceptable PIXC at 4.5% on one peak and 3.0% across both peaks. Most of the PTEs use a similar method.
4. All the train operators have to make reasonable endeavours to alleviate overcrowding under their franchise agreement signed with the SRA. The train operating company must conduct an annual Autumn count

and the SRA can order recounts if necessary. Results are compared with the contractual limit and the operator must agree with the SRA a timetable/train plan to comply with the limit over the next year, and subsequently throughout the franchise term.

5. Capacity is deemed to be the number of standard class seats on the train for journeys of more than 20 minutes; for journeys of 20 minutes or less, an allowance for standing room is also made. The allowance for standing varies with the type of rolling stock, but, for modern sliding door stock, is typically of the order of 35% of the number of seats.
6. A full table of the Edinburgh PIXC figures is attached. A separate news release issued by the SRA today reports the outcome of counts on London commuter services.

**For further details contact the Department for Transport Rail Press desk:  
020 7944 3108**