

Written evidence submitted by the Rail Delivery Group (RDG) to the House of Commons Committee on the Crime and Policing Bill (CPB116)

About Rail Delivery Group

1. The Rail Delivery Group (RDG) is a membership organisation consisting of Train Operating Companies (TOCs), Owing Groups and Network Rail. We bring industry together on important issues and are guided by one purpose: to create a simpler, better railway for everyone in Britain.
2. To do this we provide essential services that support better customer experience, from planning your journey online to booking your seat.
3. We support the growth of the industry, running national marketing campaigns to promote the use of rail, while raising revenue directly through the sale of Railcards. We are always looking for opportunities to make improvements to how rail operates that will bring benefits to customers.
4. Working collaboratively with decision makers and other key industry voices, we contribute our knowledge and expertise to plans for reform so that our rail industry can thrive in the future.
5. RDG remains committed to creating a railway environment that is safe and secure, with a strong focus on improving the protection of both railway staff and passengers. RDG supports the *Service with Respect Campaign*, launched by the Institute of Customer Service, to see all those providing a public service protected from verbal or physical abuse and assault at work.

Executive Summary

6. Rail staff are the backbone of the GB's rail network, consistently demonstrating exceptional commitment, resilience, and professionalism in keeping our communities connected. Despite their vital contribution, there has been a concerning rise in violent incidents against them. British Transport Police recorded within the performance year 2024/25, 7,405 crimes against the railway workforce, an increase of 8% on the previous year (+578 crimes).
7. Clause 14 of the Crime and Policing Bill introduces a new offence for the assault of a retail worker. While this is a welcome step toward protecting frontline staff, the current wording does not extend these protections to railway workers, who face similar risks and levels of public interaction. We therefore recommend that the language be amended to refer to **"public-facing workers"** rather than solely "retail workers," to ensure that railway staff and other frontline professionals are equally protected under the proposed legislation.
8. RDG thus supports Connor Rand MP's new clauses 10 and 11, which propose to move "assault of a public facing worker", defining "a public facing worker" as someone who is:

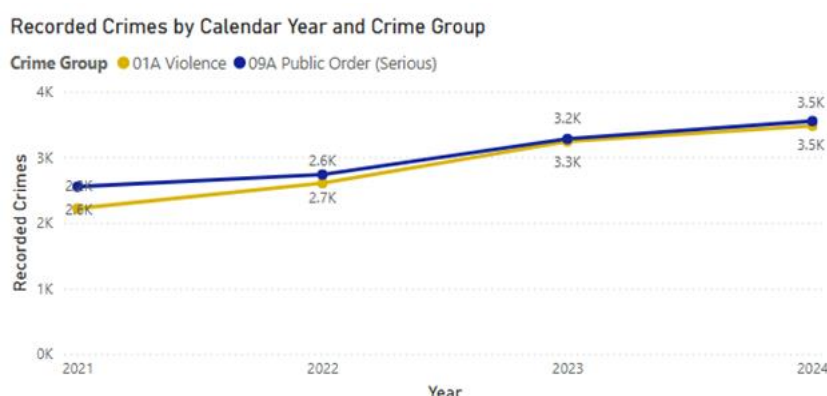
- (a) providing a public service;
- (b) performing a public duty; or
- (c) providing services to the public.

9. RDG also supports the additional step recommended by the British Transport Police in their call for evidence, which proposes a standalone offence of assault of a transport worker, with the additional duty on the court to make a criminal behaviour order on conviction, mirroring the new legislation proposed to protect retail workers.

Our Evidence

10. The Cambridge University Rail Staff Survey (data received for the period September 2024 – January 2025) for rail staff within England and Wales had a response rate of 440 perceptions and experiences related to workplace safety. From these responses, 86% had experienced verbal abuse with 55% being repeat victims (five plus times); 79% experienced threatening speech with 37% repeatedly; 78% experienced threatening conduct; 32% experienced physical attacks and 3% were chronic victims; and 30% experienced sexual misconduct with 3% repeatedly (five plus times).
11. As part of Staff Focus Groups conducted by Cambridge University and Rail Delivery Group, it was reported that some frontline staff expect to face work-related abuse and violence during their shifts. It was also noted that many assaults go unreported.
12. Research by RSSB (2021) found that the prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in rail staff is more than double the rate in the general UK population.
13. Research by (Rudkjoebing et al., 2020) found that staff exposed to work-related violence are twice as likely to report anxiety, depression, burnout and psychological distress than the ones who are not exposed.
14. Recent data from the rail industry reported over a six-month period found that 16 assaults were recorded against staff at Birmingham New Street station, with more than half being physical attacks ([link](#)). Transport for London during 2023/2024 recorded 10,493 incidents of work-related violence and aggression, a 5% increase from the previous year ([link](#)). Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) reported a 23% increase in verbal assaults and a 10% rise in physical assaults on staff ([link](#)). TfW reported 200 physical assaults during 2024/2025, mostly towards conductors and station teams.

15. Further examples of attacks on rail staff include in March 2020, a member of staff was spat at while on duty which resulted in her death due to Covid-19. In May 2021, an incident at Bromley South Station led to four rail staff being assaulted during a ticket check, with one receiving multiple stab wounds and another losing a tooth. During October 2024, a member of rail staff at a central London station was stabbed after telling the attacker to move away from the entrance because his aggressive behaviour was causing an issue.
16. British Transport Police reported data on staff assaults by calendar year and crime group, which has shown an increase year on year from 2021 to 2024 (below).



17. The current parameters for staff assault related crimes record where the person classification is marked as “staff on duty” and “victim (aggrieved)”. We include crime groups violence against the person (VAP) and serious public order (SPO), which differs to the workplace violence co-ordination unit (WPVCU) definition which includes sexual offences.
18. As can be seen from the table below, recorded crime for both VAP and SPO has increased year on year between 2021 and 2024. This is the same pattern for Staff Assaults and all Victim Classifications across this time period.

Crime Group	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
01A Violence	47%	49%	50%	49%	49%
09A Public Order (Serious)	53%	51%	50%	51%	51%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

19. Also noted is that the proportion of crime recorded under each crime group has become almost 50:50 split in the last few years, meaning VAP offences have been increasing at a slightly higher rate than SPO.

20. A further breakdown of offences in the table below of violence with and without injury shows that the majority of incidents are violence against the person are without injury, such as common assault (often pushing, spitting & grabbing in nature) or harassment. Nonetheless offences against staff are increasing each year.

Crime Group	2021	2022	2023	2024
01A Violence	2219	2603	3239	3478
Non Violence Offences	4	5	3	4
Violence with injury	238	333	413	403
Violence without injury	1977	2265	2823	3071
09A Public Order (Serious)	2551	2735	3278	3549
Total	4770	5338	6517	7027

21. The table below shows violence with and without injury breakdown. Between January and March 2025, there were 1,886 VAP and SPO crimes against staff recorded. When compared to the same period in the previous four years, we are seeing the same trend of a year-on-year increase. VAP and SPO have recorded the same number of crimes with the majority of violence crimes being without injury.

Crime Group	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
01A Violence	404	601	701	793	943
Non Violence Offences		2	1	1	
Violence with injury	36	73	86	86	98
Violence without injury	368	526	614	706	845
09A Public Order (Serious)	536	657	698	838	943
Total	940	1258	1399	1631	1886

22. When looking at the location of where these crimes take place, around three quarters are within a station, but between 2021 and 2024, the proportion of those occurring on train has also been increasing. For the crimes recorded between January and March 2025, 23% were on train (compared to 19% in 2021).

OnTrain/Station/Line (Location)	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Line/Other	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%
On Train	19%	21%	21%	22%	23%
Station	79%	77%	77%	76%	76%
Undefined	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Recommendations

23. RDG recommends the adoption of new clauses 10 and 11, which propose to move “assault of a public facing worker”, defining “a public facing worker” as someone who is:
- (a) providing a public service;
 - (b) performing a public duty; or
 - (c) providing services to the public.
24. RDG also supports the additional step recommended by the British Transport Police in their call for evidence, which proposes a standalone offence of assault of a transport worker, with the additional duty on the court to make a criminal behaviour order on conviction, mirroring the new legislation proposed to protect retail workers.

May 2025