



Traffic in Great Britain: Quarter 4 2007

This publication includes National Statistics on Traffic in Great Britain, including analyses by vehicle type and road class, for the fourth quarter of 2007.

These are provisional estimates. Final estimates will be published in July 2008 and are liable to differ slightly from the provisional figures.

The provisional figures indicate that estimated traffic levels fell by 0.9 per cent between the fourth quarters of 2006 and 2007. Comparing the whole of 2007 with 2006, traffic is provisionally estimated to have increased by 0.6 per cent. This is lower than the underlying annual rate of increase of 1.3 per cent from 2001 to 2006. Key results include:

Between the fourth quarters of 2006 and 2007

- Car traffic decreased by 3 per cent
- Light van traffic increased by 10 per cent
- Goods vehicle traffic increased by 3 per cent
- Traffic on motorways and rural 'A' roads was unchanged
- Traffic on minor rural roads increased by 1 per cent
- Traffic on urban 'A' roads and minor urban roads fell by 3 per cent and 2 per cent respectively

Comparing 2007 with 2006 as a whole, the provisional estimates show that

- Car traffic decreased by 1 per cent
- Light van traffic was 9 per cent higher
- Goods vehicle traffic was 1 per cent higher
- Traffic on motorways was unchanged
- Traffic on rural 'A' roads and minor rural roads rose by 1 per cent
- Traffic on minor urban roads rose by 2 per cent
- Traffic on urban 'A' roads decreased by 2 per cent

This quarterly bulletin also includes experimental statistics on congestion on motorways and trunk roads in England:

- Average vehicle delay on the slowest 10 per cent of journeys rose from 3.78 to 4.05 minutes per 10 miles between the baseline year (August 2004-July 2005) and the latest year (December 2006-November 2007). Over the same period, average journey time on these journeys rose from 13.4

to 13.7 minutes per 10 miles.

Notes

1. The quarterly estimates are based mainly on data from 190 Automatic Traffic Counter (ATC) sites. Caution should be taken in drawing conclusions about longer term trends from a single quarter's or year's estimates.
2. The final annual road traffic estimates are calculated from data collected by both the ATCs and 10,000 12-hour manual counts, combined with road lengths. Final annual traffic estimates for 2007 will be presented in the Statistical Bulletin *Road Statistics 2007: Traffic, Speeds and Congestion*, due to be published in July 2008.
3. The next quarterly bulletin will be published on 8 May 2008.
4. The figures on traffic levels are measured in terms of vehicle kilometres, and sometimes known as the volume of traffic. This is not the same as congestion. For example, traffic levels could increase without increasing congestion if traffic is more evenly spread during the day, with less during peak periods and more at other times. Congestion has a number of consequences, such as causing delays and making journey times unreliable.
5. Congestion is defined as delay in minutes per 10 miles, compared with the time taken to travel at a given 'reference speed'. The Department has a Public Service Agreement (PSA) target to make journeys more reliable on all motorways and trunk roads in England. The PSA target will be achieved if the average vehicle delay on the slowest 10 per cent of journeys is less in 2007-08 than in the baseline period. Currently, because of data quality issues, 91 of 103 routes are used to monitor network performance. More information can be found at <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/statistics/datatablespublications/roadstrafficspeedscongestion/congestiononthestrategicroad5359>
6. These congestion data are 'experimental statistics' that are under development and we are currently testing their ability to meet customer needs.

Publication details

Published on 7 February 2008 by Transport Statistics

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