

9 May 2022

## 5.66 million more passengers use rail services during Q1 2022

Rail patronage rose again in the first quarter of 2022 as people continued to return to the network following the relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions.

National passenger numbers increased by 5.66 million passengers or 5.1 per cent during the quarter. This was 0.7 per cent, or 838,149 passengers, below the same time the previous year.

Patronage remained 45.4 per cent – or 96.39 million passengers – down on pre-COVID levels. However, the months of December and January typically see people going away on holiday, making them less likely to be using public transport as part of their daily commute.

The light rail network saw the largest proportional increase in passengers, with a 19.4 per cent rise or a 2.45 million increase in passengers, during the quarter.

Australasian Railway Association (ARA) Chief Executive Officer Caroline Wilkie said the return to rail had begun as more people re-joined the network to get to work, school or leisure activities, but greater use of rail was still needed.

“We are seeing in both Australia and overseas that people are returning to public transport, which is a wonderful indication of the increased level of activity in our cities and towns,” Ms Wilkie said.

“Passenger rail operators are working extensively to ensure people have a great experience when they return to the network, whether for work, school or getting out and about on the weekend.

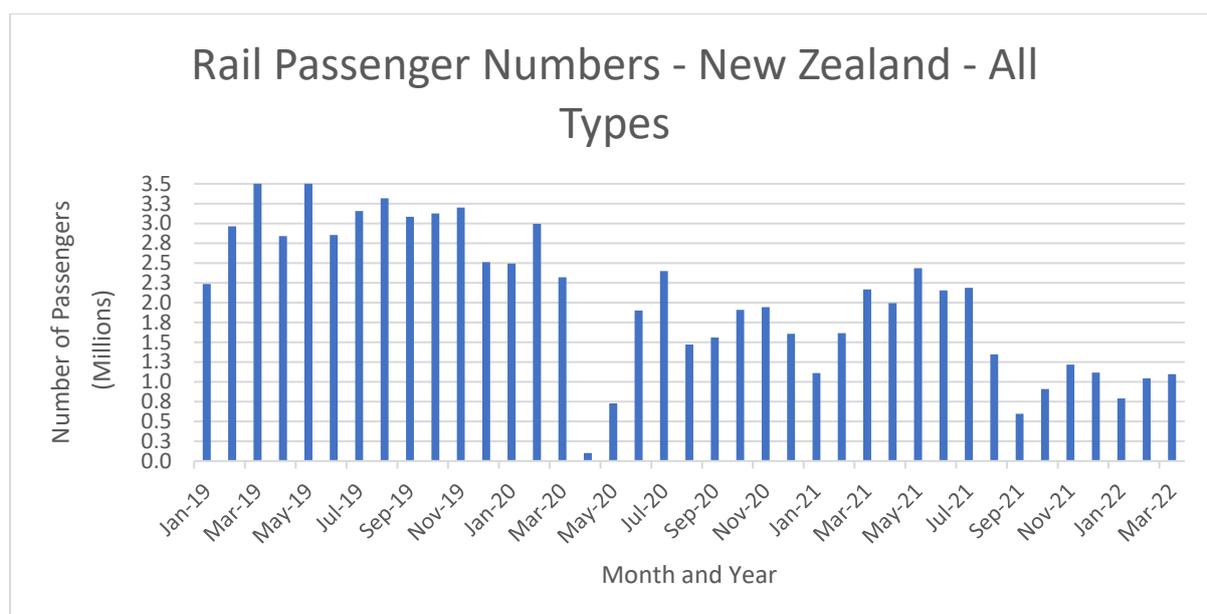
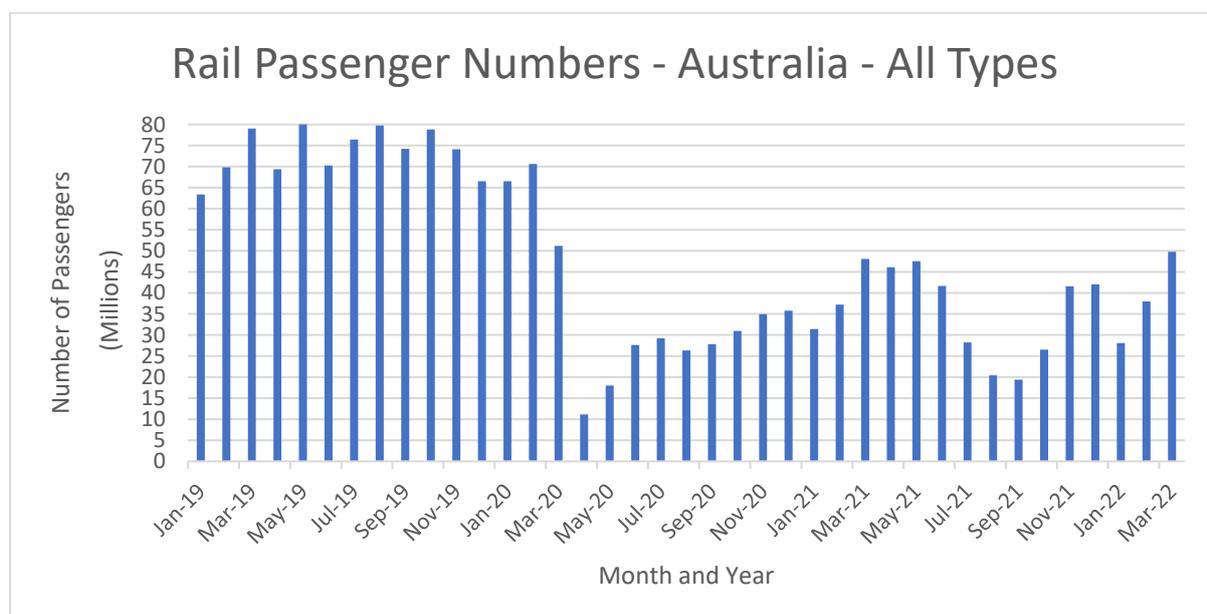
“With rising petrol prices and traffic congestion, there has never been a better time to choose public transport.”

Victoria recorded the biggest rise this quarter, with patronage up 23 per cent, but 33.4 per cent down on pre-COVID levels. NSW and ACT also recorded an increase in passenger numbers during the period.

The Queensland floods impacted rail operations in the state during the quarter, where a 25.8 per cent decrease or 2,571,888 fewer passengers was recorded.

Western Australia saw a 26 per cent fall, equating to 3,109,128 passengers, as it saw the introduction of new COVID restrictions, while South Australia saw a 24.4 per cent decrease or 880,908 fall in passengers during the quarter.

Patronage in New Zealand fell by 9.6 per cent or 312,455 passengers during the quarter due to the later onset of the Omicron variant in the country. The quarter was 40.1 per cent down from the same time last year and 66.4 per cent below pre-COVID levels.



Increasing patronage was recorded against all rail modes, with light rail having the greatest rise in numbers.

Regional rail passengers increased by 555,990 or 9.6 per cent for the quarter, while urban rail increased by 2.34 million or 2.5 per cent.

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Note to editors: Please see the following table for statistics by country and state.

## Australian snapshot – rail passenger numbers

Quarterly passenger numbers			
	Q4 2021	Q1 2022	Variance
Passengers	110,164,751	115,820,756	5,656,005 5.1%

Year on year quarterly passenger numbers						
	Q1 2019 (pre-COVID)	Q1 2022	Variance	Q1 2020	Q1 2022	Variance
Passengers	212,212,139	115,820,756	-96,391,383 -45.4%	188,273,977	115,820,756	-72,453,221 -38.5%

## State and territory rail passenger trends

Location	Change this quarter	Change year on year	Location	Change this quarter	Change year on year
NSW & ACT	2,915,198 6.6%	-47,037,870 -50.0%	VIC	9,302,731 23.0%	-10,872,121 -17.9%
QLD	-2,571,888 -25.8%	-7,115,535 -49.1%	WA	-3,109,128 -26.0%	-4,892,150 -35.6%
SA	-880,908 -24.4%	-3,044,459 -52.7%			

## New Zealand snapshot – rail passenger numbers

Quarterly passenger numbers			
	Q4 2021	Q1 2022	Variance
Passengers	3,243,757	2,931,302	-312,455 -9.6%

Year on year quarterly passenger numbers						
	Q1 2019 (pre-COVID)	Q1 2022	Variance	Q1 2020	Q1 2022	Variance
Passengers	8,729,229	2,931,302	-5,797,927 -66.4%	7,808,165	2,931,302	-4,876,863 -62.5%

## Further information

Joeley Pettit

Director Corporate Services and Corporate Affairs

0407 061 421, [jpettit@ara.net.au](mailto:jpettit@ara.net.au)