

Sources of Road Freight information

The Department for Transport's road freight statistics team often receives requests about the availability of various road freight data sources. This document describes the main data sources which are produced by the road freight statistics team, other DfT statistical teams and outside organisations. **Sections A to C** provide access to various data sources. **Section D** describes the surveys undertaken by DfT both on a continuing basis and also intermittently. **Section E** provides contact information.

A. Road freight statistics

The Department for Transport collects and publishes statistics on the following areas of UK road freight activity:

Domestic Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) Activity in Great Britain

Information about the activity of domestic hauliers in Great Britain is collected in DfT's [Continuing Survey of Road Goods Transport](#). This is a large survey which has been running since the 1950s. The data collected are used to calculate key measures of road freight activity including:

- Vehicle kilometres travelled by HGVs.
- Type of goods carried.
- Tonnes of freight lifted.
- Origins and destinations of journeys.
- Weekday of activity.
- Vehicle body type (e.g. articulated / rigid / tipper / curtain-sided etc...).
- Vehicle fuel consumption.

Estimates for the total annual activity of GB-registered HGVs in the UK are calculated by the department and published in [Road Freight Statistics](#).

CSRG data are also used in transport statistics publications produced by the [Scottish](#), [Welsh](#) and [Northern Irish](#) administrations.

International HGV journeys

DfT produces two sources of information about the international activity of UK hauliers.

The Department's [Roll-on Roll-off \(RoRo\) enquiry](#) provides a count of powered goods vehicles and unaccompanied trailers leaving the UK by ferry

and through the Channel Tunnel. These figures are published in the quarterly [Road goods vehicles travelling to mainland Europe](#) bulletin. They are broken down by:

- Country of registration.
- Country of disembarkation.
- UK port group.

The [International Road Haulage Survey \(IRHS\)](#) covers the international activities of UK-registered HGVs. Operators with international licences are asked to record the details of any trips which begin during specified dates. The IRHS provides annual estimates of journeys to and from the UK by UK-registered hauliers:

- Tonnes lifted.
- Type of goods carried.
- Country of loading/unloading .

Figures from both the IRHS and RoRo enquiry are published in [Road Freight Statistics](#).

Foreign HGV activity in Great Britain

Information on the number of foreign goods vehicles leaving Great Britain by ferry is available from the [RoRo enquiry](#). Figures from the [Road goods vehicles travelling to mainland Europe](#) bulletin give some indication of foreign vehicle activity in Great Britain.

Additionally, during 2003 the department undertook a [Survey of Foreign Vehicle Activity](#) in Great Britain.

Key measures of foreign HGV activity were produced:

- Tonnes lifted into and out of Great Britain.
- Cabotage penetration (goods collected and delivered within Great Britain).
- Vehicle kilometres in Great Britain.
- Length and frequency of trips.
- Type of goods carried.
- Driver and operator nationality.

Figures are published in the [Survey of Foreign Vehicle Activity](#) report.

Van activity

The Department has carried out two van-related surveys in recent years, to collect data about the activity of the increasing numbers of vans on British roads.

The [Survey of Company Owned Vans](#) began in April 2003 and ran until December 2005. Over the three years, thirteen thousand drivers recorded details of their activity for a period of three days. Estimates of total annual activity were produced which can be broken down by:

- Reason for use.
- Time of journeys.
- Goods carried.
- Vehicle type.
- Vehicle kilometres.
- Estimates of weight of goods carried.

Annual figures for 2003 and 2004 are published in two [Survey of Van Activity](#) bulletins. Section 3 of [Road Freight Statistics 2006](#) contains figures covering the entire 3 years of the survey.

The [Survey of Privately Owned Vans](#) ran from October 2002 until September 2003. The survey was interview based, but also included a diary where drivers recorded their activity for two days. The questions were similar to those asked in the [Survey of Company Owned Vans](#) however no estimates were made of weight of goods lifted.

Results from this survey are available in the [Survey of Privately Owned Vans](#) report.

B. Other related DfT statistical publications

1. Road Statistics: Traffic, Speeds and Congestion

In this publication DfT produces estimates of the number of vehicle kilometres travelled in Great Britain. These estimates are broken down by vehicle type so goods vehicle traffic can be estimated (Section 2.5 in 2007 release).

Also in this publication there are estimates of free flow vehicle speeds broken down by vehicle type. Therefore, average goods vehicle free flow speeds can be estimated.

[Road Statistics: Traffic, Speeds and Congestion](#)

2. Vehicle Licensing Statistics

Vehicle Licensing Statistics presents information about the number of vehicles registered in Great Britain. This is broken down by vehicle type and so the characteristics of the goods vehicle stock can be found from this publication.

[Vehicle Licensing Statistics](#)

C. Non-DfT Sources of relevant data

1. Eurostat

All EU member states (including the UK) supply road freight data collected from their national hauliers to the Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat). Much of these data are available on the Eurostat website and can be accessed via publications or through their "data access tree", which allows users to construct their own analyses. This is a good source for information on international freight movements.

To access the site, click the hyperlink below, then click on the "data" tab in the middle of the page, followed by the "transport" link.

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page?_pageid=1090,30070682,109033076576&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL

2. VOSA Effectiveness Report

The Vehicle and Operator Services Agency undertakes more than 460 thousand HGV roadworthiness tests every year. Their annual effectiveness report contains a lot of information about failure rates of these test, reasons for failing and some information about vehicle fleets sizes.

To find the 2006/07 report click [here](#).

3. Freight Transport Association

This industry group collects information from its members. More details are available from the FTA website.

<http://www.fta.co.uk/>

D. Road freight team surveys

These surveys are produced by the DfT road freight statistics team.

1. Continuing Survey of Road Goods Transport: Great Britain (CSRGT GB)

This survey provides information on the UK activity of GB-registered heavy goods vehicles (HGVs).

The CSRGT GB is based on a weekly sample of around 350 vehicles which are selected from the DVLA vehicle database. The operator of the vehicle is asked to record information about their activity for one week. From the data received, DfT calculate estimates of the total distance travelled, the total tonnage lifted and the types of goods carried by HGVs in the UK.

More information can be found, along with results from the 2007 survey in the publication [Road Freight Statistics 2007](#).

2. Roll-on Roll-off enquiry (RoRo)

DfT's RoRo enquiry collects data from ferry operators and Eurotunnel about the number of goods vehicles leaving the UK. Figures are supplied on a quarterly basis and can be broken down by country of registration and disembarkation.

RoRo figures are published in the following publications which can be found on the DfT website:

[Road goods vehicles travelling to mainland Europe](#)

[Road Freight Statistics](#)

3. International Road Haulage Survey (IRHS)

The IRHS covers the international activity of UK-registered HGVs. UK HGV operators with international licences are selected randomly and asked to record the details of any trips which begin on a particular day or over a period of days.

Journeys are scaled up, using counts of vehicles leaving the UK from the RoRo enquiry, to provide estimates of total international activity.

Figures from the IRHS are published in [Road Freight Statistics](#).

4. Continuing Survey of Road Goods Transport: Northern Ireland (CSRGT NI)

This is a smaller survey than the CSRGT GB covering the domestic and international activity of NI registered HGVs.

It works in the same way as the CSRGT GB with vehicles selected from the DVLNI vehicle database and operators asked to record their activity for a week. The sample size is around 30 vehicles per week.

CSRGT NI figures are not published by DfT in any main publications however the department is often prepared to carry out ad-hoc analyses.

5. Survey of Foreign Vehicle Activity: 2003

During the summer of 2003 a survey was undertaken by DfT to collect information about the activity of foreign registered lorries in Great Britain.

Drivers of foreign registered vehicles were interviewed at ports and truck stops. They were interviewed on their way out of Great Britain and asked to provide information about their trip, including planned and unplanned activity.

Figures are published in the [Survey of Foreign Vehicle Activity](#) report.

6. Company Owned Van Survey: 2003 - 2005

Between 2003 and 2005, the Department for Transport undertook two surveys to collect information about company owned and privately owned vans.

The Survey of Company Owned Vans began in April 2003 and ran until December 2005. Over the three years, thirteen thousand drivers recorded details of their activity for three days.

Annual figures for 2003 and 2004 are published in two [Survey of Van Activity](#) bulletins. Section 3 of [Road Freight Statistics 2006](#) contains figures covering the entire 3 years of the survey.

7. Survey of Privately Owned Vans

The Survey of Privately Owned Vans ran from October 2002 until September 2003. The survey was interview based, but also included a diary where drivers recorded their activity for two days.

Further details of the methodology can be found in the report which is available at the link below.

[Survey of Privately Owned Vans](#)

E. Contacts

For information on the surveys and publications discussed above please look on the department's website or contact the Road Freight Statistics team.

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