



Department for Transport

Domestic Waterborne Freight: UK 2014

About this release

This publication provides information on freight traffic moved within the United Kingdom by water transport, known as 'domestic waterborne freight'. The statistics are based on re-analysis of the domestic element of the port freight statistics combined with a survey of inland waterway operators.

Next Update: December 2016

Definitions

Inland Waters

Traffic carried by barge or sea going vessels on the inland waterways network (rivers and canals).

Coastwise

Traffic carried round the coast from one UK port to another.

One-port

Traffic to and from offshore locations - such as oil rigs and sea dredging.

Goods moved

Unlike the port freight statistics, traffic for this publication is measured in terms of "goods moved" (the tonnage of goods lifted multiplied by the distance travelled and expressed as tonnes-kilometres). However, most of the tables supporting this release contain statistics on goods lifted in addition to goods moved.

The total amount of goods moved for all domestic waterborne freight fell by 7% to 27.0 billion tonnes kilometres (bt-k).

This reduction in the distance goods were moved was despite the 5% increase in total amount of goods lifted to 94.9 million tonnes (mt).

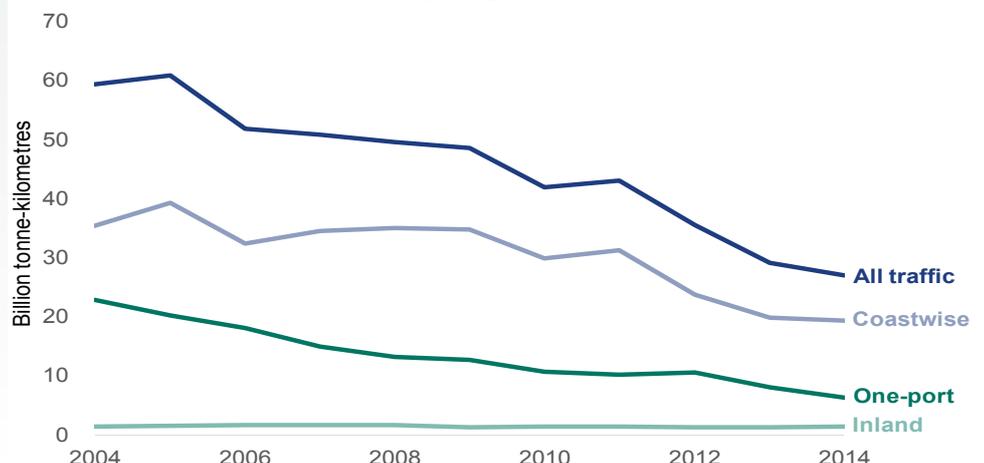
Domestic waterborne freight goods moved and lifted, 2014

	Goods Moved (bt-k)			Goods lifted (mt)		
	2013	2014	Percentage change	2013	2014	Percentage change
Inland waters	1.4	1.5	↑ +8%	43.0	46.8	↑ +9%
Coastwise	19.9 ^r	19.4	↓ -2%	38.4	40.0	↑ +4%
One-port	8.1 ^r	6.4	↓ -21%	17.7	17.9	↑ +1%
Total	29.1^r	27.0	↓ -7%	90.5	94.9	↑ +5%

*The sum of the individual components will not equal the total due to double counting between the inland & coastwise/one-port figures
^r Figures revised due to update of processing methodology

In 2014, the volume of goods moved was approximately half that recorded in 2004.

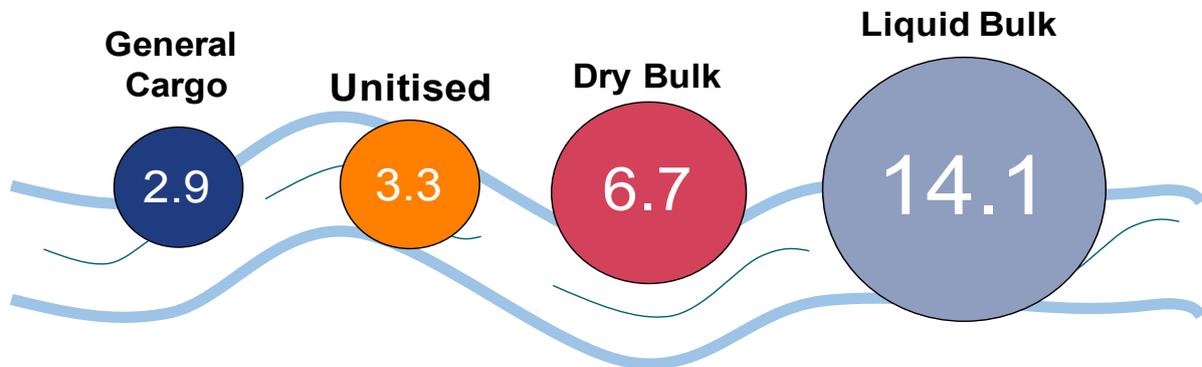
Domestic waterborne freight goods moved, 2004 - 2014



Goods moved by commodity

Of the total goods moved (27.0 bt-k), 52% was liquid bulk in 2014 compared to 60% in 2013. The remainder of the traffic was made up by dry bulk (25%), unitised traffic (12%) and general cargo (11%). The proportion of liquid bulk has decreased compared to 2013 as only 12.5 bt-k of petroleum and petroleum products were moved in 2014 compared with 16.3 bt-k in 2013.

Domestic waterborne freight goods moved by cargo category, 2014



For details on the figures above refer to the web table [DWF0102](#)

Goods moved by route

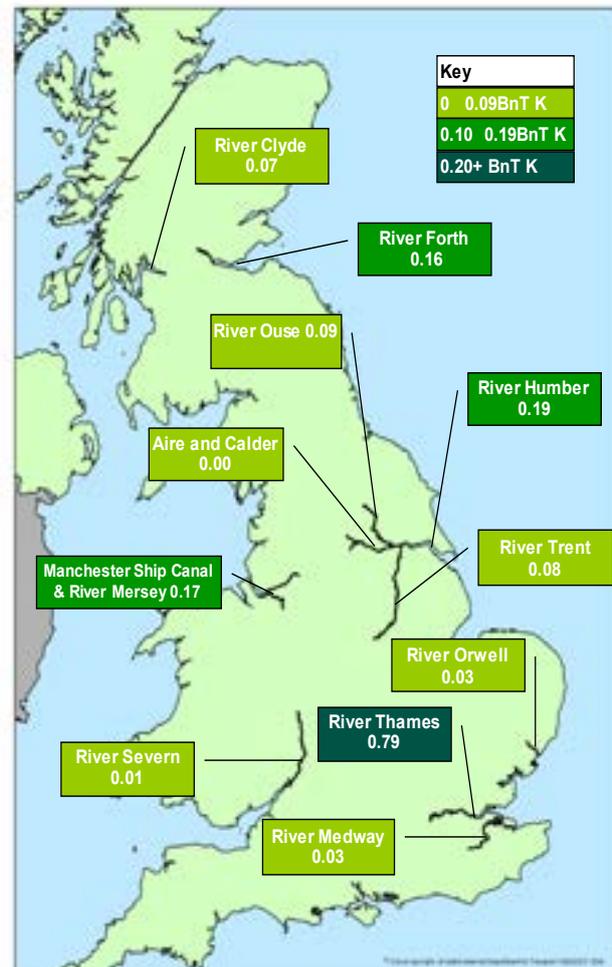
Inland waters traffic is carried by both barges and by seagoing vessels. Overall this accounts for a relatively small proportion of domestic waterborne freight traffic.

From 2013 to 2014 there was a small increase in goods moved from 1.4 to 1.5 bt-k. This was mainly due to a 30% increase in goods moved by the River Thames, from 0.6 to 0.8 bt-k. This was attributable to increases in the movement of oil products and of dry bulk (39% and a 26% respectively).

Of the navigable waterways, Thames and Kent is the region with the most domestic traffic in the UK, and moved more than 4 times that of any other inland waterway in 2014.

For more details on the figures above refer to the web tables [DWF0207](#) and [DWF0208](#).

Major inland waterway routes, goods moved 2014



Proposed changes for 2015 publication

Subject to user's needs, we propose reducing the number of tables published in this statistical release in the future. Specifically, we propose keeping tables DWF0101; DWF0102; DWF0204; DWF0205; DWF0206; DWF0207; DWF0208; DWF0301 and DWF0302, and discontinuing all other tables. A list of all tables and their descriptions can be accessed on the Domestic Waterborne Freight series page:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/domestic-waterborne-freight-2014>

We welcome user's views regarding this proposal and request that any comments are submitted by 31st January 2016 to maritimstats@dft.gsi.gov.uk.

Background notes

Port freight statistics include all traffic that either arrives at or leaves UK sea ports. Details are given by weight and number of units loaded and unloaded. The statistics are based on returns from ports and shipping agents.

The statistics in this publication cover freight moved by water in the UK. They are based on re-analysis of the domestic element of the Port Freight Statistics, combined with a survey of inland waterway operators. Both coastwise and one port traffic will contribute towards the port freight statistics as can be seen in table [PORT0108](#).

However, inland waters traffic does not appear in the port freight statistics where it takes place solely on the inland waterway network. Furthermore, international freight - carried by sea to or from the UK - will appear in the Port Freight statistics but it will only count towards these statistics if it crosses into inland waterways. Further details of these calculations are given in the technical note for this publication:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/230359/dwf-2011-technical-note.pdf.

Another significant difference is that this publication provides figures in terms of goods moved whereas the port freight statistics make no estimate of how far the freight may have travelled. However, many of the tables that support this release also contain figures on goods lifted.

The format of the publications differs too. In particular, port freight statistics gives greater detail of the cargo carried as well as data for specific ports.

Strengths and weaknesses of the data

Most of the data for this release comes from our own Port Freight Statistics. This is a robust data source, for more information see <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/port-freight-statistics-2014-final-figures>.

The port freight statistics data does not always give a specific port or wharf, instead it often gives the statistical port which is actually made up of several smaller ports or wharves (eg Tilbury is a component of the statistical port London). In order to make the inland tonne-kilometres more accurate, the specific port is sometimes estimated using data the Department already records on ship arrivals and knowledge of the cargo type handled at certain ports. However these estimates will not have a major impact on the data, even if the port has been wrongly estimated. This is because all of the component ports are relatively close to the geographical location of the statistical port.

Some details of traffic coming from, or going to, minor ports are estimated. However, the total amount of traffic by cargo type is known for these ports. Therefore, the estimation is done in a way that is consistent

with the totals and has little overall effect on the statistics.

From 2000 onwards, more accurate recording of the routing of crude oil shipments has resulted in differences in one-port and coastwise traffic compared with earlier years. See the Technical notes at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/230359/dwf-2011-technical-note.pdf.

Some of the data for internal inland waters traffic comes from an additional survey of barge operators. As far as is known, this is comprehensive, and efforts have been taken to ensure that no double counting takes place between this and the data already collected from the port freight statistics. However, there is still a possibility that such traffic is not fully reported or is being double counted.

This release is a summary of a larger set of data tables, charts and documentation on domestic waterborne freight statistics available from the Department for Transport web site at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/domestic-waterborne-freight-2014>

Other documents which form part of this release include a technical note describing the data sources, methods, definitions and data issues in more detail:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/maritime-and-shipping-statistics#technical-note>

National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure they meet customer needs.

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html>

Details of Ministers and officials who receive pre-release access to these statistics up to 24 hours before release can be found here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/230364/pre-release-access-dwf.pdf