Better train services? Website doubts it

Failrail.sg uses official data to show reliability hasn’t improved

BY FENG ZENGKUN

Last month, SMRT said that after focusing on repairing faulty train parts, commuters experienced improved service reliability between June and August.

In the longer term, it will also carry out mid-life upgrades on its ageing trains and step up maintenance to improve rail safety and reliability.

The creator of failrail.sg website (http://failrail.appy.net/), who declined to be identified, compiled the data from news articles and the independent watchdog group’s reports sent through its social media Twitter account.

The data is then transformed into charts on the website which show the number of service disruptions in a month, and gives a further breakdown of the reasons for them.

According to the figures, the number of train disruptions trended down since May but spiked in August and September on both the North-South and East-West lines.

Some of those incidents were beyond the train operator’s control. These include door obstructions such as bags being caught in the train doors.

But a significant number of them were still caused by train faults, which SMRT claimed to have reduced. No reason was also given for a large proportion of Door obstructs.

The website’s creator concluded that “train service disruptions are more frequent than they seem”, adding that smaller delays “add up and frustrate commuters” as much as major breakdowns.

SMRT had said in a joint statement with the Land Transport Authority last month that “train service reliability had improved in the last three months since the LTA-SMRT Joint Team started its work, as train faults have reduced by some 50 per cent”.

It revealed that, on average, about 40 trains were withdrawn from service on both lines, due to unforeseen circumstances, each month between June and August – half the 80 such withdrawals a month seen in April and May.

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