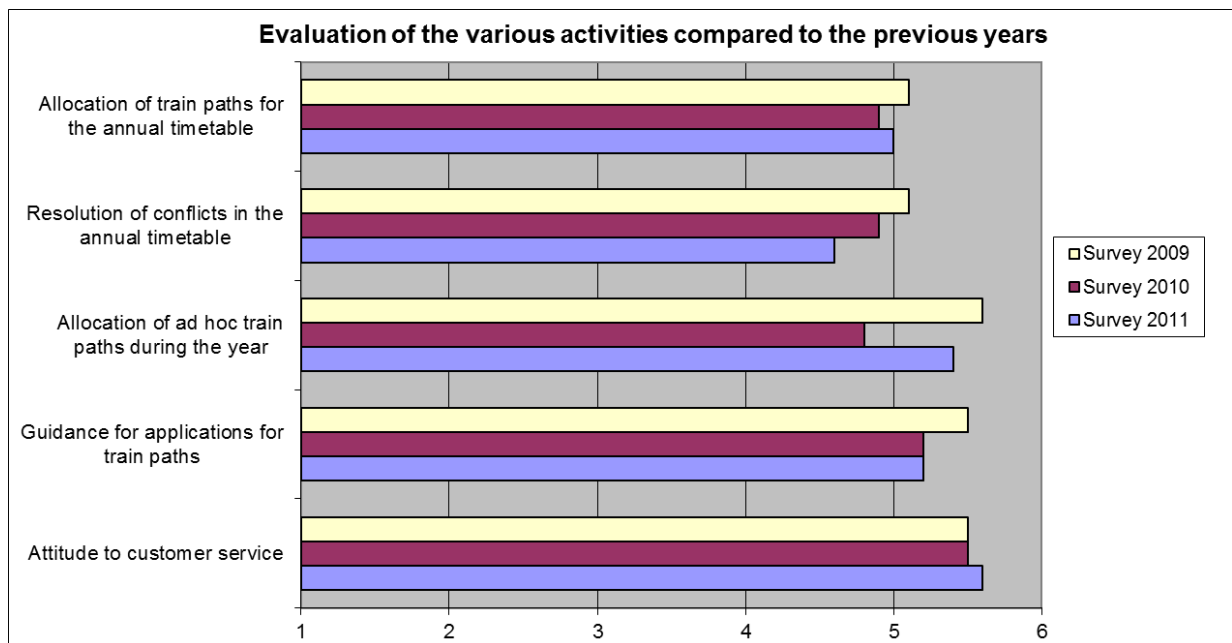


CUSTOMER FEEDBACK REFLECTS THE ACUTE SHORTAGE OF CAPACITY ON THE LÖTSCHBERG-SIMPLON AXIS

Every year, we hold customer feedback meetings with the railway undertakings which applied for train paths from us. The feedback provides us with important pointers to where and how we can make the services we offer even more efficient and customer-focussed.

Railway undertakings evaluated our services during 2011 as basically good to very good. In most areas the assessments made in the previous year were maintained if not improved on.



This very satisfactory result must not delude us into overlooking that the “conflict resolution” category was evaluated more critically than in the previous year, particularly by freight railway undertakings. This appraisal reflects the shortage of capacity for freight traffic on the North-South axis. The - urgently necessary - work being carried out in 2012 and 2013 to rehabilitate the Simplon Tunnel will reduce the number of train paths on the important Basel – Lötschberg – Domodossola axis by a third and the eight-week renewal of the crossovers in centre of the tunnel in autumn 2012 will reduce capacity by as much as two-thirds.

This background, together with changes to international passenger services, caused 240 train path conflicts across the network - almost three times as many as in the previous year. Of these, 128 are related to conflicts on the Lötschberg-Simplon axis.

Where there are conflicts, trasse.ch together with infrastructure managers and the railway undertakings involved, looks for alternatives which will allow all the applications for train paths to be accommodated under commercially acceptable conditions. This was possible in 236 cases. In the judgement of the railway undertakings involved, however, the process was too laborious. We are taking this criticism seriously and will make the process more streamlined in 2012.

Despite all our efforts, no satisfactory alternatives could be found for four conflicts, each between two freight undertakings. Each of the four paths was allocated to the railway undertaking which made the higher bid in an auction process. The amounts paid were passed on to the infrastructure managers as an element in the price of the train path. The railway undertakings recognised that this process resolved the situation. Nevertheless, given the low margins in freight traffic, they criticised the circumstances in which they had to make extra payments because of a shortage of capacity.

swiss train paths ltd. will review the auction procedure (which has hitherto been single stage) together with the participants. In addition, trasse.ch is currently discussing with the Federal Office of Transport whether, and if so under what conditions, the train path allocation process can be extended to include a differentiated priority ranking.

Thomas Hösli, Head of Train Path Allocation will be pleased to answer any further questions you may have on this issue. He can be reached on tel. +41 (0)31 384 20 46 / t.hoesli@trasse.ch

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