1. RAILWAY FREIGHT TRAFFIC VOLUME

The freight train load operated as of March 31, 1955, totaled 26,231 tons, including 23,407 tons for the national railways and 2,742 tons for the private railways. They account for 88% and 12%, respectively, of the passenger and freight train load operated.

Of all stations of the Japan National Railways, 95% or 1,217 stations are freight-handling stations. Of these, stations used exclusively for freight total 127.

The freight transportation volume in the one-year period from April 1954 to March 1955 included about 30,000,000 tons for the national railways and 7,800,000 tons for the private railways. The freight transport on kilometer-kilogram-distance transported = distance transported was 6,180,000,000 for the national railways and 2,800,000,000 for the private railways.

In freight transport, private railways are playing a role of handling localized transport between short sections, such as transport from quarters or collieries to Japan National Railways stations or ports and harbors.

A check of the transport volume of railway freight by commodity reveals that the total transport freight volume of coal, concrete, cement, oil products, lumber, etc., account for a little over 85%. Particularly in the total transport volume of railway freight by private railway, these commodities take up 87%.

In regard to the tonnage of freight handled by station, the number of stations with outgoing and incoming freight volume exceeded 1,000,000 tons in the one-year period from April 1954 to March 1955 was about 50 stations for the national railways and about 30 for the private railways. The freight volume handled per year by these stations was about 100,000,000 tons for the national railways and about 60,000,000 tons for the private railways.

As of October 1955, there are 332 stations engaged in container transport, and all of these are Japan National Railways stations.

Stations of the Legend and Map Compilation

This map shows the railway freight traffic volume per annum for each route. In freight transport, no exception emerges even for one and the same route depending on the direction in which freight is carried. For this reason, the direction is indicated in the map.

In regard to the volume of freight handled per annum, the outgoing freight volume and the incoming freight volume were shown in the upper and lower half of each circle, respectively. The varied radii of the semicircles represent graded brackets of the outgoing volume (or the incoming volume) and are in proportion to the square root of their respective measure.

In cases where the outgoing volume or the incoming volume exceeds 1,000,000 tons, they are proportionate to the square root of their respective actual number.

The stations for which the volume of freight handled per annum was indicated are those whose outgoing and incoming freight volume exceeds 100,000 tons.

References:
5. Various data from the Ministry of Transport.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF RAILWAYS

The first railway line which made its appearance in Japan was the Edogawabashi line opened between Shibash and Yokohama in 1822. At first, the policy was for the Government to construct all trunk railway lines, but the Japan Railway Company opened railway services between Osaka and Kurashiki in 1854, leading Japan to enter into an era of the coexistence of governmental and private railways. The kilometerage operated as of 1952 includes 865 km of governmental railways and 12,544 km of private railways.

Under the policy of nationalization of the main trunk railway lines in 1946, the Government took over 17 out of about 60 private railways existing in those days. As a result, the kilometerage operated by the national railways increased from 5,680 km in 1935 to 13,353 km in 1957.

All these railway lines were operated by trains pulled by steam locomotives. Electric trains made their first appearance on the line of the Kyoto Electric Railway in 1895. In the subsequent 10 years, structures appeared in Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto, Yokohama, Nagoya and other cities.

With the Ministry of Railways established in 1908, the extension of railway lines, the improvement of railway facilities and rolling stock and electrification were stepped up. It was in those days that the construction of local railway lines was underway on a full scale, thus paving the way for the appearance of a nationwide network of railways as observed today. After World War II, suburban railways and subways made their appearance.

With the outbreak of World War II, the construction of railway lines necessary for the exploitation and transportation of domestic resources was carried out, and 3,066 km of railway lines owned by private railway firms were nationalized.

The Japan National Railways made its debut as a public corporation in 1949 and was engaged in the improvement of war-devastated facilities and routes. The Japanese National Railways also strove for the redevelopement of local railway lines, such as in the countryside, and also for the assignment of speed trains to the local lines.

The Japan National Railways opened a standard-gauge Shinkansen between Tokyo and Osaka in 1964, striving further for the electrification and double tracking of main lines.

The construction of railways in major cities has been carried out in a concentrated manner since from around 1960. In the countryside, some of the railway lines have been abolished and replaced by bus services.

Legend of the Legend and Map Compilation

In this map, the period of railway construction is indicated and shown in different colors. The railway lines dismantled at present shown by broken lines are delimited with the color representing the year of construction.

Sources:
1. Japan National Railways, 100 Years' History of the Japan National Railways.
3. Japan Travel Bureau, Timetable.
5. Various data from the Japan National Railways.