

Office of Rail Regulation
Railway Industry Health and Safety Advisory Committee (RIHSAC)

Minutes of the 97th RIHSAC Meeting
Tuesday 14 October 2014
Rooms 1 & 2, One Kemble Street, London

Present:

Tracey Barlow	Chair, ORR non-executive director
Angela Back	London Underground
John Cartledge	Co-opted member
Stephen Chamberlain	Welsh Government
Paul Clyndes	RMT
John Collins	Angel Trains
Helen Costello	RSSB
David Davies	PACTS
Rob Gifford	London TravelWatch / Passenger Focus
Emma Head	Network Rail
Catherine Johnstone	Samaritans
Peter Lovegrove	ATOC
Mike Lunan	Passenger representative
Jim Lupton	RIA
Susan Murray	Unite
Emma Pickard	Network Rail
Ian Stevens	Network Rail
Alastair Young	Transport Scotland
Dilip Sinha	ORR, RIHSAC secretary
John Gillespie	ORR
Paul Carey	ORR) item 6

Item one: Welcome, introductions and apologies for absence

1. Tracey Barlow welcomed everyone to the meeting. She reported that apologies for absence had been received from Chris Angell of DfT; Bill Hillier of HRA; Steve Coe of TSSA; Colin Dennis of RSSB; Gary Cooper of ATOC; and Jill Collis of LUL.
2. Tracey welcomed Peter Lovegrove, Gary's alternate; Angela Back, Jill's; and George Bearfield, in Colin's place. She also welcomed Catherine Johnstone, chief executive of the Samaritans, and Ian Stevens of Network Rail, who were present to talk about railway suicides; Emma Pickard of Network Rail and Helen Costello from RSSB, who was present to talk about PTSG with Helen Costello from RSSB;; and Emma Head, also from Network Rail, who has taken over that company's seat here from Allan Spence.
3. The committee reviewed the minutes from the June 2014 meeting. It accepted these as a correct record.

Item two: Chief Inspector's update

4. Ian Prosser apologised that he had been unable to attend the June meeting, due to attendance at a Network Rail Board committee.

5. Ian then reported on developments since the last meeting. He noted that ORR had published its annual health and safety report in July, setting out industry performance during the previous year. The key messages were:
 - Continuing growth does have an impact on health and safety – more trains leads to more incidents involving passengers and more signals passed at danger by train drivers. Dutyholders need to ensure that plans for growth in passengers / traffic are included in their operations;
 - Ian had attended an industry safety meeting hosted by RSSB recently, and this had covered the same themes as the annual report. Workforce safety got worse last year, which ORR as regulator finds unacceptable. Ian wanted to see this situation reversed.
6. ORR has pursued three successful major prosecutions since the last RIHSAC meeting. These all involved contractors, and one involved a very significant fine. ORR will continue to prosecute where dutyholders fail to obey the law, but wants to see a switch to proactive dutyholder efforts to ensure safety risks are properly identified and dealt with.
7. ORR published its assessment of Network Rail's performance against funded obligations between 2009 and 2014 on 9 July. In it, ORR highlights enhancements and growth in Britain's railways, as well as shortfalls in performance for passengers which require Network Rail to return £53.1m to funders and improve the resilience of the network.
8. Following an external competition, ORR appointed two new deputy directors to lead work on development of markets and competition in the rail industry, and to drive forward our consumer programme.

Item three: Preventing suicide on the railway: an update

9. Catherine Johnstone, Chief Executive Officer of the Samaritans, introduced this presentation. It arose from earlier discussions at previous RIHSAC meetings, when members had been briefed on the British Transport Police's activities under the trilateral Samaritans / BTP / Network Rail suicide prevention partnership. RIHSAC members had sought to hear also from the Samaritans about their side of the partnership.
10. Catherine explained the background to the issue. The UK suicide rate in 2012 was 11.6 per 100,000; 18.2 for males, 5.2 for females (5,981 deaths registered). The highest rate in 2012 is men aged 40-44. This group is at greatest risk of suicide on the railway.
11. It was notable that a suicide decision tended not to come out of the blue. In fact, it was the culmination of a period of reflection and advance planning. Because of this, we are able to take steps to try and provide front line staff to intervene at stations and other risk points. These trained staff could have a big impact on whether someone decided whether to go ahead with suicide or to pull back from it.
12. The Samaritans are now looking to expand this work from stations and other front line risk areas, via community outreach and industry staff upskilling. Catherine explained that the organisation plans to focus on specific priorities:
 - Piloting and evaluating new activities/technology
 - Progressing the health and social care outreach work stream

- Developing a communications strategy
 - Commissioning new research to shape future activities
 - Bringing together learning from Europe and worldwide
13. Catherine said that she would be encouraging TOC input and collaboration, and working to achieve suicide prevention inclusion in franchise agreements. The Samaritans will also be developing TOC-focussed joint suicide prevention plans.
14. Concluding, Catherine said that she and others would be reflecting on the first five years of the Samaritans / BTP / NR partnership. She was looking to build on successes, and come up with fresh ideas and innovation. She was hopeful that, working together, the industry could continue to achieve meaningful progress beyond 2015.
15. Ian Stevens, Programme Manager for Suicide Prevention at Network Rail, then outlined the work the rail industry does outside its partnership with Samaritans. He explained that the figures for suicides on the railway had remained consistent, at around three and a half to four and a half percent per annum of all suicides in the Great Britain over the last ten years of the last ten years. But of course each suicide caused a delay to normal railway operation, and these had increased from 200,000 to over 400,000 “lost” minutes over the period.
16. The cornerstones of the partnership included work with BTP on mental health and suicide prevention; activities under ‘Operation Avert’ designed to stop the act of suicide at high risk locations; targeted communications material, including signs and posters in risk locations; and guidelines for the media, designed to ensure that publicity about suicides didn’t lead to copycat attempts within the period immediately following.
17. Ian pointed to work by Network Rail to introduce fences at the ends of platforms and in the middle of high risk platforms. The company is investing in academic research to look specifically at why people choose the railway to take their lives.
18. Concluding, Ian noted that NR is working hard to produce materials to help people like drivers, who could be seriously affected by a suicide. These materials included books, DVDs and training courses with other organisations like Samaritans. The company is also proactively working with organisations such as Public Health England to share up to date figures on suicide risk, so that work can be targeted to the areas most affected.
19. Tracey Barlow thanked both Catherine and Ian for the presentations. She invited members who wished to ask either of them about any issues that had been raised to do so during the tea break which followed this item.

Item four – Level crossings: update

20. John Gillespie opened this presentation. He noted that he would cover the following issues:
- Policy framework developments since October 2013
 - Transport Select Committee report
 - ORR strategy
 - Guidance on “no new crossings except in exceptional circumstances”
 - Law Commission proposals
 - Activities to support the strategy.

21. John said that ORR had made several points to the Transport Select Committee earlier this year on Network Rail's performance. It had said that NR is getting better and there's room for more improvement. ORR welcomes that they've got more LX managers and they've closed crossings (we spurred that change in their approach).
22. The select committee had published a report in March, and the government had published its reply in May. John took the committee through the TSC recommendations and the government's response. He also set out ORR's views on each issue.
23. John then took RIHSAC through the main elements of ORR's strategy on level crossings. This is covered in the presentation slides accompanying these minutes.

Item five – Developing the Platform Train Interface (PTI) national strategy

24. Helen Costello (RSSB, Programme Manager) and Emma Pickard (Network Rail, senior sponsor) opened this presentation. RIHSAC has received a presentation on PTI issues from London Underground previously, and asked for a detailed presentation from Network Rail on issues around accessibility and inebriated passengers.
25. The PTSG strategy has been developed following high profile PTI incidents such as James Street, Liverpool (Oct 2011) and the recommendation from the RAIB investigation that a cross-industry response should be co-ordinated and maintain a risk based approach to proposed controls
26. Forty eight percent of passenger fatality risk occurs at the PTI along with 21% of overall passenger FWI risk. There has been an **increase** in amount of harm while boarding or alighting since 2007/08, even when accounting for the generally increasing trend in passenger journeys.
27. The objectives of the strategy are to:
 - Reflect the wide range of safety, performance and engineering issues surrounding the PTI
 - Maintain network capacity for mixed traffic operation
 - Account for both the immediate (1 yr), short (CP5), medium (CP6 & CP7), and long term (CP8 and beyond) needs of the industry
 - Define the research, where appropriate, needed to develop and deliver the strategy
 - Obtain industry buy-in for the implementation of the strategy.
28. The presenters explained that the strategy was based on careful evaluation of commonly held assumptions about causes of PTI incidents. These were then tested using a combination of qualitative and quantitative data
29. Key themes / areas for focus emerged as the work progressed including passenger movement through the station and across the PTI; train stopping positions, dispatch, monitoring the dispatch corridor and stopping trains once dispatched; platform train interface engineering; and accessibility. The presenters took RIHSAC through these themes in detail.

30. The main output of the strategy work will be a cross industry strategy document approved by RSSB in January 2015. This will be supported by an action plan, technical report; an area for sharing good practice; and a media publicity campaign.
31. Tracey Barlow thanked Helen and Emma for the presentation, and a brief discussion followed. Answering a question, Helen confirmed that the media campaign would be white labelled (ie not carrying The Samaritans brand), as was the rest of the programme. Ian Prosser noted that it would be important to get this campaign right.
32. Answering another question, the presenters said that no work had been done on whether the space between vehicles was a risk area. They agreed with John Cartledge that it was often easier to perceive a large step than a small one, although large steps were likely to be more problematic for mobility-impaired people but this again is part of their research.

Item six – Feedback on ORR’s train protection regulations consultation

33. John Gillespie introduced this presentation. He explained that ORR had issued a consultation recently as part of the government’s red tape challenge. There has been a good industry response, and he planned to outline the responses and set out ORR’s next steps.
34. The proposed new Regulations retain and update three provisions that are important to the control of risk on the railway: use of a train protection system; use of Mark 1 rolling stock; and means of communication. The consultation also proposed removal of various requirements of the Miscellaneous Provisions Regulations 1997. The affected areas include prevention of unauthorised access to the railway, prevention of collisions and derailments, and prevention of accidents to staff caused by moving vehicles.
35. John explained that the regulations had now become outdated in some specific areas due to the passage of time – interoperability was now happening, and ERTMS signalling was being fitted, to give two examples.
36. Outlining responses to the consultation, John said they ranged from “no change required” to “remove all requirements which are covered by ROGS or TSIs”. There are also some co-ordinated responses, eg from the TOC community, suggesting that standalone regulation for the mainline railway could be removed, as it is now dealt with in other ways. John went through response areas in some detail for the committee.
37. Next steps involve ORR giving further thought to the proposals before putting proposals to ministers. John noted that in the light of comments received from landowners and farmers, ORR is now minded to make no change to current prohibitions on unauthorised access to the railway.

Item seven – meeting review

38. Members explored possible agenda items for the next meeting. They agreed to receive a presentation from Network Rail on the structure of the safety function at Network Rail from Emma Head. RIHSAC will also receive a presentation on the 2015-16 ORR safety business plan from Ian Prosser. The secretariat will review other business and prepare an agenda in due course.

Next Meeting

Wednesday 4 February 2015, from 1230-1600 at One Kemble Street.

Dilip Sinha

RIHSAC Secretary

October 2014