

Oliver Stewart
RAIB Recommendation Handling Manager



28 March 2024

Mr Andy Lewis
Deputy Chief Inspector of Rail Accidents

Dear Andy,

RAIB Report: Track worker near miss incidents at Camden Junction South, London on 28 February 2017

I write to provide an update¹ on the action taken in respect of recommendation 1 addressed to ORR in the above report, published on 27 November 2017.

The annex to this letter provides details of actions taken in response to the recommendation and the status decided by ORR. The status of recommendation 1 is **'Closed'**.

We do not propose to take any further action in respect of the recommendation, unless we become aware that any of the information provided has become inaccurate, in which case I will write to you again.

We will publish this response on the ORR website.

Yours sincerely,

Oliver Stewart

¹ In accordance with Regulation 12(2)(b) of the Railways (Accident Investigation and Reporting) Regulations 2005

Recommendation 1

The intent of this recommendation is to minimise the possibility of information loss through the possession implementation process in large signal boxes and control centres.

Network Rail should review and, where appropriate, improve the possession implementation process in signal boxes and control centres with multiple workstations. The objective of any improvement should be to optimise the management of information (both written and verbal) between signallers and PICOPs (paragraphs 101a, 101a.ii and 102a).

The review should consider:

- the appropriate design and use of additional books and forms that are intended to meet the Rule Book requirements for recording details of possessions and to support signallers' information needs (specifically considering the use of track layout diagrams);
- the content, timing and structure of verbal communications between the PICOP and signallers at different workstations, taking into account the need for all parties to be fully aware of the relevant information at the appropriate time (including, for example, whether a PICOP needs to contact all signallers affected by the possession, and what level of detail should be included in the various conversations between signaller and PICOP);
- the use of tools or technology to support signallers' information management and decision making; and
- local variations in existing application of these processes, in terms of extracting positive elements from such applications as well as smoothing the transition towards a new process for staff groups who have been familiar with an historic convention.

ORR decision

1. The intent of the Network Rail response to the recommendation is to reduce the risk of miscommunication between signallers and PICOP by re-stating the requirement for the PICOP and protecting signaller to communicate directly. Network Rail have sought to replace the practice of having a 'lead' signaller for complex possessions, so that the PICOP instead has to speak to individual signallers, with the aim of ensuring all signallers are fully aware of blocking points.

2. Network Rail has piloted a new form (NR3200) with the aim of providing a template for signallers' recording protection arrangements that offers greater flexibility than the current requirement to use the train register (which works best for simple layouts). The response notes that no one form can cover all circumstances.

3. Network Rail is also pursuing technological improvements to support communications and decision-making, through the Western Possession Optimisation Project. The project aims to replace a variety of forms and pieces of software with an 'integrated solution' that allows better workflow and real-time information. The response notes that it will be up to individual routes and regions to adopt this solution.

4. Network Rail has reviewed its arrangements and implemented changes that should address the issues identified in the recommendation. We note that the adoption of the 'integrated solution' being trialled in Western route is not mandatory, and individual Network Rail routes and regions will be best placed to decide whether it offers advantages or not. We will form a view on the solution being trialled in Western when it becomes available and will consider the case for wider adoption.

5. After reviewing the information provided ORR has concluded that, in accordance with the Railways (Accident Investigation and Reporting) Regulations 2005, Network Rail has:

- taken the recommendation into consideration; and
- has taken action to close it.

Status: Closed.

Previously reported to RAIB

6. On 26 November 2018 ORR reported the following:

We are satisfied with the scope of the review Network Rail have planned into the possession implementation review. We have arranged a meeting with Network Rail to discuss all three recommendations in detail.

Update

7. On 20 December 2023 Network Rail provided the following closure statement and supporting documents:



[N221-14] Camden
Rec 1.doc



[N221-14] Camden
Rec 1 T3 TOMSC brief



[N221-14] Camden
Rec 1 T3 Possession



[N221-14] Camden
Rec 1 Proposed T3 - 2

Previously reported to RAIB

Recommendation 1

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Network Rail should review and, where appropriate, improve the possession implementation process in signal boxes and control centres with multiple workstations. The objective of any improvement should be to optimise the management of information (both written and verbal) between signallers and PICOPs (paragraphs 101a, 101a.ii and 102a).

The review should consider:

- the appropriate design and use of additional books and forms that are intended to meet the Rule Book requirements for recording details of possessions and to support signallers' information needs (specifically considering the use of track layout diagrams);
- the content, timing and structure of verbal communications between the PICOP and signallers at different workstations, taking into account the need for all parties to be fully aware of the relevant information at the appropriate time (including, for example, whether a PICOP needs to contact all signallers affected by the possession, and what level of detail should be included in the various conversations between signaller and PICOP);
- the use of tools or technology to support signallers' information management and decision making; and
- local variations in existing application of these processes, in terms of extracting positive elements from such applications as well as smoothing the transition towards a new process for staff groups who have been familiar with an historic convention.

ORR decision

1. We are satisfied with the scope of the review Network Rail have planned into the possession implementation review. We have arranged a meeting with Network Rail to discuss all three recommendations in detail.

2. After reviewing the information provided ORR has concluded that, in accordance with the Railways (Accident Investigation and Reporting) Regulations 2005, Network Rail has:

- taken the recommendation into consideration; and
- is taking action to implement it by 30 June 2019.

Status: Implementation ongoing. ORR will advise RAIB when actions to address this recommendation have been completed.

Information in support of ORR decision

3. On 25 July 2018 Network Rail provided the following initial response:

A review will be conducted to look at the delivery element of possessions to identify where any changes to the recording arrangements or rule book requirements are needed. This will build on the work already completed on the planning standards NR/L2/OPS/202 and NR/L2/OPS/303. Specifically the review of possession delivery will focus on these specific areas:

- 1. The mechanism for the Signaller to record the possession arrangements by investigating the need for a standardised form or forms and publishing copies of the forms if required.*
- 2. Investigate the current rules concerning the communication flow between the Signaller and PICOP to determine whether any changes are required to clarify the level and timing of communication between different parties. This will link to the outputs of bullet point 1 and the need for a form that will act as an aide memoire to the Signaller.*
- 3. Investigate the arrangements for the use of reminder appliances in possessions.*
- 4. Investigate the interaction between Signallers for possessions over a large area and with intermediate Signallers who do not provide and protection to the possession limits.*

Timescale 30/06/2019