
Safety report Quarter 2 (July - September) 2018

Author : Tim Bellenger

Agenda item 8 d

Date : 6 November 2018

Background

As noted in the Quarter 1 report John Cartledge has retired from this role, following a handover period to Tim Bellenger, although he will continue to act for us in relation to the Sandilands tram accident should there be any subsequent inquest and inquiry.

Activity

Having taken up this role on behalf of London TravelWatch and Transport Focus, I have begun attending meetings of various industry bodies such as the 'People on Trains and Stations Risk Group', (convened and hosted by Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB)); the Office of Rail and Road's (ORR's) Rail industry Health and Safety Advisory Committee; and Parliamentary Advisory Committee for Transport Safety (PACTS) Rail Working Group..

I am regularly meeting with Jill Collis, Director of Safety at Transport for London (TfL), and Simon French, Chief Inspector of the Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB) of the Department for Transport (DfT), and have established links with Mark Norton, Head of Railway Safety at the DfT.

I continue to respond on behalf of both organisations to safety consultations such as operator safety certification and to requests from the RAIB and RSSB for commentary on their reports prior to publication.

My previous policy experience has helped inform my involvement in the safety work and has brought an extra level of scrutiny, value and authority to the work.

Themes

During this period, a number of common themes have continued to feature. These include:

- **'Trap and Drag'** incidents involving trams and trains, whereby people or objects have been trapped by closing doors followed by the train or tram moving off causing damage and injury. Serious incidents have occurred on Manchester Metrolink (Bury), Nottingham Express Trams (Radford Road, Nottingham) and London Underground (Notting Hill Gate). In each instance, the RAIB made recommendations in relation to training and safety instructions to both Tram operators and London Underground.
- **Poor communications** between train drivers, Network Rail signallers and train operator train running controllers. Several serious instances have occurred where a lack of understanding of where safety authority lies, that could have resulted in deaths or serious injuries. The RAIB is continuing its' investigations into these instances.

- **Stranded trains.** The procedures for how and when passengers should or could be evacuated from stranded trains, and also the dangers inherent from passengers leaving trains between stations without authority from staff.
- **User worked crossings** on Network Rail infrastructure. These are crossings where the route is normally closed to road vehicles or pedestrians, but have the facility to cross the railway after authorisation by a signaller. Often these are in remote locations and are used to access farm buildings and associated dwellings.

To better understand a number of these issues I am in the process of arranging a visit with Jordan Sergeant from Transport Focus to the York Railway Operating Centre (ROC) to meet with, and observe, both the signalling and train operator train running control functions.

Recommendations

Members are recommended to note this report

Tim Bellenger

October 2018