Annual report of health and safety on Britain's railways 2024 to 2025

Our key enforcement activities

Investigation and enforcement

Our enforcement activities play a critical role in upholding health and safety standards across the rail industry. We use statutory enforcement powers to address serious risks and legal breaches. Improvement Notices are issued where there are significant breaches of health and safety law requiring remedial action, while Prohibition Notices are served when activities pose an imminent risk of serious personal injury. In 2024 to 2025, we issued four Improvement Notices. We served no Prohibition Notices.

Where necessary, we pursue prosecutions to ensure compliance with legal obligations. During the year, we successfully concluded a number of prosecutions under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974:

- Severn Valley Railway (Holdings) PLC was fined £40,000 following an incident in which a worker fell 13 feet onto a concrete floor, sustaining serious injuries including multiple fractures. The employee had been working alone without a safety harness. Our investigation found that the company failed to implement industry-standard measures for working at height, and lacked appropriate planning, instruction, and supervision.
- In February, Network Rail Infrastructure Limited was fined £3.75 million following the tragic deaths of two trackworkers at Margam East Junction in 2019. A third worker narrowly avoided serious injury. Our investigation uncovered systemic and wide-ranging safety failures in the company's arrangements for protecting those working on or near the

tracks. As a result, we issued two Improvement Notices in July 2019, requiring Network Rail to introduce preventive and protective measures.

- Also in February, Network Rail was fined an additional £3.41 million after pleading guilty to breaches of health and safety legislation in connection with a fatal incident in Surbiton in 2021. A trackworker in a four-person team was fatally struck by a train. Our investigation found deficiencies in work planning, monitoring, and supervision.

There has been a significant reduction in trackworker safety-related near-misses, declining from approximately 65 incidents per year to around 25. This improvement reflects Network Rail's compliance with Improvement Notices issued in 2022, as well as organisational learning from the Margam and Surbiton incidents. We continue to work with Network Rail to ensure full implementation of its CP7 Trackworker Safety Strategy, which focuses on eliminating the need for track access, deploying innovative technologies, improving workforce competence, and enhancing process control and governance. We will continue to monitor progress through our engagement and liaison activities during 2025 to 2026.

A major focus this year has been supporting the Fatal Accident Inquiry (FAI) into the derailment at Carmont, Aberdeenshire, in 2020, in which three people tragically lost their lives, including two rail staff and one passenger. We continue to attend preliminary hearings in preparation for the final hearing, expected later in 2025.

We also contributed to the FAI into the 2018 death of a pedestrian at Saughton Tram Crossing in Edinburgh, providing evidence and working in close coordination with the Crown Office and other stakeholders.

Finally, we supported the multi-agency investigation into the October 2024 train collision near Talerddig, Powys, in which two Transport for Wales passenger services collided. One passenger died, four people were seriously injured, and eleven others required hospital treatment. Our investigation into this incident remains ongoing.

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