Annual Report on London St. Pancras Highspeed 2024 to 2025

Health and safety

London St. Pancras Highspeed contracts much of its operating, maintenance and renewal functions to NR(HS) and ABM. We consider that all three of these organisations have obligations under health and safety legislation.

Both NR(HS) and ABM hold safety authorisations as infrastructure managers under the Railways and Other Guided Transport Systems (Safety) Regulations 2006. NR(HS) is responsible for the operation of the HS1 railway infrastructure from London St. Pancras to the Channel Tunnel, as well as London St. Pancras International, Stratford International and Ebbsfleet International stations. ABM are the infrastructure manager for the fourth railway station on the HS1 network, Ashford International.
London St. Pancras Highspeed retains its own health and safety responsibilities, having an important role as both the asset steward and client for works on its network, stations and associated infrastructure.

The HS1 network has historically seen relatively low levels of incidents and accidents involving members of the public and the workforce and continues to achieve a level of safety performance above other GB infrastructure managers, potentially reflecting the relatively modern nature of the infrastructure. There were no fatalities or serious injuries during the reporting year.
However, there were several incidents, which have caused both the workforce and public safety performance metrics to climb above the thresholds set by London St. Pancras Highspeed. London St. Pancras Highspeed uses the 'fatalities and weighted serious injuries' metric (FWI) and sets itself a threshold based on moving annual averages, for both workforce and public safety. The factors which caused these metrics to increase included:

- An increase in injuries to contractors, from 59 incidents in the previous year to 78 in 2024/25. These incidents predominantly (46% of all incidents) relate to assaults to customer service and security staff at stations. There are external factors behind assaults, but we have challenged London St. Pancras Highspeed to demonstrate it is doing everything reasonably practicable to manage this issue. We have seen evidence that London St. Pancras Highspeed is working with its contractors and key industry stakeholders, including the British Transport Police, to address both the root causes and impacts of assaults. We have engaged with London St. Pancras Highspeed throughout the year on its work-related violence reduction strategy.
- A single incident where a NR(HS) vehicle was struck by a third-party vehicle whilst stationary. The incident resulted in lost-time injuries to three members of NR(HS).
- In November 2024 there was an incident involving an escalator at Ebbsfleet International Station. A component failure resulted in the escalator running backwards whilst a number of members of the public were on the escalator. Two members of the public attended hospital because of the incident. The escalator was taken out of service immediately following the incident. Investigations have been carried out by the lift and escalator maintenance contractor, NR(HS) and an independent specialist engaged by London St. Pancras Highspeed. The investigations identified that the asset had been inadequately maintained by the contractor, as well as deficiencies in the oversight of contractors by NR(HS). London St. Pancras Highspeed subsequently instructed NR(HS) to produce an improvement plan. After making enquiries into the incident, we have continued to monitor progress with the improvement plan through our liaison arrangements with both London St. Pancras Highspeed and NR(HS).

Following the November 2023 collision between two On-Track Machines on the HS1 Network at Strood, both London St. Pancras Highspeed and NR(HS) were issued with recommendations by the Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB). Over the last year we have continued to monitor the work being undertaken by both organisations to act on the recommendations.
RAIB addressed a recommendation to London St. Pancras Highspeed to review its approach to the safety assurance of its contractors. In response London St. Pancras Highspeed has provided detailed information about the actions that have been taken, including an internal review of its assurance arrangements and the improvements to both its corporate risk identification process, as well as arrangements for the closure of audit recommendations. As well as addressing the specific incidents above, this reporting year we carried out the following health and safety regulatory activities:

- supervision, including monthly liaison meetings with NR(HS)'s safety leadership team, and quarterly liaison meetings with London St. Pancras Highspeed's Assurance and Quality Manager, to discuss safety performance, improvement plans and incidents.
- targeted inspections of stations and worksites along the HS1 network to examine operations being undertaken by NR(HS) and their contractors.

London St. Pancras Highspeed and its contractors continue to maintain suitable arrangements in place to manage the health and safety risks associated with operations on the HS1 network. However, there remain incidents that show the potential for risks to the safety and health of both staff and the public. In particular, these have highlighted the safety implications associated with asset condition (discussed in more detail in the Asset Management section of this report) and the need for robust contractor assurance. Over the next year, it is important that London St. Pancras Highspeed and its contractors continue to manage operational and occupational safety risk across the network.

Further information on health and safety performance on all of Britain's railways can be found in our Annual Health and Safety Report, and the Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB) Annual Safety Performance Report. Information on our approach to regulating health and safety risks can be found in the strategic risk priorities section of our website.

- ← Previous Annual Report on London St. Pancras Highspeed 2024 to 2025
- → Next Traffic volume and train service performance