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4 February 2021

Mr Andrew Hall  
Deputy Chief Inspector of Rail Accidents  
Cullen House  
Berkshire Copse Rd  
Aldershot  
Hampshire GU11 2HP

Dear Andrew,

**RAIB Report: Freight train derailment at East Somerset Junction on 20 March 2017**

I write to provide an update<sup>1</sup> on the action taken in respect of recommendation 2 addressed to ORR in the above report, published on 13 December 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 2 is '**Implemented**'.

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 on 5 February 2021.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Oliver Stewart', written in a cursive style.

Oliver Stewart

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

## Recommendation 2

*The purpose of this recommendation is to reduce the risk from sub-optimal track configurations that may exist as a result of plain-lining of S&C.*

Network Rail should identify existing locations where switches and crossings have been replaced with curved plain line on an emergency and/or temporary basis. A time-bound plan should be drawn up to implement appropriate measures to mitigate the risk at such locations, taking account of the findings of this report.

### ORR decision

1. The closure statement provided by Network Rail and discussion with the head of S&C confirm that the requirements of SIN 185 have been met with all routes submitting to the Technical Authority required documentation to confirm both phases of the SIN have been completed.

- a. Phase 1 = Identification of all plain lined S&C locations, categorising them according to risk
- b. Phase 2 = Updating risk management plans

2. Having completed this work we believe Network Rail have identified locations where switches and crossings have been replaced with curved plain line on an emergency and/or temporary basis, and that each location has been categorised with a risk score and an appropriate management plan put in place.

3. Network Rail has also reviewed the work instruction for plain lining S&C in an emergency (WI 3S105) and concluded it is fit for purpose, but will be refreshed to reflect Putting Passengers First (PPF) changes

4. 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 implement it

**Status: Implemented.**

### Previously reported to RAIB

5. On 12 December 2018 ORR reported the following:

We support the approach Network Rail are taking to address this recommendation, but have asked for confirmation that the timescale for completion (31 March 2019) is when the SIN and associated actions (e.g. creation of risk management plans) will be completed, rather than just the issuing of the SIN.

## Update

6. On 7 January 2021 Network Rail provided the following closure statement:



[N182-05] East  
Somerset Junction R

7. As part of the closure statement Network Rail state the following: *NR/L2/TRK/001 mod05, clause 23, sets out requirements for the SM(T) to maintain a register of switches secured out of use, which includes plain lined assets. See extract in Appendix A.*

*Track Work Information sheet 3S105, 'How to plain line S&C in an emergency' provides guidance on the practical application when plain-lining S&C. The SIN provided evidence that risks associated with plain-lined S&C were being adequately managed irrespective of the time over which the asset had been plain-lined. The sites that were identified were risk assessed and would be managed within the limits of a time bound plan to remove the risk. As part of the closure of the SIN the submissions were reviewed to assess their effectiveness in addressing the risks identified in the recommendation. Appendix B contains a copy of the closure statement for SIN185, authorised by the Network Rail Professional Head of S&C.*

*Based on the evidence presented in this recommendation from the SIN, the existing standard and guidance documents provide instructions to assure that the risk associated with plain-lined S&C is suitably managed.*

*In view of the actions taken the intent of this recommendation has been met and therefore considered CLOSED.*

## Previously reported to RAIB

### Recommendation 2

*The purpose of this recommendation is to reduce the risk from sub-optimal track configurations that may exist as a result of plain-lining of S&C.*

Network Rail should identify existing locations where switches and crossings have been replaced with curved plain line on an emergency and/or temporary basis. A time-bound plan should be drawn up to implement appropriate measures to mitigate the risk at such locations, taking account of the findings of this report.

### ORR decision

1. We support the approach Network Rail are taking to address this recommendation, but have asked for confirmation that the timescale for completion (31 March 2019) is when the SIN and associated actions (e.g. creation of risk management plans) will be completed, rather than just the issuing of the SIN.
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 31 March 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 18 October 2018 Network Rail provided the following initial response:
 

*Recommendation 2 will be addressed through the issue of a Special Inspection Notice (SIN) requiring routes to investigate and inspect all plain-lined S&C locations. The purpose of this exercise is to create a site register for these assets as well as to conduct a physical inspection of their design and condition. Following the inspection, Delivery Units will be required to create a risk management plan for all identified plain-lined sites that should, as an ultimate objective, provide time-bound details of when the site will either be returned to its original design of S&C, or permanently plain-lined according to our track construction standards.*

*The Routes themselves will be responsible for enacting the requirements of the SIN. The progress against these requirements will be monitored nationally by STE.*

*The SIN has been drafted and will now need to be peer reviewed and presented to the TLG (which includes all RAM[T]). It is intended to be issued within the next couple of months with a 6-9 month implementation period.*

*Timescale: 31 March 2019*