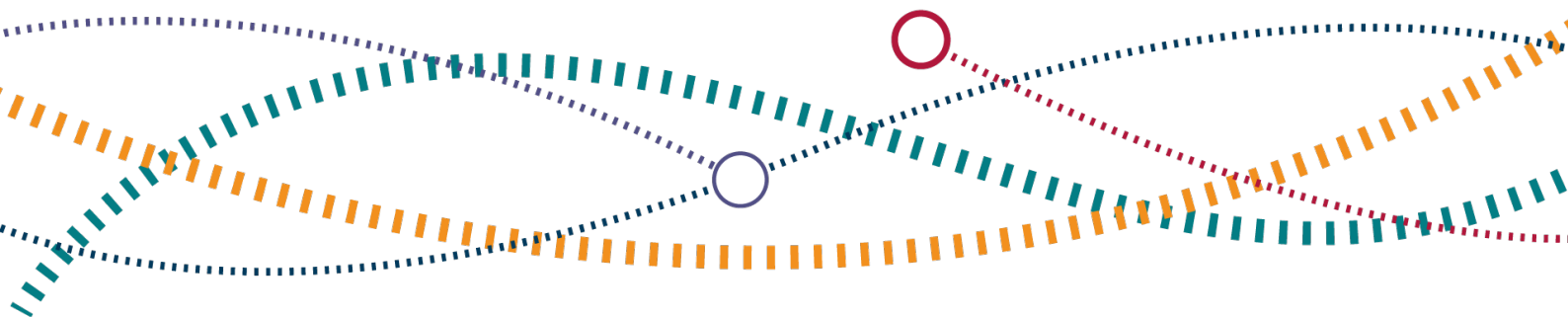




ORR Overview for Pam Warren Report – Is Safety Really Part of the Rail Industry’s DNA? March 2021

03 August 2021



ORR commissioned the Pam Warren Report: *Is Safety Really Part of the Rail Industry's DNA?* following the commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the Ladbroke Grove Rail Incident in 1999. This commission was to allow some reflection from an informed passenger's perspective on the progress made and lessons learnt by industry since the incident. The whole rail industry can benefit from hearing different perspectives, including those outside of the industry such as Pam Warren's, on the progress of rail safety since the Public Inquiries in 2000.

Pam Warren is a survivor of Ladbroke Grove and a long-time campaigner for lessons to be learned from the incident. The Ladbroke Grove Rail Incident occurred on 5 October 1999 when two passenger trains collided head on in west London resulting in 31 fatalities and over 350 injuries. Following the incident, three Public Inquiries (2 led by Lord Cullen and one joint led by Lord Cullen and Professor John Uff) took place which made 200 recommendations (Uff-Cullen recommendations) including 28 recommendations pertaining to train protection. All these recommendations were closed or addressed prior to the ORR commission of the Pam Warren report as outlined below.

ORR welcomes the report, which provides a very useful reminder of the Ladbroke Grove Rail Incident, its aftermath and the Public Inquiries following it. In summary, the key findings from Pam Warren's report are that

- Based upon her review, Pam Warren has been suitably impressed by the systems, standards and strategies that are now in place since the Ladbroke Grove Rail Incident. She is particularly impressed with the embracing of new technology, as it has become available and the commitment and professionalism of all working within and around the rail industry.

ORR response: The UK now has one of the safest railways in Europe. The rail industry has changed considerably in the last 20 years in particular signal past at danger (SPAD) risk has reduced dramatically over the last 20 years, level crossings risk has halved in the last 10 years and track asset risk is the lowest it has been. However, that is not a reason for complacency. The Chief Inspector's [Annual Health and Safety Report](#) notes that there are both ongoing and new challenges such as supporting people, technology and managing for the future.

- In Pam Warren's view 179 of the 200 recommendations have been totally completed. She has made some proposals, from her own perspective, to resolve those recommendations she considers as not consistently or comprehensively satisfied.

ORR response: The purpose of this commission was to allow some reflection and lessons learnt by the industry since the Ladbroke Grove Rail Incident. Therefore, it

should be noted that prior to ORR commissioning this report, all but two of the Uff-Cullen recommendations were closed through the Health and Safety Commission (HSC) Progress reports between 2002 and 2005, with those that were European Train Control Systems (ETCS)-focussed being based on the industry plans that were in place at the time. Furthermore, in 2018 Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB), on behalf of the cross-industry Train Protection Strategy Group (TPSG), commissioned a review of the Uff-Cullen train protection recommendations and published a report ([Review of the Uff-Cullen Recommendations related to train protection systems \(T1169\)](#)).

According to this report, the two remaining recommendations covering the implementation of ETCS Pilot and Global System for Mobile Communications – Railway (GSM-R) roll-out have since been addressed by the industry. ORR agrees with this and considers that all the Uff-Cullen recommendations had been addressed through the HSC and RSSB report in 2018 as outlined above.

Whilst in our view, the areas Pam Warren considers as not consistently or comprehensively satisfied do not require any action, ORR will engage with the industry on the conversations prompted by the findings of Pam Warren’s report through our regular engagement with the industry and [Railway Industry Health and Safety Advisory Committee](#) (RIHSAC). ORR also considers there are future coordination opportunities between those who manage the infrastructure and rail operations under the new proposed [Great British Railways](#) (GBR) structure. This is the government’s plan to transform the railways in Great Britain. Furthermore, we consider the four Uff-Cullen recommendations relating to fitment of ETCS (that is recommendations 21, 23, 26 and 27 on pages 48 and 49 of the report) that Pam Warren has highlighted have been adequately addressed, but we are nonetheless encouraging the industry to continue to improve in this area as explained below under ‘Train Protection’.

Train Protection

ORR response: Due to the success of Train Protection and Warning System (TPWS) installation which happened quickly after the Uff-Cullen recommendations, it reduced SPAD risk dramatically. This meant implementation of ETCS purely as a train protection system (TPS) was not reasonably practicable. However, the replacement of life expired signalling systems does still offer a viable opportunity for fitting ETCS and hence enhance the level of train protection. Finding a suitable deployment plan for migrating to ETCS is complex but vital and industry needs to establish such a deployment plan.

ORR is preparing new guidance for the industry on TPS, including our expectations for migrating from TPWS to ETCS. We expect to publicly consult on this in 2022. In the

meantime, ORR considers that TPWS is working well and has significantly reduced risk.

- Pam Warren's findings lead her to conclude that the industry approach to safety is too 'top down' and could benefit from 'down up' to enhance the rail industry even further.

ORR response: We are challenging the industry to improve the safety culture at the frontline which will need stronger bottom up input. We are doing this using all the tools at our disposal including formal enforcement such as ORR Improvement Notices.

We welcome the overall challenge that the rail industry might be too insular in places, although we would note that health and safety matters on the railway, by definition, require those closest to the issues to be the primary drivers of change and improvement. However, more can always be done, for example, to find and understand the travelling public's perspectives about railway safety. In the light of this, we have already taken steps to improve our understanding of public perception of risk through discussion with some academics, passenger representative groups and stakeholders from within (and outside) the rail industry. ORR has presented its work on public perception of risk to RIHSAC.

- Pam Warren considers that the safety information issued to passengers and the means by which they can be evacuated or escape from a train should be standardised.

ORR response: We understand Pam Warren's views about some of the Cullen recommendations in relation to safety information not being consistently or comprehensively satisfied. However, there is a Rail Industry Standard (RIS) which outlines how the railway industry should set out safety information to passengers. The industry has made a lot of progress on the information it provides to passengers on safety and evacuation since the Ladbroke Grove Rail Incident. Furthermore, although a RIS exists, ORR has intervened where necessary to try to improve consistency and implementation.

Transparency is key in all aspects of progress relating to the state of health and safety on our railways. This applies, irrespective of the time since an incident occurred or inquiry recommendations were made. The commissioning and publishing of this piece of work contributes to that end. ORR is very grateful to Pam Warren for all her work in this area, and to everyone in the industry who helped her in conducting her review.



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