

Ian Prosser

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29 September 2016

George Bearfield
System Safety Director
RSSB
The Helicon,
1 South Place,
London,
EC2M 2RB

Dear George,

The interaction of track, vehicles and freight container loads: Industry progress on risk reduction.

In December 2014 I wrote to you regarding effectiveness of the rail industry's approach to managing the system risks arising from the interaction of track, vehicle, and container load. The rail industry responded by coming together in Crewe during March 2015 at the ORR led rail industry workshop to seek out ways to jointly improve the management of freight derailment system risk. The agreed outcome is being taken forwards by the cross industry freight derailment working group (XIFDWG) with representatives from many of the organisations that attended that Crewe workshop.

I attended the recent XIFDWG meeting on 16th May 2016 and recognise the progress that has been made in improving the understanding, and identifying and developing new potential risk control measures. But I also have concerns about pace of progress and action being taken at dutyholder level to assess and reduce their own risks whilst the group develop longer term solutions.

I ask you consider:

- your involvement in the work of the group and whether there is more you can do to support and drive the progress of the group and increase the pace of delivery;
- what you have done since the Crewe workshop to review your own company risk assessments, and action taken as a result to enhance your arrangements.

I also take this opportunity to remind you that whilst the XIFDWG group will produce outcomes that will potentially help you meet your own health and safety duties, including acting on RAIB recommendations; your organisation will have to consider such outcomes in the context of your own health and safety management arrangements and take suitable action.

Where we identify gaps in individual dutyholders risk control measures we will continue to challenge the suitability of risk assessments and associated management arrangements to control risk arising from freight container traffic.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ian Prosser".

Ian Prosser
Director of Railway Safety