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12 June 2020



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

Dear Andrew,

RAIB Report: Two incidents involving track workers between Clapham Junction and Earlsfield on 8 March 2011

I write to provide an update¹ on the action taken in respect of recommendation 3 addressed to ORR in the above report, published on 27 February 2012.

The annex to this letter provides details of the action taken regarding the recommendation. The status of recommendation 3 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 15 June 2020.

Yours sincerely,

Oliver Stewart

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

Recommendation 3

The purpose of this recommendation is to determine whether, following the proposed changes to Assessment in the Line, the workload of Track Section Managers is reasonable. If necessary, the role should be restructured to strengthen the supervision of staff competence.

Network Rail should review the workload of Track Section Managers, to determine whether it is reasonable, taking account of the changes which are due to be introduced in 2012 as part of the 'Assessment in the Line review project'. This review should include the requirement to manage technical, managerial and administrative tasks; specific attention should be given to the work associated with the management of staff competence and on-site surveillance. If this review identifies that the workload of the role is unreasonable following the proposed changes, practical steps should be taken to restructure responsibilities to improve the delivery of safety-related activities.

ORR decision

1. Following intervention by ORR, Network Rail has developed a process for workload assessments for Section Managers and undertaking remedial action where issues are identified.
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
 - taken action to implement it.

Status: Implemented.

Previously reported to RAIB

3. On 4 December 2013 ORR reported that Network Rail was undertaking an Establishment Review to look at CP4 exit establishment requirements, headcount and vacancy gaps etc. This review would feed in to the wider Depot project which includes Section Manager work-load and planning. Network Rail expected to complete the Establishment Review in November 2013 and ORR would then look at the outcomes of Depot project work due to be completed in April 2014. After reviewing all the information received from Network Rail, ORR concluded that, in accordance with the Railways (Accident Investigation and Reporting) Regulations 2005, Network Rail had taken the recommendation into consideration and was taking action to implement it.

Update

4. An ORR inspector was on secondment to Network Rail in 2019 and helped deliver a project that resulted in Network Rail routes undertaking Section Manger workload assessments and taking actions to address issues identified.

Previously reported to RAIB

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Brief Summary on what was previously reported to RAIB on 2 August 2013

1. Network Rail advised that: *'... the review referred to has been carried out as part of the Business Critical Rules programme and the proposals have been endorsed by Network Rail's S&SD Executive [Safety & sustainability Development]. Timescale: 31 August 2013*
2. ORR wrote to Network Rail on 6 September 2013 asking if the actions to address this recommendation have been completed or if not, then please advise what has still to be done, including associated timescales.

Update

3. On 16 October 2013 Network Rail advised ORR that:

The Section Manager review will be undertaken by the Depot Review project as also covered by the Role Based Competency work in association with Business Critical Rules.

On-going monitoring of emerging workloads that translates into excessive hours worked. Reminder re awareness of fatigue and stress also issued. Absence rates amongst target group to be monitored ahead of the completion of the 2 initiatives identified.

There is currently no single solution to this issue since each Route / Delivery Unit has flexibility in how it supports its Section Managers. Role Based Competence / Role Profiling will define future role and this will allow assessment of associated workload.

The depot project has already identified work elements undertaken by the section manager that should be carried out by others, reinforcing the long held view that the SM role as currently defined, is not being carried out consistently.

The lead for this work is the Route Managing Director who has a remit to:

- *Undertake more detailed analysis on Section Manager work-load including required support and division of time including business continuity – (cover for leave, sickness, training etc.)*
- *Consideration to be given to changing the organisation design of Section Manager Organisation including the reporting line of the direct organisation. In revising the responsibilities of the Section Supervisor /Planner/Administrator roles, care should be taken not to just transfer accountabilities to the Team Leader.*
- *Clearly define the role of a Section Manager using a role based competence model including creation of a Section Manager Manual with competency requirements.*

Target Completion date: 30 April 2014

Background information

4. Network Rail carried out a Post Implementation Review (PIR) of the Phase 2bc reorganisation and amongst other issues; it identified concerns with Section Manager work-load. ORR has exchanged letters with Network Rail on this subject.
5. Network Rail is currently undertaking an Establishment Review to look at CP4 exit establishment requirements, headcount and vacancy gaps etc. This will feed in to the wider Depot project which includes Section Manager work-load and planning.

ORR Decision

6. Network Rail expected to complete the Establishment Review in November 2013 and ORR will now look at the outcomes of Depot project work due to be completed in April 2014. After reviewing all the information received from Network Rail, 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.

Status: In-progress - ORR will update RAIB by 30 July 2014