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2 February 2015

Ms Carolyn Griffiths
Chief Inspector of Rail Accidents
Cullen House
Berkshire Copse Rd
Aldershot
Hampshire GU11 2HP

Dear Carolyn,

RAIB Report: Fatal accident at Mexico footpath crossing (near Penzance), 3 October 2011

I write to provide an update[1] on the action taken in respect of recommendation 2 addressed to ORR in the above report, published on 20 June 2012.

The annex to this letter provides details of the action taken. The status of this recommendation remains *In-progress*. ORR will update RAIB by 30 July 2015.

We will publish this response on the ORR website on 27 February 2015.

Yours sincerely,

Russell J Keir
HM Inspector of Railways

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

Recommendation 2

The intent of this recommendation is for RSSB to consider what additional data needs to be captured within SMIS [Safety Management Information System] to allow a full evaluation of risk at level crossings and to use it, together with any other relevant data, to enhance its current processes for reviewing the effect of the change made in April 2007 to sounding only the low tone of the train horn for passive crossings between 07:00 hours and 23:00 hours.

RSSB should:

a. identify any additional data that should be captured within SMIS from accidents and near-miss incidents to inform future safety decision-making about level crossings and make the necessary arrangements for that data to be collected by duty holders; and

b. using the data obtained from implementing part a of this recommendation and any further intelligence contained within SMIS or other sources, enhance its current approach to reviewing the impact of the change to sounding only the low tone of the warning horn for whistle boards at level crossings between 07:00 hours and 23:00 hours and take actions, if appropriate.

Update

1.   On 16 January 2015, RSSB provided an update advising that:

On 5 October 2012, RSSB advised that the main data required to address this recommendation (whether or not a specific level crossing is fitted with a whistle board) was not captured in SMIS. However, discussions with Network Rail indicated that Network Rail was improving the asset information for each crossing in the context of the All Level Crossings Risk Model (ALCRM), and that this could be made available to RSSB.

RSSB's intent was therefore to work with Network Rail to ensure it was possible to link the SMIS level crossing locations with the location descriptions in the ALCRM such that SMIS incident data could be linked to specific locations and asset features.

It was anticipated that this work would be completed by June 2013. Making this link would allow RSSB to monitor near miss rates at the level crossings with and without whistle boards on an on-going basis.

Subsequently, Network Rail's work became part of a wider initiative – namely its Level Crossing Transparency project, which involved Network Rail creating a list of around 7,000 level crossings, complete with all relevant data (including ALCRM ID). This was completed by May 2014, after which RSSB returned to the task of working with Network Rail to link SMIS level crossing locations with the location descriptions in the ALCRM. Since the end of 2014, this information has been automatically downloaded to SMIS every month.

A project has now begun to link the downloaded data to SMIS automatically. This should be completed by the end of March 2015, after which RSSB will be in a position to address Recommendation 2(b) …the analysis of near miss and accident data. The timescales for the completion of the analysis will be reported to the ORR once all the data has been populated and the extent of the analysis required has been established. Ultimate publication of a report based on the findings will see the recommendation closed.

ORR Decision

ORR will continue to monitor the action being taken to address this recommendation.

Status: *In-progress. ORR will update RAIB by 30 July 2015.*

Previously Reported, 12 August 2014

Recommendation 2

The intent of this recommendation is for RSSB to consider what additional data needs to be captured within SMIS [Safety Management Information System] to allow a full evaluation of risk at level crossings and to use it, together with any other relevant data, to enhance its current processes for reviewing the effect of the change made in April 2007 to sounding only the low tone of the train horn for passive crossings between 07:00 hours and 23:00 hours.

RSSB should:

a. identify any additional data that should be captured within SMIS from accidents and near-miss incidents to inform future safety decision-making about level crossings and make the necessary arrangements for that data to be collected by duty holders; and

b. using the data obtained from implementing part a of this recommendation and any further intelligence contained within SMIS or other sources, enhance its current approach to reviewing the impact of the change to sounding only the low tone of the warning horn for whistle boards at level crossings between 07:00 hours and 23:00 hours and take actions, if appropriate.

Brief Summary on what was previously reported to RAIB on 17 October 2013

…Network Rail is in the process of creating a list of around 7,000 level crossings complete with all relevant data (including ALCRM ID) that will be used to populate the level crossing register in SMIS. Network Rail forecasts that this list will be ready mid-August [2013], with a release date into SMIS of early to mid-September 2013.

To ensure accuracy, the data will be refreshed by Network Rail by automatic data transfer in March next year [2014]. Once this phase of the work has been finished recommendation 2(b), the analysis of near miss accident data, can be addressed.

Update

2.   On 4 April 2014, ORR wrote to RSSB asking for an update on actions being taken to address this recommendation. On 15 May 2014 RSSB stated that:

RSSB is working with Network Rail to link SMIS level crossing locations with the location descriptions in the ALCRM, such that SMIS incident data can be linked to specific locations and asset features. We noted too that the work has since become part of Network Rail's Level Crossing Transparency project.

Network Rail has now created a list of around 7,000 level crossings complete with all relevant data (including ALCRM ID). This will now been used to populate the level crossing register in SMIS, with the project starting in June 2014. RSSB will then address Recommendation 2(b) – i.e., the analysis of near miss and accident data – as intended. The timescales for the completion of the analysis will be reported to the ORR once all the data has been populated and the extent of the analysis required has been established.

3.   On 6 May 2014, ORR met with Network Rail and expressed concern that the new level crossings register did not actually incorporate any whistle-board information. On 28 May 2014 Network Rail stated that:

The ability of RSSB to link level crossings in SMIS to level crossings in ALCRM will be resolved as part of the work to update the SMIS register, linking the I.D. used by each system. Network Rail is awaiting confirmation of the format in which RSSB needs this data to be able to input it into their system. Once RSSB has clarified this, which is due to be agreed at a meeting taking place at RSSB on 29 May, the data to enable the SMIS register to be updated and linked to level crossings in ALCRM will be sent to RSSB. Ultimately, SMIS will hold ALCRM ID's and exports from ALCRM which will be able to be linked to SMIS ID's.

Following our meeting, Network Rail has been in touch with RSSB concerning the provision of ALCRM whistle board data. This information was provided to RSSB earlier today. The information provided consists of a download from ALCRM including:

- *Level crossing SMIS ID*
- *Crossing name*
- *Whistle board distances. Whistle boards fitted / not fitted*
- *Date of whistle board fitment (approximate)*
- *Traverse time*
- *Census data*
- *Train speed*

Providing the SMIS ID will enable RSSB to link the data to the SMIS register. This can be supplemented with any further information that RSSB request using the same SQL query[2].

Until system integration is automated, Network Rail has a semi-manual system in place that will report and identify ALCRM changes that impact on the SMIS data. Network Rail will provide updates of such changed data to RSSB as required.

The system integration project team have advised that the automatic transfer of data will commence rollout from August 2014. Automation will be increased to cover additional systems, including SMIS, by the end of 2014.

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[2] special-purpose programming language designed for managing data held in a relational database

Note: The automatic transfer of data to SMIS will not occur before the end of 2014. Network Rail is only able to effect automatic transfer of data into SMIS if SMIS has a place in which it can store the data. Whistle board data is not currently held in SMIS. Unless RSSB decides to make changes to SMIS, Network Rail will not be able to automatically update whistle board data. If RSSB makes changes to SMIS so that it holds whistle board data, Network Rail will update it automatically. If this does not happen (or until it does), whistle board data will remain in the category of 'additional information'. Network Rail will automatically extract it from ALCRM and manually send it to RSSB in spread sheet form.

ORR Decision

4.   Network Rail has now provided to RSSB the information that is necessary for it to undertake work to meet the recommendation. In time that information will be automatically updated to RSSB. We will continue to monitor and update RAIB.

Status: *In-progress.* *ORR will update RAIB by 30 January 2015*