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Ms Carolyn Griffiths
Chief Inspector of Rail Accidents
Rail Accident Investigation Branch
Block A, 2nd Floor
Dukes Court
Dukes Street
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Dear Carolyn

Collision between an articulated tanker and a passenger train at Sewage Works Lane user worked crossing, near Sudbury, Suffolk, 17 August 2010

I write to provide an update¹ on the consideration given and action taken in respect of recommendation 2 addressed to ORR in the above report, published on 11 August 2011.

The annex to this letter provides details of the consideration given/action taken and reports that Network Rail is taking action to implement the recommendation.

ORR is content with the proposed actions and timescales and will monitor delivery. If, in doing so, we become aware of an inaccuracy in what we have reported we will write to RAIB again².

We expect to publish this response on the ORR website on 1 March 2013.

Yours Sincerely

Chris O'Doherty

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

² In accordance with Regulation 12(2)(c)

Recommendation 2

The intent of Recommendation 2 is for Network Rail to consider ways of managing the predictable risk that arises at user worked crossing equipped with telephones where long waiting times are frequently experienced by road users.

Network Rail should consider ways of managing the risk at user worked crossings equipped with telephones where long waiting times can arise as a result of the signaller having no means of knowing where trains are located, and implement any reasonably practicable measures identified.

Brief Summary on what was previously reported to RAIB on 24 September 2012

1. Network Rail has been exploring new technologies for identifying and tracking the location of trains within long signal sections. Two systems were demonstrated on site at Sewage Works Lane on 2 December 2011.
2. Trial on the Sudbury branch started in January 2012: Phase 1 is nearly complete (trains fitted with GPS, control screen used by signallers at Liverpool Street CC) and Phase 2, which is the installation of warnings at the crossing should complete by October 2012.
3. ORR would monitor and review the results from the Sudbury trials and update RAIB when complete.

Update

4. On 29 November 2012 Network Rail confirmed to ORR that a global positioning system (GPS) had been fitted to trains which now send train position information to signallers.
5. ORR is also aware that after the enhancements are fitted at the crossing the user will have no contact with the signaller, instead the user will rely on a red/green light and audible warning of approaching trains activated by pressing a plunger.
6. However, the installation of this has been delayed due to the difficulty designing simple and reliably understood signage telling the user how to operate the crossing in both normal and failure modes. Network Rail has sought ergonomics advice regarding the design appropriate signage at the crossing.
7. ORR wrote to Network Rail, on 4 December 2012, requesting an update on the trials and locations where Network Rail will be implementing 'a solution' to manage the risks at UWC(T) across its railway network where long waiting times are experienced by road users; what the solutions will be; and the timescales to do so.
8. Network Rail in its response of 21 December 2012 advised:

The Sudbury TAWS trials are on-going. An extension to the Trial Certificate for Phase 1 to allow for the Product Approval process was granted in October 2012.

An extension was required because further evidence was required from the tests and the evidence from October 2012 onwards is being presented in a standard format. A

DPE (Designated Project Engineer) has been brought in to the project team to endorse and approve the certification and documented evidence.

Network Rail is currently in the process of establishing the Safety Criteria for Phase 2, which provides automated information to the user of the level crossing, and a workshop to agree and establish the criteria is set for 9th January 2013. This is a requirement from the Anglia Assurance Review Panel, from which the project Sponsor will seek Product Acceptance.

The GPS based solution currently being trialled on the Sudbury to Marks Tey branch line is an innovative and bespoke solution. There are alternative products and systems now available which may provide alternatives to GPS technology which offer solutions more appropriate in terms of safety, specification and cost. Network Rail is investigating these in relation to the current site list identified for CP4.

An OJEU [Official Journal of the European Union] Evaluation of an additional list of suppliers who also provide technology solutions for train detection at level crossings is planned for 10th and 11th January. The Output Requirements Specification for the 200 sites will be provided at the end of February 2013 and the project will then enter into Feasibility and Option Selection with a target of completing this stage by the end of August 2013.

The detailed design and implementation phase of the project will then commence aiming to deliver the Client endorsed requirements by the end of CP4 [2014]. This is the current outline programme for development, trials, safety approval and delivery.

Network Rail provided ORR with a list of the proposed 200 sites for UWCTs in long sections for. Network Rail also advised that the list is likely to change.

ORR Decision

9. 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 has:

- taken the recommendation into consideration; and
- is taking action to implement it.

ORR is content with the proposed actions and timescales and will monitor delivery. If, in doing so, we become aware of an inaccuracy in what we have reported we will write to RAIB again.

Status: Network Rail is taking action to implement the recommendation