

Safety Bulletin



everyone
home safe
every day

Train Derailment at Walton-on-Thames

Issued to: All Network Rail line managers, safety professionals and accredited contractors

Ref: NRB24-01

Date of issue: 08/03/2024

Location: Walton-on-Thames, Surrey

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Overview

At 05.50 on Monday 4th March 2024, a passenger train struck scrap rail travelling on the Up Fast line on the four track railway at Walton-on-Thames. This caused the front bogie of the train to partially derail.

No passengers on the train were injured.

Following the event, all lines were blocked to allow the safe evacuation of passengers. The derailment caused significant damage to the infrastructure.

A few minutes before this incident, a train reported striking an object (at the time reported as a possible branch or piece of wood) on the adjacent Up Slow line.

This was the third train in the Up direction following weekend engineering works, and the first on the Up Fast line. The works undertaken at the weekend included tamping, ballasting and scrap clearance.

The location where the train struck the scrap rail was on a rail road access point (RRAP). This had been used at the weekend as part of a track renewal follow up.

The scrap recovery was completed 26 hours prior to the event.

The incident is under investigation by the Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB) and Network Rail.

While the investigation takes place, it is important to remember the requirements for lineside materials.

Always keep your work area tidy and never leave the following and similar items unattended trackside:

- Cable drums
- Rail lengths of less than 3m
- Wooden sleepers unless banded in groups of six and secured by a ground anchor a safe distance from the running line.
- Troughing unless stacked and banded in groups weighing no less than 800kg.
- Remove large equipment / trolleys from site or secure to a ground anchor or other fixed object.
- Remove scrap immediately from site wherever possible.
- Ensure all gates are locked/secured before you leave site.

Discussion points

- How do you check that materials, plant and equipment have been removed or secured adequately before the line is reopened?
- How does the Engineering Supervisor (ES) and Person in Charge (PIC) assure themselves that the line is safe and clear for the passage of trains following completion of works?
- When moving materials using Road Rail Vehicle (RRV) trailers or trolleys, what steps are taken to stop materials falling?
- How do you check that there are no short sections of rail left on site which could be readily removed?

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