

[Bishop of Chester: 12 May 2020](#)

Press release

Queen approves nomination of Reverend Mark Simon Austin Tanner as Bishop of Chester.



The Queen has approved the nomination of The Right Reverend Mark Simon Austin Tanner MA BA MTh, Suffragan Bishop of Berwick, for election as Bishop of Chester in succession to The Right Reverend Doctor Peter Forster, following his resignation on 30th September 2019.

Published 12 May 2020

[Report 03/2020: Class investigation into human performance in signalling operation](#)

Summary

Since it became operational in 2005, RAIB has investigated numerous incidents in which signaller decision-making has been pivotal, and where the safety of the railway system was heavily dependent on those decisions (that is, scenarios in which there were no, or limited, engineered safeguards). Under its remit, RAIB also collected industry data on several similar incidents over a five-year period which again highlighted the vulnerable nature of such decision-making. In the light of these incidents, we undertook a class investigation into what affects those decisions, recognising that they may be influenced by a variety of systemic factors. Although this investigation is about what can go wrong, it must be recognised that front-line decisions also

contribute much more widely to the safe operation of the railway on a daily basis.

The investigation examined five categories of incident:

- user worked crossing irregularities
- line blockage irregularities
- users trapped at CCTV level crossings
- irregularities involving level crossings on local control
- other operational irregularities

The investigation identified several common factors influencing the actions of signallers across these scenarios, associated with:

- signaller workload
- user-centred design
- competence management
- experiential knowledge
- organisational structure

The report also observes that Network Rail's incident investigations do not always fully exploit the opportunities to learn from these incidents.

Recommendations

As a result, RAIB has made six recommendations to Network Rail, addressing each of the five areas listed above as well as the observation on learning from incident investigations. There is also a learning point for incident investigators relating to the identification of systemic causal factors.

Simon French, Chief Inspector of Rail Accidents said:

“The decisions made by signallers have an immediate, vital impact on the safety of people using the railway. Whether giving a level crossing user permission to cross the line, or making sure that track workers are protected

from the approach of trains, a good decision by the signaller is often the last line of defence against tragedy.

“It’s easy for an outsider to assume that on the modern railway, everything to do with signalling trains is automatic, fail-safe, and relies on the latest technology. While there is a huge amount of complex hardware and software out there, supported by thousands of engineers and technicians, many decisions about everyday operations are still down to the human beings who operate the system.

“RAIB has been concerned for some time about this decision-making process, and how the performance of signallers can be affected by multiple, systemic factors that are within the control of railway management. As the railway has got busier, so the demands on the signaller have increased. Much of what signallers deal with – mostly successfully – is down to experience and implicit knowledge, but current processes don’t recognise this.

“When, rightly, managers seek to reduce the amount of work on the track that is done while trains are running, the burden on the signaller, to block the line so that work can take place, increases. When trains get faster, so that it’s no longer possible for users of private level crossings to rely on seeing them approaching in time to be able to cross safely, the signaller has to respond to more telephone calls asking for permission to cross. As the areas supervised by signallers get larger, many more level crossing users, and track workers, are phoning up during each shift. It’s asking a lot of signallers to always make the right call, and we have found that the support they need isn’t always there.

“We are recommending that Network Rail looks closely at how it manages the day-to-day work of signallers. The experience and knowledge of signalling staff is a vital asset, and needs to be properly and consistently developed, supported and made use of, for the safety of everyone who interacts with the railway.”

Notes to editors

1. The sole purpose of RAIB investigations is to prevent future accidents and incidents and improve railway safety. RAIB does not establish blame, liability or carry out prosecutions.
2. RAIB operates, as far as possible, in an open and transparent manner. While our investigations are completely independent of the railway industry, we do maintain close liaison with railway companies and if we discover matters that may affect the safety of the railway, we make sure that information about them is circulated to the right people as soon as possible, and certainly long before publication of our final report.
3. For media enquiries, please call 01932 440015.

Newsdate: 12 May 2020

Investment vehicle wound-up after stripping companies of assets

Charles James Associates Group Ltd was wound up in the public interest on 4 May 2020 in the High Court before Judge Burton of the Insolvency and Companies Court. The Official Receiver has been appointed as liquidator.

In considering the petition, the court heard that Charles James Associates Group purchased companies that were sustainable and solvent, targeting small family operated businesses spread across the UK. Targets tended to be manufacturing companies or those that provided specialist services, including window manufacturing and sales, commercial vehicle repairs and book publishers.

Charles James Associates Group, however, didn't use any of its own funds or invest capital to acquire those businesses but used associated parties to arrange purchase agreements with the companies they intended to buy.

The associated parties would then negotiate it so that companies being bought would use their own money to complete the sale with the associated parties, as well as agreeing that any remaining balances would be paid on a deferred payment basis.

Charles James Associates Group would then purchase those businesses for a nominal sum from the associated parties before stripping the companies of their assets.

This would include diverting funds, using the purchased companies' funds to acquire assets for Charles James Associates Group, making payments to Charles James Associates Group directly and trading the companies to the detriment of their creditors and employees.

Additionally, Charles James Associates Group caused the companies they bought to not pay both their trade and Crown liabilities and in one case secured pension contributions from employees but failed to pay the money collected into the pension fund, which remains unaccounted for.

As a result of these activities, the acquired companies' finances deteriorated and they were placed into insolvency. The asset-stripping conducted by Charles James Associates Group also resulted in serious losses for creditors and employees lost their jobs.

Investigators from the Insolvency Service uncovered the misconduct through confidential enquiries and also found that Charles James Associates Group never had any formal presence at their registered address between September 2017 and April 2019, using the address without the permission of the property's occupants.

The company also traded using the website of the similarly-named connected predecessor company, Charles James Associates PLC, and used the same contact

details on the website. However, Charles James Associates PLC's activities were put to a stop after it was wound-up following its compulsory liquidation in January 2018.

Irshard Mohammed, Senior Investigator at the Insolvency Service, said

Charles James Associates Group cynically purchased companies through deception before stripping them of their assets. Not only did this force previously viable companies to go into insolvency but it also meant employees lost jobs and creditors were out of pocket.

The courts thankfully recognised the severity of Charles James Associates Group's misconduct and removed the company from the corporate arena.

All enquiries concerning the affairs of the company should be made to:

- The Official Receiver, Public Interest Unit, 16th Floor, 1 Westfield Avenue, Stratford, London, E20 1HZ
- Telephone: 020 7637 1110
- Email: piu.or@insolvency.gov.uk

Charles James Associates Group Ltd (Company number: 10719407) was incorporated on 10 April 2017. The current registered office is located at Kemp House, 152 – 160 City Road, London, EC1V 2NX.

The current appointed director of the company is Mr David Roy Howick. However, conflicting information has been filed at Companies House. The authorised share capital of the Company is shown as 1 ordinary shares of £1, with that share being allocated to Myles Bunyard, thus giving him 100% control. However, although Mr Bunyard is recorded as the Person with Significant Control, his share ownership is shown on that filing as "more than 25% but not more than 50%". Mr Bunyard, under his full name of Myles Charles Bunyard, is currently subject to a disqualification undertaking, for a 12-year period to 24 June 2021."

The Petition was presented by The Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy ("BEIS") on 19 November 2019 in the High Court of Justice, Business and Property Courts in England and Wales (CR-2019-007770), under the provisions of section 124A of the Insolvency Act 1986 following confidential enquiries by Company Investigations under section 447 of the Companies Act 1985, as amended.

Company Investigations, part of the Insolvency Service, uses powers under the Companies Act 1985 to conduct confidential fact-finding investigations into the activities of live limited companies in the UK on behalf of the Secretary of State for BEIS. [Further information about live company investigations is available here.](#)

Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to

complain about financial misconduct, [is available here](#).

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

[New guidance published to ensure transport network is safe for those who need to use it](#)

- new guidance published on how to make journeys safely
- public urged to continue to work from home if they can and avoid public transport where possible to reduce pressure on the network
- those who have to travel for work should consider changing their travel habits – including cycling, walking or driving, and avoiding rush hour – to help people socially distance from others and reduce pressure on public transport

New guidance published today (12 May 2020) provides advice on how passengers should make journeys safely, following the publication of the government's [roadmap and strategy for the next phase of the pandemic](#). It urges people to consider cycling, walking or driving to help ensure there is enough capacity for those who need to travel on public transport to do so safely.

As the [Transport Secretary stated on Saturday \(9 May 2020\)](#), even as public transport begins to revert to a full service, the 2-metre social distancing rule would only leave effective capacity for one in ten passengers on many parts of the network.

The advice sets out that if people who cannot work from home and have to travel for work, they should first consider alternatives to public transport. Those driving their own cars have been asked to avoid busy areas.

For those who have to use public transport, the [guidance for passengers on how to travel safely](#) recommends:

- keeping 2 metres apart from others wherever possible
- wearing a face covering if you can
- using contactless payment where possible
- avoiding rush hour travel where feasible
- washing or sanitising your hands as soon as possible before and after travel
- following advice from staff and being considerate to others

All transport operators have been issued guidance on ensuring stations and services are regularly cleaned, making clear to passengers how to stay 2 metres apart where possible in stations, airports and ports, and to ensure

routes for passengers are clearly communicated to avoid crowding. The government's guidance also sets out steps operators should take to provide safe workplaces and services for their staff and passengers across all modes of private and public transport.

To help reduce pressure on the transport network so there is space for social distancing where possible, the Transport Secretary has spoken to train and bus operators and local authorities to ensure they increase the number of available services over the coming weeks.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

Transport operators and staff have been working hard to ensure that people who need to get to work are able to do so, including crucial NHS workers and all those on the frontline of the fight against the virus.

Alongside the cycling and walking revolution we are launching, and clear guidance to passengers and operators published today, we can all play our part by following the advice and reducing pressure on public transport.

If we take these steps, all those who need to use public transport should feel confident that they can do so safely, with the space to maintain social distancing as far as possible.

This follows the Transport Secretary announcing [a £2 billion package of cycling and walking investment](#) on Saturday that will deliver a green revolution in travel, easing the pressure on public transport services by helping more people than ever choose alternative forms of travel. This included £250 million for local authorities in England to create pop up bike lanes with protected space for cycling, wider pavements, safer junctions, and cycle and bus-only corridors.

The government's strategy and advice recognises that there will be times and some settings on public transport where social distancing is not possible. The new guidance outlines how people should try to minimise the duration of this, and take all necessary steps to observe these measures where possible.

[PM statement on coronavirus: 11 May 2020](#)

Good evening and thank you for joining us for this Downing Street press conference.

First of all, I want to update you on the latest data in our fight against coronavirus. I can report through the Government's ongoing testing and monitoring programme that, as of today:

- 1,921,770 tests for coronavirus have now been carried out in the UK, including 100,490 tests carried out yesterday;
- 223,060 people have tested positive, that's an increase of 3,877 cases since yesterday;
- 11,401 people are currently in hospital with coronavirus, down from 11,768 the previous day.
- And sadly, of those tested positive for coronavirus, across all settings, 32,065 have now died. That's an increase of 210 fatalities since yesterday. This figure includes deaths in all settings not just in hospitals.

Before we begin questions from the public and from the media I just want to remind people of a number of important things I said in my address to the nation last night.

First, in order to monitor our progress, we are establishing a new COVID Alert Level System. The COVID Alert Level has five levels, each relating to the level of threat posed by the virus. The level will be primarily determined by the R value and the number of coronavirus cases. In turn, that COVID Alert Level will determine the level of social distancing measures in place. The lower the level the fewer the measures; the higher the level the stricter the measures.

Throughout the period of lockdown which started on March 23rd we have been at Level 4 – meaning a Covid19 epidemic is in general circulation, and transmission is high or rising exponentially. Thanks to the hard work and sacrifices of the British people in this lockdown, we have helped to bring the R level down and we are now in a position to begin moving to Level 3, in steps.

And we have set out the first of three steps we will take to carefully modify the measures, gradually ease the lockdown, and begin to allow people to return to their way of life – but crucially while avoiding what would be a disastrous second peak that overwhelms the NHS.

After each step we will closely monitor the impact of that step on the R and the number of infections, and all the available data, and we will only take the next step when we are satisfied that it is safe to do so.

Step 1 – from this week:

- Those who cannot work from home should now speak to their employer about going back to work.
- You can now spend time outdoors and exercise as often as you like.
- You can meet one person outside of your household outside (outdoors), provided you stay 2 metres apart. The social distancing measures remain absolutely crucial to us keeping the infection rate and the number of cases down as low as we possibly can.

Step 2 – from June 1, at the earliest, as long as the data allows, we aim to allow:

- Primary schools to reopen for some pupils, in smaller class sizes;
- Non-essential retail to start to reopen, when and where it is safe to do so;
- Cultural and sporting events to take place behind closed doors, without crowds.

And then Step 3 – no earlier than July 4, and again, only if the data says it safe, we aim to allow:

More businesses and premises to open, including potentially those offering personal care such as leisure facilities, public places, and places of worship. Many of these businesses will need to operate in new ways to ensure they are safe, and we will work with these sectors on how to do this.

So, given we have taken the first step in carefully adjusting some of the measures today, and therefore our advice to people on what to do, we have also updated our messaging. We are now asking people to Stay Alert, Control the Virus and Save Lives.

Yes – staying alert, for the vast majority of people, still means staying at home as much as possible. But there are a range of other actions we're advising people to take as we modify measures.

People should Stay Alert, by:

- working from home if you can;
- limiting contact with other people;
- keeping distance if you go out – 2 metres apart where possible;
- washing your hands regularly;
- wearing a face covering when you are in enclosed spaces where it's difficult to be socially distant – for example in some shops and on public transport;
- and if you or anyone in your household has symptoms, you all need to self-isolate.

Because if everyone stays alert and follows the rules, we can control coronavirus by keeping the R down and reducing the number of infections. This is how we can continue to save lives, and livelihoods, as we begin as a nation to recover from coronavirus.