

Report 14/2020: Passenger train collision with a derailed locomotive at Bromsgrove

Press release

RAIB has today released its report into the passenger train collision with a derailed locomotive at Bromsgrove, 23 March 2020.



The locomotive involved after the accident (image taken looking south, ie towards the direction from which the passenger train approached on the adjacent main line)

Summary

At about 22:44 hrs on Monday 23 March 2020, the 21:05 Cardiff Central to Birmingham New Street service collided with a class 66 locomotive that had derailed at the end of a siding, south of Bromsgrove station. The passenger train suffered significant damage along one side of all three vehicles, although it did not derail. There were four passengers and two crew on board the passenger train and none reported any injuries.

The locomotive had just arrived in the siding and was to act as a 'banking' locomotive, assisting heavy freight trains up the 1 in 37 Lickey incline, to the north of Bromsgrove station. It derailed after running through the buffer stop at the end of the siding and came to rest fouling the main line. The driver of the locomotive was not injured in the collision, although the locomotive suffered damage to the corner of the leading cab.

The driver did not stop the locomotive before it reached the buffer stop because he became distracted from the driving task by personal issues arising from the national COVID-19 lockdown announced earlier that evening.

The collision occurred because there was insufficient time between the locomotive derailment and the passenger train's arrival for the alarm to be raised and the passenger train to be stopped.

Recommendations

RAIB has made one recommendation to Network Rail to review its processes and standards for managing buffer stop collision risk on non-platform terminal tracks.

RAIB has also identified three learning points for drivers, relating to compliance with mobile phone policies in the driving cab, informing signallers of accidents and safe exit from trains during an incident.

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 07814 812293.

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Companies House issue 'don't leave it until the last minute' advice to businesses

Press release

Company directors and accountants urged to file earlier than usual and online.



Companies across the UK are being urged not to leave filing their annual accounts until the last minute and consider going paperless, as the disruption caused by coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to affect people's lives, businesses and the economy.

Companies House's [online filing service](#) – which is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – can take as little as 15 minutes and has inbuilt checks to help directors avoid mistakes. Accounts filed on paper are 6 times more likely to be rejected than accounts submitted electronically (7.5% compared to just 1.2% respectively).

Paper accounts submitted too close to the 31 December 2020 deadline, which are then rejected, risk not having enough time to be corrected, re-submitted and manually checked. This type of late accounts will incur an automatic late filing penalty; however, if the late delivery of accounts was directly caused by the coronavirus outbreak, we will treat penalty appeals sympathetically.

In line with government guidance and restrictions surrounding coronavirus, there is currently a reduced number of staff working at Companies House offices. The processing of accounts filed on paper for the 2019/20 financial year is, as a result, expected to take significantly longer this year.

Companies House Chief Executive Louise Smyth says:

By asking companies to submit their accounts early and preferably online, we are trying to ensure that they experience peace of mind during the busy end of year filing period.

In common with so many organisations in these unprecedented times, we currently have a reduced number of people in our offices due to the ongoing coronavirus crisis and the government guidance and restrictions surrounding the pandemic.

As a consequence of that, it's going to take longer than it normally would to process accounts that are filed on paper, which need to be manually checked.

We want to do all we can to help companies during the pandemic, as well as ensuring the safety and wellbeing of everyone who works for Companies House. It's a delicate balance, but one we are determined to get right.

Companies can also use [third party software](#) to file their accounts electronically.

- Companies House is an Executive Agency of the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).
- Companies House is the register of limited companies in the UK. It incorporates and dissolves limited companies, registers the information companies are legally required to supply, and makes that information available to the public.
- There are over 4.5 million companies registered in the UK. Over 500,000 companies are registered each year.
- On 25 June 2020, the Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act 2020 received royal assent and introduced measures to reduce the burden on businesses during the coronavirus outbreak. The vast majority of companies received a 3-month extension to their accounts filing deadline.

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Sir John Manzoni announced as Chair Designate for AWE plc NDPB Board

Press release

Following the announcement that the Atomic Weapons Establishment plc will become an Arms-Length Body of the MOD, the Department has decided to appoint Sir John Manzoni as Chair Designate.



Sir John Manzoni has been appointed Chair Designate for AWE plc NDPB Board.

The existing AWE Management Limited (AWE ML) Board will hand over to John and the new Board of the Arms-Length Body following termination on June 30th 2021, the AWE ML Board will continue to lead AWE until that date. While John

will be formally appointed as Chair of the Board on 1st July 2021, he will be supporting the MOD in appointing the new Board during the transition period.

John's extensive regulatory, public and private sector and leadership experience make him well placed to take on this appointment.

The MOD would like to thank the AWE ML Chair, Ian Tyler, for his years of service towards maintaining the UK's nuclear deterrent and his continued commitment to stewarding the organisation through this crucial transition period.

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E3 statement on Iran to the IAEA Board of Governors, November 2020

Thank you Chair,

France, Germany, and the United Kingdom would like to thank the Director General for his latest report (GOV/2020/51) and the Deputy Director General for his Technical Briefing. We commend the Agency for its timely, independent and objective reporting.

As participants to the JCPOA, we reiterate our continued commitment to the preservation and full implementation of the nuclear agreement. We E3 have worked hard to preserve the agreement. We have been consistently clear that we regret the US withdrawal from the JCPOA and re-imposition of US sanctions. We have lifted sanctions as foreseen by the JCPOA and taken additional efforts to allow Iran to pursue legitimate trade, by developing the financial mechanism INSTEX.

However, despite these good faith efforts, Iran has engaged, for a year and a half now, in numerous, serious violations of its nuclear commitments. We continue to be extremely concerned by Iran's actions, which are hollowing out the core nonproliferation benefits of the deal. Advancements on Research & Development have irreversible consequences.

We are concerned at Iran enriching uranium above the 3.67% JCPOA limit, and the continued growth of its low-enriched uranium stockpile, which is now 2443 kg. This is a dozen times the JCPOA limit. Contrary to the JCPOA, Iran is using advanced centrifuges for the production of low-enriched uranium (LEU). Contrary to the JCPOA, Iran is also enriching at Fordow: this facility has no credible civilian use.

Iran also continues to conduct research and development on several types of

advanced centrifuges not permitted under the JCPOA and the JCPOA's R&D Plan. This includes the operation of hundreds of IR-2m, IR-4 and IR-6 centrifuges. Iran has also introduced new types of centrifuges not authorized under the JCPOA. Iran must cease undertaking any research and development of advanced centrifuges contrary to the provisions of the JCPOA.

On top of this, Iran has announced that it intends to install advanced centrifuges at the Fuel Enrichment Plant at Natanz. The IAEA report confirms this process has already started: one full cascade of IR2m centrifuges is now installed at the FEP, as well as some IR4 centrifuges. The report also indicates that these cascades will continue to accumulate uranium. The IAEA reported on 17 November that the process of feeding the IR2m cascade with UF6 has now been initiated.

The JCPOA is clear that all centrifuge research and development should be undertaken at the PFP. The JCPOA is also clear that only IR-1 centrifuges may be installed at the FEP for enrichment purposes and that their number is limited to no more than 5060. Iran's latest decision to change the location of its research and development activities, which are already being conducted in ways that are inconsistent with the JCPOA, as well as increasing the overall number of centrifuges installed at the FEP, is a matter of deep concern. It makes it easier for Iran to expand its activities with advanced centrifuges in the future should it decide to do so. The FEP has space for thousands of additional centrifuges, therefore moving advanced centrifuges to a larger space raises serious concerns about Iranian intent. We urge Iran not to proceed with the installation of advanced centrifuges at the Fuel Enrichment Plant, and its plans to move its R&D facility to the FEP. These activities constitute a further violation of the JCPOA and send an unacceptable signal to the broader international community that has rallied in support of preserving the JCPOA.

It is now critical that Iran immediately reverses its steps and returns to full compliance with the JCPOA without further delay. We remain committed to working with all JCPOA participants to find a diplomatic way forward and we intend to pursue these discussions within the framework of the JCPOA.

Chair,

We commend the Agency for its continued and intense efforts to engage Iran in a substantial dialogue to evaluate Iran's declarations under its Additional Protocol.

We take note of Iran's implementation of its legal obligations under the Additional Protocol to its Safeguards Agreement by providing the IAEA with complementary access to sites and locations in Iran, including access to two locations which were the subject of this Board's attention recently. We expect Iran to fully cooperate with the IAEA in accordance with its nuclear obligations, including by answering all questions that the Agency may have in the coming months once the proper evaluation of the samples taken at these undeclared locations is completed.

Paragraphs 33-35 of the Director General's report clearly state that Iran's

responses to questions on the presence of uranium particles of anthropogenic origin detected at an undeclared site, which were provided by Iran after very significant delays, were 'not technically credible'. These delays and unsatisfactory responses are unacceptable. We welcome the DG's clear reporting on this matter and his efforts to follow up the issue with Iran.

In June, this Board, in a Resolution adopted by a large majority, called on Iran to comply with its safeguards obligations and to cooperate fully and without delay with the Agency. We recall Iran's legally binding safeguards obligations. In order to alleviate concerns over possible undeclared and unaccounted for nuclear material and activities, it is of critical importance that Iran should promptly provide a full and accurate explanation to the Agency on this issue, as well as on other safeguards-related issues being currently investigated by the Agency. We would welcome further updates, as appropriate, to the next Board of Governors, as the investigation progresses.

We once again thank the IAEA for its latest quarterly report on Iran and express our full confidence in its capacity to engage its mandate in a rigorous and impartial manner.

We call on the Agency to continue to provide further detailed technical updates, as appropriate, and would welcome a decision to make its latest quarterly report public.

Thank you.

CMA fines ComparetheMarket £17.9m for competition law breach

Press release

The CMA has fined ComparetheMarket £17.9 million after it found that clauses used in the company's contracts with home insurers breached competition law.



An investigation by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has concluded that, between December 2015 and December 2017, the price comparison website ComparetheMarket breached competition law by imposing wide 'most favoured nation' clauses on providers of home insurance selling through its platform.

These clauses prohibited the home insurers from offering lower prices on other comparison websites and protected ComparetheMarket from being undercut elsewhere. They also made it harder for ComparetheMarket's rivals to expand and challenge the company's already strong market position as other price comparison websites were restricted from beating it on price.

As a result, competition between price comparison websites, and between home insurers selling through these platforms, was restricted. The CMA found that this is likely to have resulted in higher insurance premiums.

ComparetheMarket's clauses meant:

- The insurers bound by the contracts were prohibited from offering cheaper deals on other price comparison websites. In turn, this limited competitive pressures on all home insurers competing on price comparison websites.
- Rival comparison sites were restricted in gaining a price advantage over ComparetheMarket, for example, by lowering their commission fees to encourage those insurers to quote lower prices on their platforms.
- The competitive pressures ComparetheMarket itself was subject to were weakened. Without the clauses, it would have had to compete harder to get lower prices from the home insurers, for example by reducing the commission fees it charged.

Michael Grenfell, the CMA's Executive Director for Enforcement, said:

Price comparison websites are excellent for consumers. They promote competition between providers, offer choice for customers, and make it easier for consumers to find the best bargains.

It is therefore unacceptable that ComparetheMarket, which has been the largest price comparison site for home insurance for several years, used clauses in its contracts that restricted home insurers from offering bigger discounts on competing websites – so limiting the bargains potentially available to consumers.

Digital markets can yield great benefits for competition, and therefore for consumers. We are determined to secure those benefits, and to ensure that competition is not illegitimately restricted. Today's action should come as a warning – when we find evidence that the law has been broken, we will not hesitate to step in and protect consumers.

Further information on this investigation can be found on the [case page](#).

Notes to editors:

1. The CMA has addressed the decision to BGL (Holdings) Limited, BGL Group Limited, BISL Limited and Compare the Market Limited as the legal entities constituting the undertaking referred to as 'BGL', and to which the CMA has attributed joint and several liability for the infringements. BGL is the undertaking that operates the ComparetheMarket price comparison website business.
2. The total financial penalty issued by the CMA on BGL for the infringements is £17,910,062.
3. The term 'insurers' in this case covers providers of home insurance, including underwriters, brokers and retail partners. Home insurance providers, and price comparison websites that enable consumers to compare financial products like home insurance, are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.
4. This investigation follows on from the CMA's market study into digital comparison tools. Further information on that study can be found on the [price comparison website page](#).
5. On 30 November 2017, two months after the launch of the CMA's investigation, ComparetheMarket contacted the insurers to inform them it would no longer be enforcing the 'wide most favoured nation' clauses.
6. The Chapter I prohibition in the Competition Act 1998 prohibits agreements and concerted practices between businesses which have as their object or effect the prevention, restriction or distortion of competition within the UK. Article 101(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) covers equivalent anti-competitive agreements and concerted practices which may affect trade between EU member states.
7. Any business found to have infringed these prohibitions can be fined up to 10% of its annual worldwide group turnover, taking into account a range of factors including the seriousness of the infringement and any mitigating or aggravating factors.
8. Media queries should be directed to press@cma.gov.uk, or 020 3738 6460

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