

Freight train derailment at London Gateway

News story

Investigation into the derailment of a freight train approaching London Gateway, Essex, 24 December 2021.



The train following the derailment (image courtesy of Network Rail)

At about 05:45 hrs on 24 December 2021, the 22:35 GB Railfreight operated freight service from Hams Hall (near Birmingham) to London Gateway derailed on the down Thames Haven line while on the approach to London Gateway port, near to Stanford-le-Hope in Essex.

The freight train involved was formed of a class 66 locomotive and 33 wagons, all of which were of the 'container flat' type. The initial derailment occurred on Network Rail managed infrastructure, when the leading bogie of the 12th wagon derailed on plain line at about 13 mph (20 km/h). The train continued travelling for around 500 metres after this initial derailment, before it reached a set of facing points within the port boundary, when a further four wagons derailed.

The wagon involved in the initial derailment was the middle wagon of an Ecofret2 set. This comprised of three wagons semi-permanently connected to each other by steel draw bars. The wagon involved in the initial derailment was the only one in the train not loaded with a container.

There were no injuries caused by the derailment, but extensive damage was caused to track and signalling equipment inside the port boundary. The rail connection to the port remained closed until temporary repairs allowed it to reopen on 4 January 2022.

Our investigation will seek to identify the sequence of events which led to the accident. It will include consideration of the status of the track conditions, the loading of the wagons, wagon characteristics, the way in which the train was driven and any underlying management factors.

Our investigation is independent of any investigation by the railway industry or by the industry's regulator, the [Office of Rail and Road](#).

We will publish our findings, including any recommendations to improve safety, at the conclusion of our investigation. This report will be available on our website.

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