

Loss of brake control on a passenger train approaching Edinburgh Waverley

At about 07:26 hrs on Thursday 1 August 2019, train 1B26, the Edinburgh portion of the 23:36 hrs 'Lowland Sleeper' service from London Euston, failed to stop as scheduled at Edinburgh Waverley station. It was brought to a stand approximately 650 metres beyond its intended stopping point. There was no damage or any injuries as a consequence of the incident. However, the outcome could potentially have been much worse, had it led to a collision with another train.

The train comprised eight Mark 5 coaches hauled by a Class 92 electric locomotive that had been attached at Carstairs. On the approach to Edinburgh the driver discovered that his train's braking performance was well below normal. The RAIB's preliminary investigation indicates that he had no control of the brakes on the coaches because a brake pipe isolating valve was in the closed position when the train left Carstairs station. This meant that the only effective brakes on the train as it approached Edinburgh were those on the locomotive, which were insufficient to maintain control of the train. The train was brought to a stand by the operation of an emergency device in one of the coaches by the Train Manager, which caused the train brakes to apply.

The RAIB's investigation will identify the sequence of events that led to the incident and will include consideration of:

- how the isolating valve came to be closed at Carstairs;
- the preparation of the train at Carstairs, including the attachment of the locomotive and testing of the train's brakes;
- how the train was driven;
- the suitability of relevant procedures and working practices;
- the design and approval of the brake system fitted to the Mark 5 coaches; and
- any relevant underlying management or organisational factors.

The train operator issued a safety alert to the industry on 5 August 2019 (NIR 3350/224) reminding railway staff of the importance of carrying out the brake continuity test after all other train preparation activities.

Our investigation is independent of any investigation by the railway industry, 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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