

News story: Collision between road-rail vehicles near Cholmondeston

On Wednesday 19 September 2018, a road-rail ballast distributor collided with a road-rail personnel carrier near Cholmondeston, on the line between Crewe and Chester.

The ballast distributor included a hopper fed conveyor system that is used to distribute ballast onto the track. It was equipped with both rubber wheels for road running and steel rail wheels for operation on the railway. That night, it was intended to be used to distribute fresh ballast onto a section of track which was under possession (temporarily closed to normal train services).

The personnel carrier vehicle was an off-road utility vehicle that had been converted for use on and off the railway. It was fitted with tip-up seats at the back to allow the transport of personnel and/or materials. That night, it was transporting personnel involved in track repairs within the possession.

The ballast distributor vehicle had on-tracked at Calveley road-rail access point, which provides a flat surface allowing road-rail vehicles to be manoeuvred on to the track. It then started travelling, with the conveyor belt end leading, towards the location where ballast was required, approximately 3.5 miles (5.6 km) away.

Just before 02:35 hrs the conveyor belt end of the ballast regulator collided with the rear of the personnel carrier, which had been stationary prior to the collision.

Two trackworkers who were on the personnel carrier were injured, one of them sustaining serious leg and back injuries. The other staff on the personnel carrier and the ballast regulator were uninjured.

The RAIB's investigation will identify the sequence of events that led to the collision and consider:

- the factors influencing the actions of those involved in the operation of the vehicles on the night
- the condition and maintenance history of the vehicles
- the standards and design approval processes that were applied to the vehicles
- any relevant 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 safety recommendations, at the conclusion of our investigation; these will be available on our RAIB website.

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