

[Press release: Report 03/2019: Train dispatch accident at Elstree & Borehamwood station](#)

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Summary

At around 14:03 hrs on 7 September 2018, a passenger and her dog were involved in a train dispatch accident at Elstree and Borehamwood station. The dog's lead became trapped in the closed doors of a departing train, dragging the dog off the platform and leading to its death. The passenger was not injured but was very distressed.

The accident happened because the train driver did not observe the passenger in close proximity to the train, both before he decided to close the train doors and before he decided it was safe to depart from the station. An on-train CCTV system is provided to allow the driver to monitor the side of the train and the adjacent platform edge during the dispatch process.

The design of the door obstacle-detection system was such that a thin object, such as the dog's lead, could not be detected. As a result, the train was able to depart with the dog's lead trapped in the closed door.

Recommendations

As a result of this investigation, the RAIB has made two recommendations. The first is made to Govia Thameslink Railway. It relates to the development of suitable guidance to drivers on the time needed to safely observe the platform-train interface before and after closing the train doors, and enhancing its driver management processes by routinely monitoring the safety of train dispatch. The second recommendation is made to the Rail Delivery Group, in consultation with RSSB and train operators. It relates to investigating technologies to better assist train dispatch staff to detect people or items which may become trapped in train doors.

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.

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