

[Press release: Report 17/2018: Extensive track damage between Ferryside and Llangennech](#)

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Summary

On 30 October 2017, train 6B13, which was carrying oil-based products from Robeston oil terminal, Milford Haven, to Westerleigh oil terminal, Bristol, caused extensive damage to railway infrastructure over approximately 25 miles (40 km). After the train had been stopped, at the entrance to Llangyfelach Tunnel near Swansea, the driver found that there had been a catastrophic failure of the braking system on one of the fully laden wagons.

The investigation found that one of the wheelsets on the damaged wagon had locked up and slid, causing severe wheel flats, before starting to rotate again. Impacts from the wheel flats subsequently damaged the rails as well as equipment mounted on the bogie, some of which partially detached and was dragged under the train, causing damage to track-mounted equipment. The wheelset had locked up and then started rotating again because an object became caught between one of the wheels and the adjacent brake block holder. This was most likely to have been one of the brake blocks, which had fallen off the wagon during the journey of train 6B13, probably due to the omission of key components when the brake blocks were replaced on 27 October.

Recommendations

The RAIB has made one recommendation to Touax Rail and other affected parties regarding a risk assessment of the facilities and processes used for maintaining wagons operating out of Robeston terminal. The RAIB has also identified three learning points about checking the security of brake blocks before permitting a vehicle to re-enter traffic, the application of general signalling regulation 19, and signallers and control staff being aware of the potential consequences of an incident involving a train carrying dangerous goods.

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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