

[Press release: Highways England awards design contract to shape North West roads](#)

The Design Services contract for motorways and major A roads in Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Cheshire and South Lancashire is worth £49.7 million, will run for up to 5 years and has been awarded to Amey Consulting as part of Highways England's Asset Delivery operating model.

The contract, which starts in April 2019, will see Amey Consulting carrying out the designs of structures, drains, barriers, signs, landscaping, lighting, traffic signals and other features across the North West's 260 miles of motorway and 50 miles of major A road.

Highways England's Executive Director of Operations, Nick Harris, said:

This contract will enable Highways England to deliver schemes which will improve both journeys for our customer and the condition of the road network. We are delighted to award this contract to Amey Consulting and look forward to establishing a successful, long-term relationship with them.

Amey's Chief Executive Andy Milner, said:

Collaboration is at the core of Amey Consulting's approach, and working closely with Highways England and the Asset Delivery Community, we look forward to delivering long-lasting benefits for the communities of the North West.

The Design Services contract is the second of the Asset Delivery suite of contracts to be awarded in the Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Cheshire and South Lancashire area. In October Amey were awarded the £325 million Asset Delivery Maintenance and Response contract which will run for up to 15 years. The Construction Works Framework is due to be awarded in the coming months.

Highways England will be working with all the successful contractors to ensure that they are ready to begin delivering key services from April 2019.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

[Press release: Report 18/2018: Runaway hand trolley at Ramsbottom](#)

RAIB has today released its report into a runaway hand trolley at Ramsbottom, East Lancashire Railway, on 15 March 2018.

[Press release: Report 18/2018: Runaway hand trolley at Ramsbottom](#)



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PDF, 5.11MB, 27 pages

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Summary

At around 11:15 hrs on Thursday 15 March 2018 a hand trolley, loaded with approximately 0.5 tonnes of ballast, ran away from a group of track workers near to Ramsbottom station on the East Lancashire Railway. The trolley derailed when it struck a wooden level crossing gate. The gate was pushed into a road which was open to road traffic.

There were no injuries, although the level crossing gate was damaged.

The immediate cause of the runaway was that the trolley was not fitted with any brakes and was deployed on a gradient without the introduction of any mitigation or safeguard against it running away.

The unbraked trolley was almost certainly available for use because it had been donated to the East Lancashire Railway, which did not have any processes in place to manage donations, and no controls in place for use of trolleys during track maintenance. Additionally, there were no constraints on the use of such trolleys on the railway, nor any competence and training requirements for their operators.

There was no assessment of the risks of using the trolley, either generically or for the specific task on the day, and there was no formal training or briefing of the operators on the day.

The underlying factors were inadequate management systems in the Permanent Way department and, probably, a lack of Safety Management System compliance audits.

Recommendations

The RAIB has made three recommendations as a result of this investigation. The first is made to the Heritage Railway Association and relates to it issuing guidance to its members on limiting the use of trolleys not fitted with fail-safe brakes, and fully assessing the risks where they are to be used. The other two are made to East Lancashire Railway; the first relates to the provision of suitable working procedures in the Permanent Way department, and the other to the implementation of an effective audit process.

The RAIB has also identified three learning points. These relate to the importance of undertaking planned audit and compliance activities; being clear about how vehicles and trolleys are to be controlled before they are deployed; and considering the safety risks associated with assets that are acquired through donations.

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.

Newsdate: 12 November 2018

Press release: Alun Cairns calls on Welsh schools to sign up to new UK aid backed programme to connect schools with African, Asian and Middle Eastern classrooms

Welsh Secretary Alun Cairns will visit Heronsbridge School in Bridgend later today (Monday 12 November) to encourage more schools in Wales to sign up to the UK aid backed [Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning programme](#), which launched in England in September.

The scheme, which is co-funded by The Department for International Development (DFID) and the British Council, unites pupils in the UK with school children around the world to build friendships and increase awareness and understanding of global issues.

The programme aims to connect more than three million primary and secondary school pupils in the UK with schools in countries across Africa, Asia and the Middle East. It will also train 60,000 teachers and school leaders in the UK and developing countries to equip pupils with the knowledge and skills to live and work in a global economy.

Heronsbridge is one of a growing number of Welsh schools already taking part in the programme, and has existing links to schools in Tanzania where teachers and pupils regularly take part in exchanges and share work on topics including culture, rights and responsibilities and the environment.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:

The UK Government Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning programme is a valuable way for children here in Wales to gain a broader view of the world at an early age, learning more about the issues affecting countries in all corners of the globe. It is also an opportunity for schools around the world to benefit from the support and knowledge of British teachers.

I urge primary schools and secondary schools across Wales to sign

up to take part in such a meaningful scheme operating in a vast global network.

The Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning programme is part of an initiative that introduces the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals to students and teachers in the UK and around the world. The Goals are designed to deliver a more sustainable future for all and include tackling hunger, providing clean water and affordable clean energy. Research has shown that 'school linking' can increase the quality of teaching and learning in the schools involved, improving both pupil engagement and teacher motivation.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said:

The Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning programme is a win for the UK and a win for the developing world.

The programme will build deep and meaningful partnerships between schools and communities in the UK and countries all over the world.

I have already heard heart-warming stories of how children taking part have come to realise just how much they have in common, and how much they have learned from each other, building lasting friendships.

Director of British Council Wales, Jenny Scott, said:

Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning provides young people with an opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to thrive in an increasingly global society. The partnership between Heronsbridge School and schools in Africa shows the huge impact these connections can have on pupils, teachers and the local community. We hope schools across Wales will sign up to take part.

[Press release: Foreign Secretary travels to the Gulf to push for end to Yemen bloodshed](#)

In the Gulf he will meet King Salman of Saudi Arabia, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman of Saudi Arabia, Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan

of Abu Dhabi, Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir, United Arab Emirates Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Yemeni Vice President Ali Mohsen and Yemeni Foreign Minister Khaled Al Yamani. The Foreign Secretary is seeking to build support among international, and particularly regional, partners for new action in the UN Security Council to bolster the UN-led peace process, following his meeting with UN Special Envoy for Yemen Martin Griffiths at the end of October.

The Foreign Secretary will be the first UK Minister to visit Saudi Arabia since the murder of Jamal Khashoggi one month ago. He will use his meetings to make clear the importance of Saudi Arabia cooperating with Turkey to conduct a full and credible investigation into Mr Khashoggi's death. This will build on talks that the Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Simon McDonald, also had this weekend in Saudi Arabia with King Salman of Saudi Arabia and Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir.

While in the UAE the Foreign Secretary will also raise the ongoing consular case of Matthew Hedges.

Speaking ahead of his visit Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt said:

The human cost of war in Yemen is incalculable: with millions displaced, famine and disease rife and years of bloodshed, the only solution is now a political decision to set aside arms and pursue peace. Britain has a unique position, both as pen-holder at the UN Security Council and as a key influencer in the region, so today I am travelling to the Gulf to demand that all sides commit to this process.

We are witnessing a man-made humanitarian catastrophe on our watch: now is the window to make a difference, and to get behind both the UN peace process and current UK efforts in the Security Council.

In addition, he will call on the Saudi authorities to do more to deliver justice and accountability for the Khashoggi family:

The international community remain united in horror and outrage at the brutal murder of Jamal Khashoggi one month ago. It is clearly unacceptable that the full circumstances behind his murder still remain unclear. We encourage the Saudi authorities to co-operate fully with the Turkish investigation into his death, so that we deliver justice for his family and the watching world.

Further information

- Follow the Foreign Secretary on Twitter [@Jeremy_Hunt](#) and [Facebook](#)

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- Follow the Foreign Office on [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#)

Media enquiries

For journalists

Email

newsdesk@fco.gov.uk

Newsdesk

020 7008 3100