

Report 09/2019: Fatal collision between a tram and a pedestrian, near Saughton tram stop, Edinburgh

Summary

At 12:10 hrs on Tuesday 11 September 2018, a pedestrian who was using a footpath crossing near the Saughton tram stop, was struck and fatally injured by a tram travelling at 53 km/h (33 mph) from Edinburgh city centre towards Edinburgh airport.

The pedestrian was seemingly unaware that the tram was approaching when he walked onto the crossing. The evidence indicates that from the point where he would have had a clear view of the approaching tram, he was not looking out for trams. He may have looked earlier, but would not have had a clear view of approaching trams from the footpath.

Explanation of RAIB's findings and recommendations

The investigation found that although the tram driver had used the tram's bell to sound repeated warnings on the approach to the crossing, this audible warning was not sufficiently loud for it to be heard and acted upon by the pedestrian until it was too late.

The RAIB found that the tram's audible warning devices were not sufficiently loud to provide an effective warning to pedestrians under many operational circumstances. It also found that Edinburgh Trams Limited did not have a process in place for regularly reviewing the risks at its off-street pedestrian crossings.

Recommendations

The RAIB has made four recommendations. One of the recommendations is for Edinburgh Trams Limited to improve the audibility of its trams' warning devices. Another recommendation is for it to identify the risk factors associated with its off-street pedestrian crossings and to develop a process for regularly reviewing the risk control measures. Two further recommendations are made to the Light Rail Safety and Standards Board (LRSSB). One is to improve the current guidance on the audibility of tram warning devices and another is to improve the guidance on the design and layout of tram footpath crossings. The report also identifies a learning point concerning the importance of maintaining records relating to risks that have been identified during project safety assurance processes, and requesting appropriate technical expertise where necessary.

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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