

Runaway of a mobile elevated work platform from Belle Isle junction

News story

Investigation into a runaway of a mobile elevated work platform from Belle Isle junction, north London, 16 May 2021



The mobile elevated work platform involved in the incident.

At around 03:40 hrs on 16 May 2021, a mobile elevated work platform (MEWP) ran away while being on-tracked at a road-rail access point (RRAP) near Belle Isle junction, north London. The MEWP was due to be used within an overnight possession of the track between Belle Isle junction and Canal Tunnel junction. The machine operator onboard the MEWP was unable to stop the vehicle and jumped from it as it was running away.

The MEWP ran away on a descending gradient (posted as 1 in 28) and travelled along the Up Canal Tunnel line towards St Pancras station. It subsequently came to a stop within a tunnel, with the total distance of the run-away being approximately 700 metres. No one was injured during the incident and no damage was caused to the vehicle or the infrastructure of the railway.

RAIB's preliminary examination found that a hydraulic valve on the MEWP's direct rail wheel braking system was not correctly set for operational use and that this was likely to have been the cause of the MEWP not being braked when it was on-tracked. RAIB also found that a similar occurrence on a different type of MEWP had been reported via a National Incident Report (NIR) in 2016.

Our investigation will consider the sequence of events that lead to the incident. It will also consider:

- the configuration of the RRV's braking system at the time of the accident
- recent maintenance activities undertaken on the machine and the arrangements used to confirm the effectiveness of braking systems

following maintenance

- the methods used to ensure that the machine had effective braking performance when in operational service
- the arrangements for reporting technical issues relating to road-rail vehicles
- any relevant underlying 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 recommendations to improve safety, at the conclusion of our investigation. This report will be available on our website.

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