

## [AAIB report: Agusta Westland AW189, loss of visual references](#)

The helicopter was tasked to rescue three climbers on the mountain at night. The crew made several attempts to reach them from different directions, but due to low cloud were unable to do so. On the fourth attempt, from another direction, the visual references seen through each pilot's night vision system were lost and a turn back down the re-entrant was attempted.

Due to the proximity of the ground, the pilot climbed the helicopter but lost airspeed after which the helicopter yawed to the right. The pilot flying attempted to use the autopilot system upper modes to assist him but decoupled them because they caused the collective control lever to lower. The helicopter spot-turned through 370 degrees before it cleared the top of the cloud. Control was regained and the aircraft subsequently landed. The climbers were recovered on foot by the mountain rescue team.

Shortly after the incident, the operator introduced a scenario-based training exercise for all pilots that reproduced the incident during six-monthly recurrent training and testing. The training was continued with an emphasis on unusual attitude recovery.

[Read the report.](#)

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## [Report 11/2019: Serious operational irregularity at Bagillt user worked crossing](#)

### **Summary**

At around 11:57 hrs on Friday 17 August 2018, a passenger train passed over Bagillt user worked level crossing, Flintshire, shortly after a very large road vehicle had crossed. Railway signals had not been set to stop trains from approaching the crossing. A person assisting the vehicle driver, who was walking back over the crossing to close the gates behind the vehicle, was alarmed to see the approaching train and ran off the crossing.

The vehicle driver's assistant had telephoned the signaller and obtained his permission before crossing the railway, but the signaller had not stopped trains approaching when a large vehicle needed to cross the railway, as required by the Rule Book. The user had not told the signaller that the vehicle was large, as required by a sign displayed at the crossing. The

signaller did not ask questions to establish the size of the vehicle, and did not know that most people using this crossing did so with heavy goods vehicles, although some Network Rail staff were aware of this. Network Rail was unaware that this exceptionally heavy vehicle, subject to special requirements when on public roads, used the crossing regularly.

Underlying factors relate to Network Rail's processes for risk management at this type of level crossing. These did not provide railway staff or road users with a coherent and consistent process for deciding when a vehicle should be treated as 'large', and did not provide an effective interface between signallers, crossing users and railway staff responsible for liaison with users and inspecting level crossings. An observation identifies further shortcomings in the information provided to signallers.

## **Recommendations**

The report contains one recommendation addressed to Network Rail, seeking improvements in its management processes for user worked crossings with telephones.

The report also contains two further observations. One, relating to how signallers decide when it is safe for users to cross the railway at level crossings, provides evidence supporting the need for Network Rail to complete implementation of a previous RAIB recommendation. The other notes poor application of safety critical communication protocols in some training material.

The RAIB has identified five learning points. Four relate to dealing with requests to cross the railway at user worked level crossings. These cover clear communication about the characteristics of road vehicles needing to cross the railway, the circumstances when signal protection is needed, making allowance for differing train speeds when deciding when it is safe for users to cross and achieving safety critical communication standards when speaking with members of the public. The final learning point relates to correct use of safety critical communication protocols in training material.

## **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: 15 August 2019**

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# CMA breaks up assistive communication technology merger

In its final report, published today, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) finds that the deal raises significant competition concerns in the supply of augmentative and assistive communication solutions, where Tobii and Smartbox are 2 of the UK's leading suppliers and compete closely.

The technologies supplied by Tobii and Smartbox help people with complex speech and language needs to communicate using specialised software and devices, such as joysticks, eye gaze cameras and speech-generating systems. These solutions are typically bought on behalf of those who need them by the NHS, charities and schools.

Following an in-depth Phase 2 investigation, a group of independent CMA panel members concluded that the loss of competition brought about by the deal could lead to reductions in the existing product range and quality, less new product development and higher prices.

The CMA has decided that the only effective way of addressing the loss of competition resulting from the merger is for Tobii to sell Smartbox to a new owner, which must be approved by the CMA.

Kip Meek, Chair of the independent inquiry group carrying out the investigation, said:

Competition plays a key role in driving improvements in product range and quality – making a real difference for the people who use these technologies to communicate. Competitive pricing also helps to make sure that public bodies aren't paying more than they should for these technologies.

Our investigation concluded that the loss in competition brought about by this deal could therefore have very serious effects – less choice, less product development and higher prices. Having carefully considered all options, we decided that only selling the entire Smartbox business would effectively address the concerns we found.

Further details are available on the [Tobii / Smartbox case page](#).

## **Notes to editors**

1. The CMA is the UK's primary competition and consumer authority. It is an independent non-ministerial government department with responsibility

for carrying out investigations into mergers, markets and the regulated industries and enforcing competition and consumer law. For CMA updates, follow us on Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

2. On 30 May 2019, the CMA [published its provisional findings and notice of possible remedies](#) and invited views.
3. The CMA's decisions in phase 2 merger inquiries are made by inquiry groups chosen from the CMA's independent panel members. The members of the inquiry group are: Kip Meek (Inquiry Chair), Susan Hankey, Ulrike Hotopp and Keith Richards. The CMA's panel members come from a variety of backgrounds, including economics, law, accountancy or business; the membership of an inquiry group usually reflects a mix of expertise and experience.

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## [Providing a foundation for change in Turkmenistan](#)

On 14 August, British Ambassador Thorda Abbott-Watt signed another MoU on a joint project, this time with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). This project, with support from the UK government, will see the first ever national survey on family life in Turkmenistan based on an internationally-recognised methodology. The project will support initiatives that the Turkmen government started some time ago.

MoU signing ceremony

The survey, which will provide base line statistics on domestic abuse, is just one of many projects that the UK government supports in Turkmenistan. The work of the British Embassy, together with a number of UN agencies in Turkmenistan, aims, in partnership with the Turkmen authorities, to make a lasting contribution towards shared development goals.

UNFPA will implement the project in partnership with government agencies led by the Institute of State, Law and Democracy

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## [How does your bank compare? Summer results published](#)

The latest survey results are available on the following links:

Personal and small business current account holders were asked how likely they would be to recommend their provider to a friend, relative or other business. Questions also covered online and mobile provisions, branch and overdraft services and for small businesses, the quality of the relationship management they receive.

This measure was introduced by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) after it conducted a market investigation into the retail banking sector in 2016. It aims to give people better quality information about their provider, the services on offer within the sector and therefore help them choose one most suited to their needs.

The results of the independent survey are displayed in a 'league table' style and, since its introduction in August 2018, providers have been required to prominently display them both in branch and on their websites and apps.

They clearly show customers how their provider ranks on quality of service and make it easier for people to compare offers. They also drive up competition between providers, resulting in a better overall experience for the account holder.

Adam Land, Senior Director at the CMA, said:

Current account holders and small businesses should consider voting with their feet and switching their bank or building society if they aren't getting a good service. These league tables help show what's out there for customers and hold the providers to account. There's nowhere for the worst performers to hide now.

We also welcome the expansion and reach of the survey with the addition of new participants from the personal banking sector in 2019 and 2020.

In addition, banks are required by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) to publish details of available services and relevant helplines, as well as figures on how long it takes to open current accounts and replace debit cards. Information about the number of major operational and security incidents they have experienced should also be provided on both banks' and the FCA website.

Christopher Woolard, Executive Director of Strategy and Competition, at the FCA, said:

It is now a year since we required firms to start publishing this data, providing people with the tools to work out how easily they can carry out day to day banking activities, as well as the reliability of the service they receive.

The figures provide a more established basis for consumers, small businesses and comparison services to compare current account

providers and find the right solution for their needs. The information published should increase the incentive for firms to offer better service, helping consumers to get the most out of their banking experience.

**Notes to editors:**

1. The CMA and FCA can't comment on the performance of individual banks. Journalists should speak to the individual banks for further explanation.