

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Dutch Safety Board has identified structural deficiencies in the management of risks during works on the track. The Board sees opportunities for the parties involved to take joint measures to eliminate these deficiencies in order to contribute to a safe working environment, the safe travel of rail users and a safe living environment near the tracks.

To this end, the Board is making the following recommendations¹:

To the State Secretary for Infrastructure and Water Management

1. Ensure that in the commissioning of ProRail as infrastructure manager, values other than availability of the network and track integrity, such as safe working and the safe passing of trains at worksites, are embedded. In addition, remove the barriers for ProRail to develop and implement innovations in the industry with regard to safe working on the railways, on the one hand, and on the other, to create a facility for recording, analysing and sharing information on accidents and near misses (see recommendation 2).

To ProRail

2. Set up a facility where information on rail accidents and near misses is recorded and put to use. Require all rail stakeholders, including railway companies, to submit their incidents. Target in this facility the broad safety domain, i.e. including occupational safety and railway safety. Ensure that all relevant parties jointly learn from accidents and near misses and share lessons with each other.
3. Use the facility to be established (see recommendation 2) to improve safety based on risk analysis. Maintain control over the safety of works and rail traffic in all phases of maintenance work, from strategy and innovation to implementation. In particular use industry professionalism in addition to imposing rules to make situational trade-offs.

¹ In accordance with the Dutch Safety Board's Order (*Besluit Onderzoeksraad voor Veiligheid*) all recommendations are also addressed to the Human Environment and Transport Inspectorate (ILT). ILT will assess the implementation of these recommendations by the relevant organisations and report back to the Board.

4. Promote the safety of railway workers. If you cannot take all tracks into possession, at least ensure the following:
 - a. a robust (physical) worksite shielding.
 - b. a work location that is safely accessible. Stop using island possessions and temporary crossing periods to worksites and road-rail access points.
 - c. a facility so that track workers can see on site whether or not tracks are in possession. To this end, introduce tools complementary to verbal communication.
 - d. record verbal safety communication to promote learning from accidents or near misses.

5. Reduce the negative health and safety consequences of night work and excessive working without increasing safety risks. Ensure that railAlert and maintenance contractors take measures to reduce the risks of night work. In doing so, ensure that when working on the track, the working hours of self-employed workers as a minimum comply with the Working Hours Act.