

Train overspeeding at Spital Junction, Peterborough, 17 April 2022

On publication of RAIB's report concerning a train overspeeding at Spital Junction, Peterborough, 17 April 2022, Andrew Hall, Chief Inspector of Rail Accidents said:

"The overspeeding incident at Spital junction in April 2022, led to a number of minor injuries. Some passengers were thrown from their seats and some hit by luggage falling from overhead racks. However, the outcome could have been much worse, as analysis showed the train was close to overturning. A similar event occurred at the same junction in May 2023, albeit a little slower and involving a train operated by a different train operating company.

"As designed, the signal protecting the junction cleared from red to green and displayed an indicator showing which way the junction was set as the train approached. The risk associated with a train then accelerating to an excessive speed over the associated diverging junction, when the driver has an expectation of taking a through route with a much higher permissible speed, had previously been illustrated when a light locomotive derailed in similar circumstances at Bletchley in February 2012. The risk associated with particular junctions and drivers, varies with infrastructure configuration and driver expectation.

"It is therefore absolutely necessary that Network Rail and train operating companies work together to mutually understand and sufficiently mitigate risks of this type at specific locations, accounting for the rolling stock and operations involved."