

Overspeed at Spital Junction, Peterborough, 4 May 2023

On publication of RAIB's report concerning an overspeed at Spital Junction, Peterborough, 4 May 2023, Andrew Hall, Chief Inspector of Rail Accidents said:

"An underlying factor behind this incident was that neither Network Rail nor the East Coast Main Line train operators effectively controlled the risk of overspeeding at Spital Junction both at the time the protecting signal's operation was changed in 2014 and following the previous incident in 2022.

"During the 2022 incident a train crossed the 30 mph limited junction at around 76 mph; a speed at which it is likely that some wheels lifted off the rails and close to a speed that could have caused the train to overturn. Thankfully a serious accident had been very narrowly avoided but thirteen months later, in this incident, the same junction was crossed at 66 mph in similar circumstances. This, once again, reinforces why learning from previous accidents and incidents and taking effective action in response to them is a vital means of improving safety and avoiding repeating mistakes of the past. The fact that the management of risks associated with an incident may be shared between more than one party does not alter this."