



Private and confidential

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19 July 2017

Dear Madam

Regulation 28 Report – Robert John Mullis (Decd.)

I refer to your report dated 23 May 2017 made under paragraph 7, Schedule 5 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and regulations 28 and 29 of the Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013 in relation to the inquest into the very sad death of Robert John Mullis, who died on 6 January 2017 after going onto the railway track adjacent to platforms 5 and 6 of Ashford domestic railway station.

Background

As noted in your report, the conclusion of the inquest was that Robert Mullis died on the evening of 6 January 2017 from injuries sustained when he was hit by a train after disembarking from a train on which he was travelling to London and wandering onto the railway track adjacent to platforms 5 and 6 of Ashford domestic railway station.

Ashford International Station is a busy railway station operated by London & South Eastern Railway Limited, trading as Southeastern, with trains which provide domestic and international rail services. The station itself has six platforms and there is a mixture of stopping and non-stopping services which pass through the station.

Platforms 5 and 6 are domestic platforms which, together with platforms 1 and 2, Network Rail leases to Southeastern Railway.

Southeastern is the station facility owner of the domestic station and holds the Safety Certificate as Infrastructure Manager for platforms 1, 2, 5 and 6. Eurostar International Ltd is similarly responsible for the international part of the station (which includes platforms 3 and 4).

Response to Points of Concern

In your report, you state that *"In my opinion action should be taken to prevent future deaths and I believe your organisation has the power to take such action. I make this report with the knowledge that Network Rail and South Eastern are addressing the issue of track access from platforms nationally with Ashford being addressed in Autumn 2017"*.

I confirm that Network Rail is planning to install platform-end fencing and anti-trespass panels (commonly referred to as 'witches' hats) on platform 1, 2, 5 and 6 (the domestic platforms) at Ashford International Station and that these works are due to be completed by the 31st July 2017. More specifically, we have now installed platform-end fencing (in the form shown in Annex 1 below and witches' hats in the form shown in Annex 2 at both ends of platforms 2, 5 and 6 and the London end of platform 1 at Ashford International Station. We will install equivalent fencing and witches' hats at the country end of platform 1 by the end of July 2017.

Network Rail, Train Operating Companies and the British Transport Police (BTP) continue to work together to manage this type of incident on the rail network. Platform-end fencing would be considered as one possible mitigation in instances where platforms ends are identified as a primary access point for repeat occurrences.

The platform-end fencing and witches' hats being installed at Ashford International Station are part of a wider program of mitigations that are being applied to a number of locations across the South East Route to address the risks associated with trespass and access to the rail network.

On a national basis, our approach is a risk-based one using data (including data shared by BTP) to identify trespass or access-to-the-line hot spots.

I hope this response provides you with assurance that the advised action is taking place. If I can be of further assistance, or if you would like further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Finally, on behalf of all at Network Rail, I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere condolences to the family of Mr Mullis.

Yours faithfully,



John Halsall

Route Managing Director

Annex 1 – Illustrations of Works: Platform-end Fencing



Annex 2 – Illustration of Works: Witches' Hats

