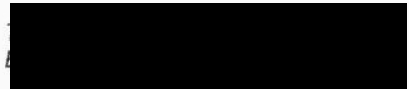




Geoffrey Sullivan
HM Senior Coroner for Hertfordshire
Area of Hertfordshire Coroner's Office
The Old Courthouse
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AL10 OES

Route Managing Director LNE&EM
Network Rail
Floor 4B
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YO1 6JT

15 November 2018



Dear Sir,

Regulation 28: Report to Prevent Future Deaths – Kevin Phillip Sherwood

I refer to your report dated 11th September 2018 made under paragraph 7, schedule 5, of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and regulations 28 and 29 of the Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013.

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

As you noted in your report Mr Sherwood died as the result of Severe Multiple Injuries sustained when he was struck by a train on the railway near Hitchin on 20th February 2018. The conclusion at the end of the inquest on 6th September 2018 was Suicide.

I detail below Network Rail's considered response to the matter of concern raised in your report.

Network Rail's Fencing Standard

In accordance with its legal obligations, Network Rail implements a mandatory fencing standard NR/L2/TRK/5100 Issue 2 (2008) - Management of Fencing and other Boundary Measures, which applies to all Network Rail controlled infrastructure (a copy of this document can be provided if required).

The purpose of the Fencing Standard is to specify the boundary management measures commensurate with assessed risks posed by the adjacent environment and the railway, and to incorporate a method of assessing these risks.

To comply with the standard, annual inspections are undertaken, noting and scoring against stipulated criteria:

- 1) Likelihood of unauthorized access (Risk score 1-4)
- 2) Consequence of unauthorized access (Risk score 1-4)
- 3) Condition of existing boundary (Rating score 0, 2 or 4)

Low scores = Low risk

The overall risk score is derived using the equation:

$$\text{Risk} = (\text{Likelihood} \times \text{Consequence}) + \text{Condition}$$

The overall risk score informs the boundary management measures that are appropriate for the given location.

Fencing in the Ickneild Way, Hitchin area

At the time of the incident the boundary measure in the Ickneild Way, Hitchin area had been assessed as 3 (Likelihood) x 3 (Consequence) + 0 (Condition) = 9 and, as such, deemed medium risk. The class 3 (1.4m high) boundary measure on both sides of the track was installed twelve years ago. The inspection prior to the incident on 15th February 2018 recorded the fence as 'good condition' and regarded as compliant to the Fencing Standard.

As a result of this incident, the site was re-assessed (in line with the Fencing Standard) and the likelihood score increased from 3 to 4 as there was now "recorded evidence of trespass or vandalism within the last twelve months". The consequence score was also increased from 3 to 4 as a result of the increase in numbers of trains through this section of railway. The revised score, therefore, became 4 (Likelihood) x 4 (Consequence) + 0 (Condition) = 16.

The mitigation for the increased risk score is a requirement to increase the frequency of inspection from annual to three monthly. The standard also requires that, at the point where the current fence becomes life expired, it will be replaced by a class 1 (1.8m high) fence. A fence line may be renewed prior to life expiry in some circumstances due to operational requirements or route enhancement projects (subject to funding).

Renewal of the fencing in the Ickneild Way, Hitchin area is currently scheduled for 2019/2020. In the meantime the fencing remains compliant with our Fencing Standard, and will continue to be monitored via three-monthly inspections.

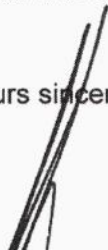
Further Suicide Prevention Work

Network Rail and the British Transport Police (BTP), together with Train Operating Companies, are working together to actively mitigate against suicidal intent along the line of route from Peterborough to Kings Cross and Bedford to St Pancras (which includes Hitchin), together known as the Thameslink route.

Specifically, Platform End Anti-trespass measures have been added to Hitchin Station to deter access on to the track. In addition to existing Mobile Operations staff who patrol the area, the Route has been supported by BTP Emergency Interventions Units and BTP Embedded Inspectors. Network Rail has also introduced a team of 'roving patrollers' whose focus is suicide prevention on this line of route and providing rapid response to incidents. We continue to work closely with industry partners to prevent loss of life in the Hitchin area as part of our strategy for the Thameslink route.

I hope this response answers your concerns but if I can be of further assistance, or if you would like further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping, slanted lines that form a stylized name.

**Route Managing Director LNE&EM
Network Rail**