

Richard

OFFICIAL

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9 July 2021

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**CONFIDENTIAL**

Dear Mr Pegg

#### **Regulation 28 report – Callum Rhys Evans**

I write in relation to the above Inquest heard on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2021 following the sad death of Callum Evans on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2020 at Hinton Admiral station. This was a tragic accident and our thoughts and deepest sympathies go out to Callum's family and friends.

The Regulation 28 report dated 20<sup>th</sup> May sets out your concern about the lack of signs at the station entrance or central part of the platform directly warning of the fatality risk if you touch the live rail.

Before specifically addressing this concern, I wish to assure you that Network Rail and the wider rail industry are constantly working hard to discourage and prevent people accessing the railway and to warn of the dangers this poses not just from the presence of live electrical equipment but also the trains themselves.

Working with industry partners including South Western Railway (SWR) and British Transport Police, and other organisations such as local authorities and schools, Network Rail's campaigns warn of the dangers and target people at risk and high-risk areas where we believe there is an increased risk that member/s of the public may try to access the railway.

These campaigns, across the Internet, broadcast, print and social media, have made significant reductions in the number of incidents and evidence demonstrates the campaigns make more people aware of the dangers of the railway.

There are also practical steps we can take, and our risk assessments identify the appropriate types of fences along the boundary of the 20,000 miles of railway in Great Britain. However, certain locations such as stations must by their very nature permit people to access trains.

## How the railway is managed

The railway industry involves many companies who collaborate to operate safely. Network Rail owns and operates the rail infrastructure i.e. the track, signalling, bridges, level crossings etc. Other companies operate the trains and most stations. The Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB) coordinates standards that apply across the industry.

South Western Railway is responsible for the station at Hinton Admiral under a franchise agreement. They are responsible for the signs at the station and applying standards set by the RSSB.

Network Rail is responsible for the infrastructure serving the station, including placing statutory signs warning people that it is an offence to access the infrastructure and determining whether barriers are required at the platform ends. Network Rail is also responsible for applying the relevant standards set by RSSB. RSSB has by way of example produced a Rail Industry Standard for Station Infrastructure RIS-7700-INS; Railway Group Standard GI/RT7033 relevant to Lineside Signs; Rail Industry Standard RIS-7016-INS Interface between Station Platforms, Track, Trains and Buffer Stops and many more which include the requirements for the specification and positioning of safety signs and platform safety features.

### Turning now to the specific concern:

You have stated that *“the railway station has an absence of signage stating the presence, and risk to life, of a live rail on the railway tracks which can be seen by those entering the railway station or whilst on the central part of the platform”*.

Signage on the railway is set out in the industry standards. These state that we have a “do not trespass” sign at all locations. We also have signs at the ends of the platform, which were in place at Hinton Admiral, to prohibit unauthorised access and warn of the dangers, including of electrocution. The signs displayed at the station warn of the danger of electrocution and comply with the Railway Group Standard GI/RT 7033. To avoid confusion at different locations, there is safety benefit in consistent and clear signs that meet British Standard ISO 3864 – 1.2011: ‘Graphical symbols’ and the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996. Network Rail’s own company standard NR/L2/ELP/21131 applies the industry and national standards and follows appropriate risk assessments. The signs provided by Network Rail at Hinton Admiral remain compliant with those standards.

The signs at the ends of the platform state that passengers must not go onto the track or cross the line; a sign giving the contact number for the Samaritans; and a graphic ‘electric bolt’ sign with large words stating “Danger do not touch the live rail”. Research evidence highlights the benefit of clear and simple communication of risks – extra words are more likely to dilute the message impact. Adding additional words suggesting a “risk to life” may have other impacts such as increasing the risk to anyone with mental health issues and suicidal thoughts. As a national and world leader in combatting suicide on the railway Network Rail works with other industry parties to consider its signage so that it reduces risk and does not have any knock on effects on those who are struggling with mental health issues.

That said we do understand that awareness of our risks needs to be continually refreshed and needs to be a combination of hard mitigations, key messages and signage so we are now planning to trial under platform warning signage. This will be at 10 locations across the Wessex region with Hinton Admiral being one of the trial locations, and will feature warning signs underneath the platform which will be visible to passengers standing on the opposite platform.

In addition, we target areas where we know there is a higher risk of the public accessing the infrastructure with additional measures to help further deter access, such as the installation of platform end gates, yellow hatching warning lines and anti-trespass matting. Within the Wessex region of Network Rail we are just completing a programme of works that sees these additional safety measures installed at the majority of our stations, Hinton Admiral already being one of them.

I would also like to take this opportunity to highlight the work we do with schools and other organisations to raise awareness of the dangers of accessing the railway, including from electrification risks.

Network Rail works with schools and community partners such as the Scouts Association to educate young people about hidden dangers on and around the railway. Our schools' partner LearnLive has reached over ten million children in the past two years.

Underpinning all this work is our social media campaign branded "YouVsTrain". The material used in that campaign and on the YouVsTrain.co.uk website specifically features the dangers from electrification with three dramatic films reconstructing real events. Those films have been seen by many millions of people and have won awards for effective community engagement. Other work with Fun Kids Radio and a book featuring Thomas the Tank Engine target younger age groups.

In two years this combination of activity has reduced overall trespass incidents by 20% and incidents involving young people particularly by 30%.

I hope my letter addresses the concerns raised but would be happy to provide further information about our extensive work to prevent people accessing the railway and to warn of the dangers the railway environment poses if that would help.

Yours sincerely



Head of Operations Network Rail Wessex  
On behalf of

Route Director Network Rail Wessex