



Rail Accident Investigation Branch

What is the RAIB?

The Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB) is the independent railway accident investigation organisation for the UK.

The RAIB is concerned with the investigation of accidents and incidents on:

- the national railway networks in Great Britain and Northern Ireland;
- the Channel Tunnel (in co-operation with its equivalent operation in France);
- the London and Glasgow Underground systems and other metro systems;
- tramways;
- heritage railways (including narrow-gauge systems over 350mm gauge); and
- cable-hauled systems of 1km or longer.

The purpose of a RAIB investigation is to improve the safety of railways, and to prevent further accidents from occurring.

The RAIB achieves this by identifying the causes of accidents along with any other factors that contributed to the event or made the outcome worse, such as technical or operational factors or those arising from management systems.

The RAIB's investigations are entirely independent and are focused solely on safety improvement. The RAIB does not apportion blame or liability nor enforce law or carry out prosecutions.

How is the RAIB organised?

The RAIB is independent of the railway industry, safety regulators and prosecution bodies. Like the Air and Marine Accident Investigation Branches (AAIB and MAIB) the RAIB forms part of the Department for Transport, but is functionally independent: the Chief Inspector reports on accident investigations directly to the Secretary of State for Transport.

Who carries out the RAIB investigations?

To carry out its investigations the RAIB has appointed and trained Inspectors recruited from the railway industry and other investigating bodies. They are experienced, have a broad mixture of skills across the railway industry and have been trained in investigation techniques.

All inspectors carry an RAIB identity card which they will show to you when requested.

What are the RAIB's powers?

The powers of the RAIB and its Inspectors - and the framework for reporting and investigating accidents - are set out in the Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003 and the Railways (Accident Investigation and Reporting) Regulations 2005.

The RAIB Inspectors have the power to:

- enter railway property, land or vehicles;
- seize anything relating to the accident and make records;
- require access to and disclosure of records and information; and
- require people to answer questions and provide information about anything relevant to the investigation.

How do I contact the RAIB?

Should you have any questions about the RAIB or its investigations, please contact the RAIB using the information below.



Guidance on the Railways (Accident Investigation and Reporting) Regulations 2005 can be found at www.raib.gov.uk

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Department for
Transport

Your witness statement

Leaflet 02

Rail Accident Investigation Branch

The Wharf
Stores Road
Derby
DE21 4BA

Telephone: 01332 253300
Fax: 01332 253301
Email: enquiries@raib.gov.uk
Website: www.raib.gov.uk

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How RAIB investigates

Following an accident, the RAIB may conduct a preliminary examination to gather information about the event. The purpose of such an examination is to enable the RAIB to determine whether there are grounds for a more detailed investigation, which would be aimed at improving the safety of railways and preventing similar accidents. RAIB Inspectors undertaking preliminary examinations or investigations may interview those who were involved in the accident or witnesses to it.

Why am I being interviewed?

The sole purpose of your interview is to provide the RAIB Inspector with a record of what you saw of the accident or know of the events leading up to it. The details you give will only be used by the RAIB in its own investigation.

You can, if you wish, have someone else with you at the interview for emotional support. They may take notes, if you want them to, but they will not be allowed to take part in the interview.

If you are an employee of any company involved in the accident, this friend cannot be anyone who is there to represent the interests of the company (for example a manager or company legal advisor) rather than to provide support to you. The RAIB's obligation to maintain confidentiality over the contents of statements obtained from witnesses means that it will normally exclude such persons from the interview.

There is, however, no need for you to have anyone else present if you do not want to. It is your choice.

What about my confidentiality?

The RAIB's investigations are entirely independent from any industry or judicial investigations, and are focused solely on safety improvement.

By law, the RAIB must not at any time disclose to anyone else, including the police, the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR), your employer or any other enforcing authority, personal details about you in connection with any information that you give us in your statement, unless we are compelled to do so by a Court Order.

If you have any concerns about this, the RAIB Inspector will be happy to explain in more detail before your interview begins.

What happens after my interview?

During the interview the RAIB Inspector will make an audio recording or take notes. If, following the preliminary examination, the RAIB decides to conduct a full investigation, and you were able to provide information that the RAIB considers relevant to the investigation, a written summary of the key information will be prepared. You will then be provided with a copy, usually sent to you by post, with a request that you sign the document to confirm the accuracy of the information, and then return it to the RAIB.

If you wish to propose any changes you will be free to do so but - depending on the nature of the changes - the RAIB Inspector may ask you to attend a further interview.

As the RAIB's investigation progresses, the Inspectors may find that they need to speak to you again. If this is the case, a member of the RAIB's investigating team will let you know as soon as possible.

What happens to the information I give the RAIB Inspector?

When the investigation is complete, the RAIB will publish a report on the accident. The report will recommend actions that the RAIB believes are needed to prevent a similar accident and improve railway safety.

Although the report may make use of the information that you gave to the RAIB Inspector in your interview, it will not identify you by name.



More detailed information about the RAIB's reports can be found in Leaflet 01 - An introduction to the RAIB.

Download at www.raib.gov.uk

Issued to:

name and date:

in connection with the investigation at:

that took place on (date):

Your interview is scheduled for:

date:

time:

place:

The contact for this investigation is:

date:

and can be contacted on:

telephone: