

# Urgent safety advice 01/2020: Passing between or close to the end of stationary rail vehicles in depots, yards and sidings

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## 1. Safety issue

Suitable measures may not be in place to control the risk of train drivers and other operational staff passing between or close to the end of stationary rail vehicles when walking and working in depots, yards and sidings.

## 2. Safety advice

Duty holders are advised to ensure that all staff required to walk and work in depots, yards and sidings are aware of the risk of passing between or close to the end of stationary rail vehicles, and that suitable measures are in place to control this risk (such as training and local procedures).

Duty holders should also be aware that using the GE/RT 8000 Rule Book as the only basis of track safety training for train drivers and other operational staff is inappropriate because:

- the provisions of the Rule Book with respect to personal track safety are not applicable when working away from the mainline railway (such as in most depots, yards and sidings).
- the Rule Book contains no rules, regulations or instructions relating to passing between or close to the end of stationary rail vehicles.

## 3. Issued to:

The employers of train drivers and other operational staff whose duties may take them close to stabled rail vehicles when walking and working in depots, yards and sidings.

## 4. Background

At around 20:00 hrs on 14 December 2019, a train driver suffered fatal injuries while passing between two trains at Tyseley traction maintenance depot, Birmingham.

Prior to the accident occurring, the driver involved had brought an empty train into the depot. Once this train had been shut-down, the driver alighted from its cab and crossed the depot yard. This consists of a number of sidings, one of which had two stationary trains positioned closely together on it. The driver tried to pass between these trains as he crossed the yard. A later reconstruction undertaken by the RAIB suggests that there was a gap of approximately 540 mm between the gangway ends of these trains.

A second driver was in the cab of one of the trains, next to the gap. As the first driver was passing between the trains, this second driver attempted to couple them together, trapping the first driver. The RAIB's reconstruction showed that the second driver would not have been able to see the first driver as he crossed the yard and entered the gap between the trains.

Based on evidence obtained as part of this investigation, the RAIB believes that some transport undertakings are using GE/RT 8000 Rule Book Module G1 'General safety responsibilities and personal track safety for non-track workers' as the only basis for establishing the competence of train drivers in personal track safety. This means that the safety arrangements used by train drivers may not effectively control the risks to which they are exposed when walking or working in depots, yards and sidings.