

Report 03/2018: Trailer runaway near Hope, Derbyshire

On publication of RAIB's report concerning a trailer runaway near Hope, Derbyshire, Simon French, Chief Inspector of Rail Accidents said:

"In 2004, four men died when they were hit by a runaway trolley on the west coast main line near Tebay. The brakes on that trolley had been deliberately disabled, and two of the people responsible were subsequently convicted of manslaughter and sent to gaol. It's therefore very worrying for RAIB when we hear of runaway trolleys and other items of plant, because we know just how silent and deadly they can be.

"On the Hope Valley line on 28 May 2017, the runaway trailer did not hit anything and there were no serious consequences. However, one of the factors which caused the incident was that the trailer's brakes had been disabled. This may have been done with the best of intentions, to keep the job running, but if the potential consequences had been considered, it should never have been contemplated. Just testing the set-up properly before starting to use the tractor unit and its trailer would have shown what was wrong. The whole episode, as our report shows, was a saga arising from lack of training, care, and caution.

"I hope that everyone who works with on-track plant and machinery will take note of the lessons from this report, and never again be tempted to cut corners while using equipment on the line."

Newsdate: 19 February 2018