

## **Report 04/2019: Near miss with tracker worker, Peterborough, 20 July 2018**

### **On publication of RAIB's report concerning the near miss with a tracker worker, Peterborough, 20 July 2018, Simon French, Chief Inspector of the RAIB said:**

"In my introduction to the RAIB's Annual Report for 2018, I said that the number of near misses involving trains and track workers which we have seen in recent years is hugely disappointing. The subject of this report is another of these events - in this case the worker concerned moved clear of the line less than three seconds before the train passed him.

"This narrowly avoided collision between train and man took place during routine inspection work. The catalogue of problems with on-site organisation and communication that we found in this investigation was alarming. Some of the people involved made assumptions about what was happening, and the lookout allowed himself to be distracted from the vital duty of warning of approaching trains.

"It is disappointing that the planning of the work had resulted in it being done while trains were running. The team involved did most of their work in this way, and of all the different maintenance teams at Peterborough, they were the least likely to plan work in periods when there were no trains.

"The investigation highlights the difficulty of managing effective communications between controllers of site safety and the lookouts that they have placed at locations remote from the site of work. A number of unofficial flag signals were being used to transmit messages, and this was a factor in the Peterborough incident. For this reason, we are recommending that Network Rail investigates the methods of communication that are actually being used in these circumstances, and comes up with practical measures that will make life safer for teams working on the track.

"I believe that it is also important that the company continues to work hard to reduce the amount of work that is done under the protection of lookouts. Some of Network Rail's maintenance managers have shown that smart planning can enable more routine maintenance activities to take place when trains are stopped, so improving safety and making better use of working time."