

Near miss at Norwich Road level crossing, 24 November 2019

On publication of RAIB's report into the near miss at Norwich Road level crossing, 24 November 2019, Simon French, Chief Inspector of Rail Accidents, said:

“All too often the interaction between road users and the railway at level crossings leads to incidents and accidents. In many cases the actions of the road user are the immediate cause, but in this alarming event, deficiencies in the way the railway equipment operated placed two car drivers, and the people on a passenger train, in deadly danger through no fault of their own.

“Our investigation found that the installation at Norwich Road level crossing was a poor piece of engineering which had been in use for several years, and only luck had previously prevented an accident. A change in the type of train using the line exposed a weakness in the way that the crossing's electronic control equipment was configured. This meant that the system lost sight of the approaching train and commanded the barriers to rise. Lessons from the trial of the crossing equipment in other locations, and from incidents involving the same equipment in service, had not been applied to the crossing at Norwich Road. It is important that the railway industry learns from this incident, and makes sure that it has effective processes in place to transfer such learning to where it is needed.”