

Rail Accident Investigation: Explanation of discontinuation

**Derailment of a tram at Piccadilly tram stop,
Manchester
5 April 2026**

This investigation was carried out in accordance with:

- the Railway Safety Directive 2004/49/EC
- the Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003
- the Railways (Accident Investigation and Reporting) Regulations 2005.

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This report is published by the Rail Accident Investigation Branch, Department for Transport.

Preface

The purpose of a Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB) investigation is to improve railway safety by preventing future railway accidents or by mitigating their consequences.

Where the Chief Inspector of Rail Accidents has determined that there are no significant safety lessons to learn from continuing an investigation, it can be discontinued in accordance with Regulation 5(13) of The Railways (Accident Investigation and Reporting) Regulations 2005.

In such cases, RAIB will let all interested parties know that it is discontinuing the investigation and will give its reasons for doing so.

The accident

Summary

- 1 At around 13:39 on 5 April 2026, a Metrolink tram travelling from Ashton to Bury derailed on the approach to Piccadilly tram stop in Manchester (figure 1).
- 2 The tram, formed of two coupled sets, was travelling at about 8 mph (13 km/h) when one wheelset derailed. This was the leading wheelset of the rear bogie of the leading tram, which derailed after its left-hand wheel climbed up and over the running rail. The driver was initially unaware of the derailment and the tram continued into the tram stop, where passengers were able to disembark.
- 3 There were no injuries reported as a result of the derailment and minor damage was caused to the tram and to the infrastructure.



Figure 1: The tram involved in the derailment at Piccadilly tram stop.

Reason for discontinuing the investigation

- 4 Since announcing its investigation, RAIB has determined that:
 - The safety learning to be gained from this derailment will likely relate to low-speed operation of trams on tight curves in high wheel-rail adhesion conditions and will probably be localised to the Manchester Metrolink tramway network.
 - The tramway's 10 mph (16 km/h) speed limit for the approach to Piccadilly tram stop meant the consequences of this derailment were low and are unlikely to be significantly worse in similar circumstances.
 - KeolisAmey Metrolink, the company which operates and maintains the tramway, is taking action to understand and then address the factors that led to this derailment. This includes commissioning a vehicle dynamics study by a university, known for research in this area, to understand the derailment mechanism and to identify the factors that contributed to the derailment occurring.
- 5 Where RAIB determines that there is only localised safety learning to be gained from a low consequence event, and the railway or tramway company involved is likely to conduct a thorough investigation of its own, it can use its legal powers to undertake an 'industry review' of that organisation's internal investigation report.
- 6 Consequently, RAIB has decided to discontinue its own investigation into this derailment and instead undertake an industry review. Following this review, RAIB can decide to reopen its investigation, if it considers this is necessary.

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