

RSSB: Positive safety performance ahead of lockdown, but there's still work to do

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Britain's railways continue to hold a very positive safety record, but industry must continue to collaborate to tackle risks under pressure, says RSSB.

The independent rail safety body has published its latest [Annual Health and Safety Report](#) for Britain's railways across the last full financial year 2019-20.

The report shows that key safety trends are generally in line with expectations for the 12 months running up to March 2020, just before the COVID-19 lockdown took effect.

It was the 13th consecutive year with no passenger or workforce fatalities in train accidents. There were seven fatalities to passengers or members of the public on stations, and three fatalities to the workforce.

There are concerns about a rise in train accident risk and frequency of signals passed at danger (SPADs), as well as track worker safety and the integrity of safety critical systems that need to be addressed. Health and wellbeing also remain a really key area, says RSSB.

The rail industry has recently refreshed its health and safety strategy, Leading Health and Safety on Britain's Railway. This focuses on 12 key risk areas and includes objectives for each these areas over the next few years.

In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has added new health and safety risks that need to be managed on top of existing issues. This has put more pressure on rail companies to get safety right.

RSSB experts have been supporting members to ensure the health and safety of rail passengers and its workforce is protected as services are ramped up. Essentially, the goal is to provide industry with greater confidence and help remove anxiety and uncertainty from the travelling public.

RSSB's Director of System Safety and Health, Ali Chegini said: "GB rail has a proud record of safety improvement, but there's still work to do and it's vital we come together as an industry to continue to deliver our industry LHSBR strategy and assure progress—which is more important now than ever, as we adapt to the new normal and continue to become a better, safer railway during and after the global pandemic."

[RSSB's Annual Health and Safety Report](#) can be downloaded from the RSSB website, and will shortly see a dedicated page for each key risk area for ease of navigation.

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