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28th November 2017

Dear Mr Gray

Information request

Reference number: FOI2017/01284

Thank you for your request of 31st October. You requested the following information:

'Regarding the near miss at Magdalen Road level crossing, Watlington, Norfolk 09/08/2017 please could you supply:

**the near miss report on 09/08/2017*

**standard operating procedure for the crossing with signalling arrangements with diagrams *the training supplied for crossing attendants including emergency arrangements i.e. accident procedure and equipment supplied *near miss, accident reports for the crossings *the new arrangements following the accident*

I appreciate you providing similar information for a level crossing accident a few years ago again in Norfolk'

I have processed your request under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

I can confirm that we hold the information you requested.

- ***The near miss report on 09/08/2017***

The incident was reported by neither the signaller nor the driver at the time as they were unaware that any incident had occurred. It came to our attention via a member of the public reporting the event using our helpline number.

You may be interested to know that the Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB) created an independent safety digest report which is available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safety-digest-142017-magdalen-road-level-crossing>.

- ***Standard operating procedure for the crossing with signalling arrangements with diagrams***

Watlington Road crossing is a manually controlled barrier crossing operated by the signaller at Magdalen Road signal box. The normal position for the barriers is open to road traffic; the crossing is lowered by the signaller when a train is to pass over. The controls for the crossing are located in the signal box and the crossing is fitted with an automatic raise function. When a train is to pass over the crossing, the signaller lowers the barriers, checks the crossing is clear and operates the signals associated with the crossing. Once the train has passed clear, the signaller replaces the associated signals back to danger (red) and the barriers automatically rise.

- ***The training supplied for crossing attendants including emergency arrangements i.e. accident procedure and equipment supplied***

Signallers are required to attend Signalling School at a Network Rail Training Centre. During this 12 week course they cover all aspects of the Rule Book which are regulated by the Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB). Their training includes but is not limited to simulation of high risk activities, written assessments, practical assessments, safety critical communication assessments and evaluation of Non-Technical Skills. If they successfully complete this course they receive further training specific to their location, follow a local training plan and have to pass a practical assessment at the end of their training. Signaller training then continues throughout their career. They sit rules exams and knowledge tests and also attend regular safety briefings. Should an accident occur, the signaller reports this direct to our Control Centre which initiates the emergency plan and mobilises the response team. The signaller contains and protects the accident site by use of the signals. This is covered within the RSSB Rule Books. (diagram attached)

- ***Near miss, accident reports for the crossing***

If information is readily assessable to you by other means, Section 21 of the FOIA allows us to direct you towards where that information can be found. As advised in response to question one, an independent safety digest report by Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB) is available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safety-digest-142017-magdalen-road-level-crossing>.

- ***The new arrangements following the accident***

We have worked closely with the RAIB following this incident. We are currently reviewing the instructions given to signallers during degraded working to ensure that there is a robust method of work in place. In the interim, whilst this review takes place, re-briefing on the relevant rule book modules and instructions when working under degraded working have been issued to signallers. In particular, they must ensure that all level crossings are switched to manual control when in degraded working.

If you have any enquiries about this response, please contact me in the first instance at FOI@networkrail.co.uk or on 01908 782405. Details of your appeal rights are below.

Please remember to quote the reference number at the top of this letter in all future communications.

Yours sincerely

Anisha Pandya
Information Officer

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Appeal Rights

If you are unhappy with the way your request has been handled and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision, please write to the FOI Compliance and Appeals Manager at Network Rail, Freedom of Information, The Quadrant, Elder Gate, Milton Keynes, MK9 1EN, or by email at foi@networkrail.co.uk. Your request must be submitted within 40 working days of receipt of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF