

Office of Rail Regulation

Extract from web site:

Policy on level crossings

Great Britain's level crossing safety record is among the best in the world, but every incident has the potential for significant human and economic loss. Level crossings are the single biggest source of railway catastrophic risk, but overall the risks are well managed.

We seek to influence dutyholders and others to reduce risk at Britain's level crossings. We do this through a variety of means ranging from advice to formal enforcement action. We check that preventive and protective measures are implemented in accordance with the principles of prevention set out in the [Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999](#).

Risk control should, where practicable, be achieved through the elimination of level crossings in favour of bridges, underpasses or diversions. Where elimination is not possible, we aim to ensure that duty holders reduce risk so far as is reasonably practicable and in accordance with the principles of protection.

As the safety regulator for Britain's railways, our role is to provide clear advice and enforce relevant legislation – including that which relates to level crossings. We also exercise delegated powers of the Secretary of State in making level crossing orders under the [Level Crossings Act 1983](#).

We believe that it is neither effective nor efficient for only rail companies to be responsible for managing safety at level crossings. Decisions about level crossings should involve rail companies, traffic authorities and other relevant organisations as early on as possible.

Relevant authorities should recognise the wider benefits that safety improvements at level crossings (for example, replacing them with bridges) can bring about, particularly for road users. If wider benefits can be achieved, the appropriate funding bodies should agree on how the costs of making safety improvements will be met.

We are also committed to helping people understand the importance of the [safe use of level crossings](#) (PDF 354 Kb).

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