Level crossing safety

There are around 6,000 level crossings in Britain. Every day they are used by thousands of people to cross one of the busiest rail networks in the world

We invest in a wide-ranging programme, working with national and local organisations, to make level crossings safer and to help people use them correctly.

Trespassing on the railway is illegal and dangerous. You could be taken to court and face a £1000 fine.

Level crossings map

About this data / understanding the risk assessment procedure, scoring and tools

About the data in the level crossings map

- The map is currently updated with the most current data within the first week of each month.

- Closed crossings, recently closed and temporary closed crossings are not included.
- Only information from live crossings, ie crossings with a live set of signed off details, including assessment is included.
- Crossings with a legal right of way but no access are not included.
- Not all crossings have been captured by Google Street View

These notes will help you understand the risk assessment procedure, scoring and tools.

Why we assess level crossings

The risk levels can change at level crossings for a number of reasons such as:

- The number or speed of trains may increase.
- New housing or retail developments could lead to increased numbers of level crossing users.
- The types of vehicles using a level crossing might change.

To make sure that risk assessments remain current we review the risk at each level crossing on a regular basis.

Level crossing risk assessment scoring

Level crossing risk assessments produce two scores:

- One is for the 'individual risk' which applies only to crossing users. The score is presented as a letter ranging from A to M where A is the highest value and M is the lowest.
- The second score is for 'collective risk' which considers the total risk for all people who use the crossing, including: pedestrians, road vehicle drivers, train staff and passengers. The score is presented as a number ranging from 1 to 13 where 1 is the highest value and 13 is the lowest. This 'collective risk' score is the most important part when prioritising crossings.

- Crossings with a risk score of ‘M13’ have been assessed as having zero risk. They have no known usage and no scheduled reassessment regime. These crossings are reviewed periodically and the appropriate risk assessment regime instigated if required.

Tools used to assess level crossings

We have worked with rail industry partners to develop a computer based risk model called the All Level Crossings Risk Model (ALCRM). By having a risk model we are able to assess each level crossing in a consistent manner.

When carrying our level crossing risk assessments, the following process is used:

- Information is gathered about the level crossing which includes visiting the site.
- The 'risk engine' within ALCRM then calculates the risk associated with the level crossing. This is based on many calculations around factors such as; the crossing type, probability of an accident, likely consequences of an accident.
- After completing the assessment ALCRM presents results in a number of formats including; a summary of usage per day, a risk rating, key risk drivers associated with the crossing.

Information about all our level crossings including type, location, number of trains per day, line-speed and risk assessments.

There are around 6,000 level crossings on our rail network and we have a legal duty to assess, manage and control the risk for everyone.

Level crossings can be categorised by their type, but each is unique, so we’ve worked with our rail industry partners to develop a standardised method for assessing crossing risk. Factors taken into account include frequency of trains, frequency and types of users and the environment and where the crossings are located.

Risk assessment

Level crossings are assessed at a frequency that is based on the level of risk a crossing poses. The assessment frequency ranges from 1¼ to 3¼ years. You can find the latest Level crossing narrative risk assessments on the page Our information and data.

Safety education and Level crossing safety campaigns are a key part of our work to improve safety by managing and mitigating the risk at crossings.

A safer railway

We can eliminate risk by closing crossings where agreement can be reached to do so. Between 2009 and 2017 we delivered the following as part of our commitment to a safer railway:

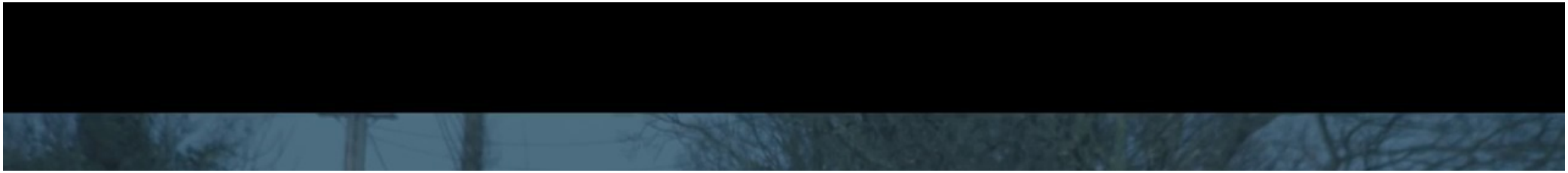
- closed 1,100 level crossings
- improved sighting at over 1,100 crossings
- fitted LED road traffic lights at 500 crossings, significantly improving their brightness
- introduced new technology to better inform users of a second train approaching the crossing in quick succession to the first
- repositioned over 250 crossing phones into safe areas for users
- designed and commissioned a new type of level crossing featuring automatic obstacle detection technology
- installed barriers at 66 open crossings
- introduced a fleet of mobile safety vehicles for operation by the British Transport Police to discourage deliberate misuse and to record offences at level crossings
- rolled out level crossing red light safety cameras, with 33 currently installed across the network (December 2017)
- installed power-operated gates at 77 user worked crossings
- commissioned 65 audible warning devices at high risk footpath crossings
- delivered a programme of miniature stop lights for installation at user worked crossings.

Contact

Contact us if you have any queries or concerns relating to a level crossing. Please state the name of the level crossing in any communication.

Crossing Over film

The following film, for ages 12 and over, was filmed at the school attended by Olivia Bazlinton and Charlotte Thompson, who were killed at a level crossing in Elsenham in 2005. It shows the dangers at level crossings and features an interview with Tina Hughes MBE, mother of Olivia Bazlinton.



Level crossings for drivers

Guidance for driving over level crossings

Level crossings for pedestrians

Guidance for pedestrians at level crossings

Level crossings for cyclists

Guidance for cycling over level crossings

Level crossings for horse riders

Guidance for horse riders at level crossings

Safety education

Educational resources developed with teachers and pupils about electrification on the railway, level crossings and railway safety

Reducing risk at level crossings

In 2010 we started a landmark level crossing risk reduction programme – here's how it's improving safety on the network

Deliberate abuse of level crossings

These real life videos show just how dangerous it is to deliberately abuse level crossings

More information

- Level crossings
- Level crossing safety campaigns
- Level crossing safety performance
- 9+ times people risked their lives at level crossings