



# edgware road safety news

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## WE STILL DON'T KNOW IF THIS SYSTEM IS SAFE

An unintended software bug was recently discovered as part of the signalling systems software testing for other areas scheduled for fully automatic train working. The system fault identified that points may become unlocked, even if a through route for a train had been set. Obviously, things don't get much more serious than this for a train driver - the potential consequence of points moving under a train is a derailment/collision.

What compounds the issue even further is that the incident took place *after operational testing had been completed and the signalling system was fully signed off for traffic hours operations*. An urgent meeting was convened with reps from Service Control & trains upgrades. At that meeting LUL said they share the concerns of all the reps, and we told them that we need further assurances on the integrity of the signalling system before trains enter passenger service. We've demanded a letter of assurance from the head of signalling within LUL confirming that a) the initial root cause of the signalling fault had been identified

and b) no further signalling anomalies would occur. We need to be sure that there's nothing else hiding in the software.

This is a really serious issue. **We will immediately let you know if we find out any more problems.**

Reps have asked LUL to provide an "assurance letter" that says two things. 1) They understand and have resolved the issue that led to points being unlocked after a route was set, and 2) their systems are robust enough that they can say there are no other problems like this.

LUL said they were happy to give us this assurance letter.

**But 3 weeks later, there's no sign of it.**

Why? Only 2 answers are possible: **either this system is not safe, or they don't give a damn whether the drivers think it's safe or not.**

As people on the front line, we might have to decide whether we think the risk to our lives is worth it. If you feel that LUL hasn't proved the safety of this system, **you have the legal right not to be forced to do unsafe things.**

## HMS FAMILIARISATION: NOTHING AGREED YET

We organised a meeting on 30 May where we were finally able to tell management all the things that drivers and IOs have raised with us. We presented a serious list of issues, including making a strong demand for every driver to drive in & out of HMS depot several times under the new system.

It's now over 2 weeks later and we still don't have an agreement. Only after 14 days did we get a proposal from LUL.

Unions and LUL have agreed that all drivers will get **a minimum of 6 trips** between Latimer Road & HMS with an IO. **But that doesn't include going into the yard.**

LUL has now proposed that IOs will assist drivers with booked turns that go in or out of the yard, so drivers will have one trip if their duty calls for it. But for everyone else, LUL is saying that **they will only familiarise drivers if they go to managers and ask them for it.**

It is an unsafe way of working and it's something we can't just accept. We've all

seen how some drivers don't have any confidence. Some never report defects because they feel intimidated talking to train technicians. Others simply can't bring themselves to say they need help.

It's wrong to say "that's tough, we will only give them help if they ask for it". Our employer should do its level best to make sure we are all competent and confident.

Remember, **every IO who took part in the 'proving' weekend said they needed to drive in/out of HMS**. It's not an unreasonable demand.

We told LUL, "if you agree a training programme, the drivers will work with you to make sure it's done".

Many drivers have said: "we will not drive into the yard without a pilot until we've been given enough extra familiarisation".

We totally support this. As a driver, I won't feel confident doing unless I've had several trips with an IO, so I'll need to be piloted in until I'm properly familiarised. As a safety rep I will totally support any

driver who feels the same; we have to protect our safety and our jobs.

Hopefully LUL will see sense and arrange a proper training programme for all drivers. We will keep pushing for it.

One thing LUL keeps saying is that "most drivers will hardly ever have to go into the yard". But that's exactly our point - it's those drivers who need their confidence boosted, because of how rarely they do it. And we cannot allow our members to be put in the awkward position of saying "I won't move my train off of platform 1 until a pilot joins me" while a train is waiting outside with a driver who's just about to finish.

The truth is, **we might all have a fight on our hands**. If LUL won't listen to what every driver is telling them, it might be up to drivers & reps to make sure we all get the training we need. Please look out for updates this week. **The RMT will give you 100% support - we've got your back.**

Please let me know if you've got any concerns; I will keep you updated.

## 50MPH TARGET SPEED INTO HMS DT!

Another alarming thing that came up recently was a train in HMS platform being given a target speed of nearly 50mph to enter HMS Depot. It turns out, in the platform the train is given the normal target speed for the next section, even if it's just a few metres. So it's the "correct" speed for the few metres before the points. LUL accepts that this will needlessly alarm drivers, so they're going to change it – but it might be done after ATO "goes live".

## PLATFORM STRIKE

You might've heard about an ATO train that struck an Edgware Road platform recently. The driver, train, platform & track have all been fully exonerated and the investigation into the root cause of the incident is currently ongoing. They don't know what happened or why, but they're happy to carry on regardless. They seem to be working on the basis of "oh well, it probably won't happen again, right?" If you notice anything dodgy, please get in touch.

## BEEPING NOISE

Once again, drivers are being caused loads of stress by an unidentified noise in the cab. The soft "beep" noise goes off every few seconds, and once you start hearing it you become sensitised and you hear it every time. Your brain focuses on it and it becomes a big distraction. LUL is going to update the software to stop this, but we don't know when.

**We totally support any driver who needs to get off their train or get a changeover if they're distracted.** Your safety is what matters, as well as the passengers' safety.

# ISSUES FROM 30 MAY MEETING WITH MANAGEMENT

We organised a meeting to ask questions and put our worries to management on behalf of drivers. Every issue that IOs and drivers raised after the "operational proving" weekend on the 12/13 May 2018 was put on the agenda and discussed. Here are the main responses we received from management at the meeting:

- 1) Audible warnings and alerts in the cab: too loud: **this will be monitored, some IOs reported real discomfort with the sound level**
- 2) Alert when berthing in Latimer Road w/b: **this will be removed**
- 3) Major VOBC & wheel-slip issues after rain: **LUL believes they've learned from this and it won't happen again.**
- 4) Switching over from legacy to CBTC causing issues on both days of proving - there were a number of issues at the very start: **LUL thinks they understand how to avoid them next time. However, we think there might be problems when the system goes live.**
- 5) Reasoning/logic behind braking profile decisions: **braking happened so softly and slowly - LUL says that because the system is new, they might be cautious in how they use it, so we might not get the best out of ATO yet.**
- 6) Effect of performance profile decisions on PM mode driving: **when a driver is in PM, s/he will have to learn a new way of handling the train, as the system will demand earlier braking and slower speeds than the driver might be used to in certain areas. It's going to take some getting used to!**
- 7) What do we look at when berthing in PM - the SID showing "0m" or the chevrons? **Always stop at the chevrons. LUL will remind trainers to stop telling people to use the SID**
- 8) Too much jargon used over the radio: **LUL has committed to cutting this down.**
- 9) Radio not picking up correct changeover points in ATO section: **this is resolved.**
- 10) "Cramped" signage in HMS DT: **one reason we are so insistent on all drivers being re-familiarised in HMS is that there's a lot of new signage, and it can only go in certain places.**

## LATIMER ROAD FACILITIES/TIMINGS

We are still in discussions about making sure that there are decent facilities for all IOs who will have to wait at Latimer Road during the first month of ATO. In addition, we are making sure that there is adequate travel time for IOs to get there & walking time to change platforms once there.

- 11) Clarity over accidental switching into RM: **we need LUL to really make sure drivers understand when this needs to be reported to the controller.**
- 12) Issues with door opening when in PM: Some trains have trouble opening the doors even when in the right place. **This is a software issue, but make sure you're fully up to speed on "emergency door open" procedure.**
- 13) "Cross now" signs in HMS: the way we work in HMS changes - **we could now get sacked if we cross the track when the signs aren't lit.** That's part of the familiarisation we are asking for. **It's vital that we are all clear on how much things are changing in HMS DT.**

These are just a few quick notes from what was a long and detailed meeting - many items were small and were dealt with in such a way that should mean they never affect us on a live ATO railway.

As always, if you want more detail I'm absolutely happy to provide it. If you want copies of reports, emails etc just drop me a message and I'll send it straight over. You can email me at [tony@evilplan.org.uk](mailto:tony@evilplan.org.uk)

## 'AMNESTY': IT'S OK TO MAKE MISTAKES

When you have a fundamental change in how things work, there's a high risk of people making lots of mistakes, It's likely that people will get lots of things wrong as they get used to the new ATO system. Given how many new situations we will be exposed to, it wouldn't be fair for LUL to expect perfection.

We've secured an agreement with LUL that there will be an "understanding" (another word for "amnesty"), and that if people mess up under ATO they won't automatically be treated harshly. We'll give the same advice here that we always give: **if you mess up, just hold your hands up and be honest about it.** If you try to wriggle out of trouble, it could go badly wrong and then there's no amnesty for you. Be open about mistakes and management will go easier on you.

We'll always give you the best defence possible, but for a while after we go live, you can be relaxed about accidentally messing things up. And if you're not confident about something or need extra training or coaching, **they have to give it to you.**