



2<sup>nd</sup> February 2022

[Redacted],

Email: [Redacted]

Re: FOI request IE\_FOI\_546

Dear [Redacted],

I refer to your request dated 4<sup>th</sup> January 2022 made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014, which was received on by my office on that date, for records held by Iarnród Éireann.

**Request:**

- copies of all records held referring or relating to the decision to heavily load a rail service after a mechanical fault occurred on 28 December.
- copies of any health and safety assessment, investigation reports associated with the operation of this service.
- copies of any complaints (anonymised) relating to this service.

**Response:**

I, Ms. Annette Reilly, Decision Maker have now made a final decision to grant your request on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2022.

Please find response document and schedule of records attached.

**Rights of appeal**

In the event that you are not happy with this decision you can make an appeal in relation to this matter, you can do so by writing to the FOI Unit, Corporate Communications, Iarnród Éireann Irish Rail, Connolly Station, Amiens St, Dublin 1 or by e-mail to [foi@irishrail.ie](mailto:foi@irishrail.ie). You should make your appeal within 4 weeks (20 working days) from the date of this notification, where a day is defined as a working day excluding, the weekend and public holidays, however, the making of a late appeal may be permitted in appropriate circumstances.

The appeal will involve a complete reconsideration of the matter by a more senior member of the staff of this body.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the above, please contact the FOI Officer on [Redacted] or by email at [foi@irishrail.ie](mailto:foi@irishrail.ie)

Yours sincerely,

PP

**Ms. Annette Reilly, FOI Decision Maker, Safety, Iarnród Éireann**

Freedom of Information Request:  
Schedule of Records for IE\_FOI\_546 : Summary for Decision Making

Record No.	Date of Record	Brief Description	No. of Pages	Decision: Grant/Part Grant/Refuse	Section of Act if applicable	Record Edited/Identify Deletions
1	12.01.2022	IE_FOI_546 Response Doc	1	Grant	~	~
2	12.01.2022	Report Failure of 1225 ex Cork Tuesday 28th December 2021	10	Grant	~	~
3	12.01.2022	Mark IV Capacity	1	Grant	~	~

Signed:  
Sue Stanley  
Freedom of Information / Data Protection Office

## IE FOI 546 Response Document

- copies of all records held referring or relating to the decision to heavily load a rail service after a mechanical fault occurred on 28 December.
  - The 14:25hrs service ex Cork (the train used to take the customers off the failed 12:25hrs service) had recorded 10 first class and 131 standard class passengers before Portlaoise. There were 160 customers on the failed train and all transferred over. The total number of customers on the 14:25hrs leaving site would then have been 301 customers which does not exceed the max capacity for a Mark IV (see copy of Mark IV capacity attached).
- copies of any health and safety assessment, investigation reports associated with the operation of this service.
  - As of 28<sup>th</sup> December 2021, Iarnród Éireann was operating at 100% capacity in line with Covid 19 guidelines. The number of passengers would not have affected the capacity of the MK4 on the 14:25hrs service on the 28th December. (See copy of the Investigation Report attached).
- copies of any complaints (anonymised) relating to this service.
  - Up to 12.01.2022 there have been 207 complaints received regarding the disruption on the 28th December. This is based on searching for Service Disruption-Train Failure- Cork, Tralee, Limerick and Galway routes, from 28th December to 12th January.
  - ***To extract all such complaints from the CRM system, would take 207 x 7 mins per complaint = 1449 mins = 24 hours @ €20 per hour = €480***

**Report into the failure of the 12:25 hrs Cork/Heuston Service**  
**At Portlaoise on Tuesday the 28<sup>th</sup> December 2021.**

**Attendees;**

Billy Gilpin, Director RU

Pat Casey, PSM, S&W

Paul Stanley, DM Mainline

Chris Mc Morrow, Head of Fleet Management (HOFM)

Darren Bowe, Manager CTC & Train Performance

John O Connor, Duty Manager, CTC

Ronan King, Assistant Depot Manager, Running Shed

Stephen Sweeney, Fleet Technical Support, Loco and MKIV

**Background**

On Tuesday the 28<sup>th</sup> December at circa 14:50hrs the 12:25hrs service from Cork to Heuston stopped 1 mile south of Portlaoise station, and was subsequently declared a failure due to a catastrophic event in the engine room of loco 223, at 15:05hrs.

This event (coupled with an earlier delay at Lisduff due to a reported fault with the loco) led to an overall five hour delay to some 160 customers on board, as well as delays to a range of other services ex Cork ranging from 10 mins to 3 hours. In total there was;

- Primary Mins lost: 279 mins
- WLC Mins: 1,743 mins (42 trains)

The significant delay also meant taxis and hotel rooms needed to be arranged for many that missed flights and onward connections. It also drew some media attention and query.

The PSM, S&W called a review meeting of the main stakeholders in the management of the event for Friday the 31<sup>st</sup> December @ 09:00hrs.

**Summary of failure timeline.**

13:58hrs – 12:25 stops at Lisduff, reports alarm with loco 223.

14:30hrs - loco restarts and continues after consulting with CME.

14:42hrs – 12:25 reports loss of power, will coast into Portlaoise.

14:50hrs -12:25 stopped south of Portlaoise, driver attempting to restart loco.

15:05hrs -12:25 declared a failure. Rescue loco and staff for T2T transfer sought & dispatched.

17:05hrs-report from site that failure ready to move.

17:35hrs – advice from site rescue loco cannot build a brake. T2T rescue initiated.

18:15hrs – T2T commences.

18:50hrs- T2T completes and 1425 ex Cork moves toward Portlaoise.

20:14hrs – failed train moves into Portlaoise platform.

### **Why did loco 223 fail?**

The loco suffered a powerpack related failure and would not take a restart . This loco shut down at Lisduff earlier in the journey (13:58hrs to 14:30hrs) but took a restart. It wasn't showing any unusual readings in fluid or oil level at that point. As this was not considered an unusual event, it could continue its journey. Some 12 mins later the loco shut down again approaching Portlaoise. This time the driver reported a lot of engine room smoke and the loco would not take a restart. The service was declared a failure. CME confirm that the fault could not have been predicted and there were no associated engine issues reported during its recent maintenance in the Running Shed or in passenger service.

### **Why didn't the service coast into Portlaoise?**

The driver did confirm that he was going to attempt to coast into Portlaoise platform, however a local service was boarding on the up platform at the time and despite CTC making an effort to move the local quickly, the 12:25 was blocked by signals and had to stop.

### **What was the immediate response?**

CTC sought a light engine from Heuston to go to site with maintenance on board, this was done before the 12:25 was declared a failure. CTC also sought additional staff from the DM Mainline to lead and assist with a train to train (T2T) rescue. Remote pilotman (RPM) was also set up.

Both CTC and RU Ops agreed that the rescue option employed would be based on who/what got to site first. This was widely communicated to all levels. It transpired that the loco got to site first, and so a loco recovery was initiated.

### **Why wasn't the 13:25 ex Cork used for a T2T rescue?**

Current procedure on T2T evacuation calls for a "person in charge of transfer" (PICOT). This role developed when the procedure was formalised against the backdrop of some train crews declining to engage with the concept during disruption, based on not having any formal knowledge of it. CTC sought a PICOT from DM Mainline and one was provided. However, the 13:25 (4 ICR) would have suffered a huge delay waiting for the person to get to site, so it was decided to let the 13:25 continue via RPM and use a later train.

**What was the communication updates from the site of the failure like?**

Updates from site was poor on this event. This was despite the CME specifically asking their man to keep them updated. This lack of information had a direct bearing on CTC and twitter updates to staff and customers.

**When RU Managers knew that the 12:25 would be a least 3 hours late, what was done for customers?**

DM Mainline took it upon himself to keep the host on board the 12:25 up to date with the recovery scenarios. He also reminded the host that toilets would shut down and the host was to manage this carefully, locking off any toilets that threatened to overflow.

The host went through the train advising customers of the expected delay and then took details from customers wishing to make flights etc. Taxis were arranged in Portlaoise and Heuston for those people.

**Were there any efforts to get refreshments to the failed train?**

No. RU didn't have any stock on board or near the site to get to the customers. The fact that Covid regulations prevents IE's contracted caterer Railgourmet being on board, meant no supplies. There also wasn't enough staff to complete this or procure stocks from a local supermarket, the only 2 additional staff the DM had access too, were dispatched to the train to assist with T2T.

On arrival at Heuston there was bottled water made available, and several customers availed of it. Those customers staying overnight in the Aishling hotel were supplied with food and bottled water/minerals after check in.

**Rescue loco 207 was ready to go with the failed train at 17:05hrs but then was also subsequently declared a failure at 17:35hrs as it couldn't form a brake. What happened?**

Everything was in order with the brake test of Cab 1 of Loco 207 (Loco Cab immediately coupled to the MKIV) and the brakes released on the train at 17:05.

It transpires that human error (remote cock in the wrong position) was the cause of the rescue loco not building a brake. This remote cock was mistakenly switched out in cab 1 and after switching in cab 2 (lead cab for hauling back to Dublin), it was noticed that the independent brake went abnormally low and the PC lamp would not clear, meaning no power.

There was also a subsequent report of an issue with another brake pipe cock on the front of Loco 207, however on further investigation this was proven not to be the case.

In discussion CME and RU ops could not agree where the error lay. CME argued that it was the driver's responsibility to set up the cab, RU Ops advised that the CME representative on the ground directed the driver (and later the District Traction Executive) on the position of the remote cock.

As it could not be resolved, the meeting agreed to take the issue offline for the DM Mainline and HOFM to discuss and agree what should be done in future if there is a difference of opinion on the ground.

However, all agreed that this error put the failure which was already significant (now at 3½hrs), into crisis mode where T2T was believed to be the only viable option, and was going to add another hour at least to the recovery.

### What lessons have been learned from this event?

- A protocol needs to be developed which prioritises **customer** response/rescue over train rescue. An example of such a document would be; RDG-OPS-GN-049 Issue 5 – November 2020. [https://www.raildeliverygroup.com/files/Publications/RDG-OPS-GN-049 MeetingtheNeedsofPassengersStrandedonTrains.pdf](https://www.raildeliverygroup.com/files/Publications/RDG-OPS-GN-049%20MeetingtheNeedsofPassengersStrandedonTrains.pdf)
- A checklist for CTC, CME and RU Ops Managers needs to be drafted so failures can be broken down by the half hour/hour to see if actions are being taken.
- The T2T policy document needs to be updated. Training to be arranged for Hosts and CSOs on T2T evacuation procedures.
- A better and more structured approach in relation to updates from site needs to be developed by CME.
- Drivers and CME staff that respond to these failures need more comprehensive training on loco to DVT rescues.
- Given the level of complexity and number of actions that can fall out of such failures, expecting the DM to do it all is undermining an effective customer response. Front line colleagues like DMs need better support. DM Mainline was dealing with everything from the host, to taxis to Heuston information, to arranging hotel rooms.
- In the continued absence of Railgourmet, RU Ops need to consider how food and water can be gotten to delayed customers. There were several options considered.
  - Bring Railgourmet back, even in a limited capacity.
  - Seek some formal response from catering providers/supermarkets that can be called upon to provide water & food to a location.
  - Consider the formulation of an RU response team (like a MERRT) that would have the ability to get to site and assist with food/water and T2T.
  - Ask a member of staff to procure water & food from a local supermarket when failures occur. *Note, this option received the least amount of support as some participants believed it could not be delivered in a consistent way, or indeed in the fashion that subsequent twitter and internal commentary dictated how IÉ should respond.*

## Actions

Lesson	Action	Responsibility	Comment
A protocol needs to be developed which emphasises customer rescue over train rescue.	Write up a protocol similar to the <b>Network Rail guidance note: Meeting the needs of passengers stranded on trains, RDG-OPS-49, issue 5 November 2020</b> that can be briefed to all PSMs, DMs and Acting DMs to focus future failures to the customer response.	Director RU	
A checklist for CME and RU Ops Managers needs to be drafted so failures can be broken down by the half hour/hour to see if actions are being taken.	Write up a checklist that managers can consult to ensure all appropriate actions are being taken during a failure	Director RU	
Checklist for CTC, to include staff and twitter updates.	Develop a checklist for CTC Duty Managers breaking down the event by half hourly/hourly to ensure actions are being taking.	Manager CTC & Train Performance	
The T2T policy document needs to be updated. Training to be arranged for Hosts and CSOs on T2T evacuation procedures.	Update the policy document and brief to staff.  Arrange for practical training for on board staff	PSM S&W	
A better and more structured approach in relation to updates from site needs to be developed by CME	CME will review its Communication Process and ensure staff are aware of the importance of giving regular updates from site so decisions can be made, and information passed on to staff and customers.	Head of Fleet Management	
Drivers and CME staff that respond to these failures need more comprehensive training on loco to DVT rescues	Practical/video training for loco to DVT rescue to be set up	DM Mainline/Head of Fleet Management	
Given the level of complexity and number of actions that can fall out of such failures, expecting the DM to do it all is undermining an effective customer response. Front line colleagues like DMs need better support. DM Mainline was dealing with everything from the host, to taxis to Heuston information, to	Other customer relevant staff/departments need to support DMs with issues like flights and hotel bookings during disruption.  The commercial team have a role to play here.	Director RU	



arranging hotel rooms. He then led the response in Heuston in person	Director RU to speak with the Commercial Director on the options.		
In the continued absence of Railgourmet, RU Ops need to consider how food and water can be gotten to delayed customers.	Director RU and PSMs to consider options for their teams.	Director RU/PSMs	




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Pat Casey  
 Passenger Services Manager,  
 South and West

## Timeline for failure of A215 from Symphony Call Logger

- 13:58:02- Driver contacts Reg due to alarm on loco and requests to speak to CME
- 13:59:00- Driver put through to CME call length 10.21 minutes
- 14:08:57- Driver requests signal protection to go back to loco
- 14:13:37- Driver put through to CME from loco, restarted loco, call length 13 minutes
- 14:30:06- Driver advises ready to go.

## Actual failure

- 14:42:30 – Driver advises lost power and rolling in
- 14:43:30- Reg tell driver of P213 on platform in Portlaoise to depart immediately
- 14:50:45 Driver advises now stopped, he will go back and try restart loco
- 14:53:39- Hstn requested to dispatch loco
- 14:57:48- Driver advises attempted a restart but shutdown immediately with a lot of smoke from the engine compartment
- 15:00:02- Driver put through to CME
- 15:05:30- Driver declares A215 a failure
- 15:11:04- Driver of A217 advised of failure ahead and CTC are setting up RPM
- 15:29:58- A217 giving instructions for RPM around failure
- 15:51:06- J243 giving instructions for RPM
- 16:13:42- Staff member from Portarlinton arrives and advises traffic Reg
- 16:15:44- Driver of assisting loco contacts signaller from Portarlinton to enquire of procedure
- 16:16:28 Driver of A215 giving an update on assisting loco
- 16:23:02- Driver of A215 asked if the loco will fit in behind signal
- 16:25:41- Driver of A215 told to go to protection point
- 16:38:51- Assisting loco giving authority number to enter section
- 16:46:41- DTE J Darcy contacts reg to say arrived on site
- 17:04:47- Reg contacts staff member on the ground for info as unable to contact CME/ Driver at failed set
- 17:05:47- Driver of assisting loco advises hooked up and nearly ready to go
- 17:16:38- Staff member on the ground advises still building up brake on failed set
- 17:17:00 – Driver of A215 contacted and advises trouble building brake
- 17:17:55- Traffic Reg contacts Inchicore as no contact from site, he advises he can't contact him either
- 17:23:19- General call made to A215 to contact CTC
- 17:24:16- Inchicore CME contact Reg to advise they cannot contact staff member at failure
- 17:24:20- General call made for driver of A215 to contact CTC
- 17:26:14- DTE J Darcy contacts CTC to help driver but CTC unable to contact him
- 17:26:36- Driver of A215 contacts CTC and advises still building brake
- 17:27:47- Reg asks driver for mobile number so FTS can speak with him.

- 17:35:39- Inchicore CME contact Reg for update as he cannot contact staff member on ground
- 17:35:51- General call made for A215 to contact CTC
- 17:37:19- Driver of A219 contacted and advised train to train transfer will take place
- 17:39:07- Driver of A219 advises CSO not trained for transfer
- 17:41:32- RPM re-established for transfer
- 17:42:03- Driver A215 advises still no brake, advised of train-to-train transfer
- 17:44:14- Inchicore CME contacted and advise still has brake issue and FTS will contact train
- 17:44:39- JOC contacts driver of A215 to advise of train to train
- 17:55:23- A219 giving RPM instructions to enter section
- 18:01:32- Inchicore updates Reg that FTS speaking with staff member on the ground
- 18:18:35- Driver of A219 contacted for update and advises transfer taking place
- 18:23:58- FTS put through to driver of A215
- 18:47:15- Driver of A219 advises train to train complete, RPM gives instructions to proceed
- 20:14:47- Driver of A215 advises ok to go

## CTC Email Alerts

- 1-14:06- A215 12.25 Cork-Hstn stopped Lisduff-Ballybrophy with train alarm- driver fault finding at present- JOC
- 2- 14:20- A215 12.25 Cork-Hstn stopped Lisduff – Ballybrophy- loco requested from both Limerick & Hstn to assist- on-going fault finding continuing- CME requested to travel with loco- JOC
- 3- 14:33- A215 12.25 Cork-Hstn moving on + 35 after restarting loco 223- Assisting locos stood down- JOC
- 4- 14:46- A215 12.25 Cork-Hstn loco 223- driver advises loco in trouble again approaching Portlaoise- update to follow- JOC
- 5- 14:54- A215 12.25 Cork-Hstn loco 223 stopped just outside Portlaoise- driver will attempt to restart loco to make platform- update to follow- JOC
- 6- 15:02- A215 12.25 ex Cork stopped outside Portlaoise- loco ex Hstn to assist- unable to contact CME @ 3882 to travel with loco- CTC prepping for RPM- JOC
- 7- 15:08- A215 12.25 Hstn-Cork failed outside Portlaoise- rescue loco ex Hstn to assist- contact made with CME who will travel to site-JOC
- 8- 15:18- CTC have left message with Act DM Hstn arrange staff for train-to-train transfer- JOC
- 9- 15:23- A217 13.25 Cork-Hstn has gone around failed set via RPM- assisting loco has departed Hstn- JOC
- 10- 15:43- DM Hstn advises staff on route ex Hstn & Portarlinton for train-to-train transfer if required- assisting loco passing Newbridge at present- JOC
- 11-15:55- A217 13.25 Cork -Hstn + 33 due to failure at Portlaoise (Operating via RPM)- JOC
- 12- 16:27- Assisting loco approaching Portlaoise and will be giving instructions shortly to assist A215- JOC
- 13- 16:43- Assisting loco entered section and to proceeding to failed service- JOC
- 14- 17:11- A215 driver advises should be ready to go very shortly and will serve Portlaoise and nonstop to Hstn- A219 14.25 Cork-Hstn was held in rear as Plan B Option (train to train transfer) and currently 60 late- A221 15.25 currently at Ballybrophy- JOC
- 15- 17:29- A215 advises trouble building brake – RPM to be re-established and train to train transfer with A219- Update to follow- JOC
- 16- 17:42- Host on A219 advises not trained for passenger transfer- Staff on the ground to assist- JOC
- 17- 17:49- Driver of assisting loco advises not getting a brake- A219 currently pulling up alongside to transfer passengers- JOC
- 18- 17:59- All in place for train-to-train transfer- No information coming from site of failure- JOC
- 19- 18:10- CTC have requested plan from CME on the recovery of A215 & 2 failed locos- JOC

20- 18:16- Train to train transfer currently taking place - JOC

21- 18:17- DM Hstn will have staff in Heuston to meet affected passengers- JOC

22- 18:25- CTC still awaiting information on recovery of failed set- JOC

23- 18:37- A224 18.00 ex Hstn & A226 19.00 ex Hstn combined due to failure at Portlaoise- JOC

24- 18:44- Driver of failed A215 advises passengers still transferring to A219- JOC

25- 18:51- Train to train transfer complete and A219 moving on- JOC


26- 19:04- Loco FTS put through to driver of failed A215 to carry out further checks- RPM remains in force until failure cleared- JOC

27- 19:17- On-going disruption to mainline services through Portlaoise due to failed A215 - JOC

28- 19:27-CME advise brake cock on Cork end of assisting loco seized- loco will run around and haul empty set into LCTD- JOC

29- 19:56- Delays to mainline services operating through Portlaoise remain on-going- RPM in operation, this will be cancelled after the passage of A226 19.00 ex Hstn & A225 17.25 ex Cork to allow loco run around failed set and haul into LTCD- JOC

30- 20:25- Failed set has cleared onto the platform at Portlaoise after CME repaired assisting loco- RPM cancelled and normal signalling resumed- set will return empty to Inchicore later tonight- JOC

Seating Capacity							
	STOCK	TRAIN LENGTH (m)	SEATING PER CARRIAGE			WHEELCHAIRS / BIKES	PICTURE
	MKIV			7 PCE	8 PCE		
	43 Standard Cars	23.60	69	276	345	1 W/Chair in Standard Bikes in Control Car	
	8 Control Cars (DVT) 8 Dining Cars	23.81	00	00	00	1 W/Chair in City Gold	
	8 City Gold Cars	23.60	28	28	28		
	201 Class Loco	23.60	44	44	44		
		20.95					
7 PCE	Formation: (DVT City Gold Diner 4 Standard)	186.36		348		5 W/Chairs Per 7 Car Set	
8 PCE	Formation: (DVT City Gold Diner 5 Standard)	209.96			417	6 W/Chairs Per 8 Car Set	
	TOTAL: 67 Coaches						