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# £5m rail safety move to save lives

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Network Rail is funding a £5 million programme to fit additional disc brakes to hundreds of road rail vehicles, the company said amid calls for safety improvement on the eighth anniversary of an accident in which four railway workers were killed by a runaway wagon.

The Rail Maritime and Transport union will stage a commemoration close to the village of Tebay in Cumbria, where the accident happened in 2004, and will renew its demand for action to stop a repeat of the tragedy, which killed Colin Buckley, Darren Burgess, Chris Waters and Gary Tindall and injured five others.

The union said that since the accident, it had engaged with Network Rail on developing a secondary protection and warning system aimed at preventing another Tebay.

General secretary Bob Crow said: "Today we remember our colleagues who so tragically lost their lives because of the safety failures at Tebay on that dark, early morning eight years ago.

"RMT members up and down the country are rightly angry and disgusted that a secondary protection system, which has been the subject of countless meetings, still hasn't been introduced eight years on.

"Today we are demanding that Network Rail stop prevaricating and give us a definitive timetable for the guaranteed introduction of the secondary protection system. On this day, of all days, we will accept nothing less."

A Network Rail spokesman said: "Safety is paramount in everything we do, which is why all the recommendations made by the Railway Safety and Standards Board following their investigation of the incident have been fully implemented.

"In addition to those, there are a number of work streams in progress to deliver solutions aimed at reducing the risk posed by runaway vehicles and the RMT is actively involved in these.

"In order to reduce the risk, we are currently funding a £5 million programme to fit additional disc brakes to over 300 road rail vehicles.

"Our long-term strategy includes the development of a new generation of road rail vehicles designed specifically for railway use."

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