

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

# Dedicated to Safety

The Hague – May 2026



Dutch Safety  
Board

# The Dutch Safety Board

When an accident or disaster happens, the Dutch Safety Board investigates how it was possible for it to occur, with the aim of learning lessons for the future and, ultimately, improving safety in the Netherlands.

The Dutch Safety Board is independent and is free to decide which occurrences to investigate. In particular, it focuses on situations in which people's personal safety is dependent on third parties, such as the government or companies. In certain cases, the Board is under an obligation to carry out an investigation. Its investigations expressly do not focus on issues regarding blame or liability.

You can read the annual report on our website.



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# 1 Reflection

Independent, careful and dedicated. These are the core values of the Dutch Safety Board – values that should resonate in everything we do, everything we are, and everything we aspire to be.

We strive to ensure that these core values are not just words on paper. They must be unmistakable in our attitude, our behaviour, and our investigations. They come into play when we conduct an investigation, communicate about it, and liaise with the parties concerned. They help us to take a close look at ourselves: are we acting independently, are we investigating carefully, are we truly dedicated?

Most people will understand what we mean by ‘independent’ and by ‘careful’, but what about ‘dedicated’? It’s extremely important to us, but what does it actually mean? It’s long been a term with a rather solemn connotation. At the Dutch Safety Board, it’s expressed through the hard work of our staff, who devote their time and energy to improving safety. It embodies the personal commitment and responsibility of every one of them, going far beyond just complying with all the procedures and standards that guide our work. Dedication calls on us to be vigilant and act responsibly – regarding the findings of the investigation, regarding the learning outcomes that we strive for at all times, and regarding the interests of those affected by a safety occurrence. In fact, it applies to every last detail of our work. Being dedicated means being totally committed to something – genuinely and sincerely.

In 2025, we published an investigation into the safety of migrant workers. That’s a prime example of how safety involves more than simply complying with all the legislation on health and safety at work. You may have outsourced all your safety risks and you may score top marks in your safety audit, but without staff who are dedicated to safety, those achievements become pointless. If a control tower, a wheelhouse, a refinery, or a slaughterhouse doesn’t have dedicated people working there – people who care about their colleagues and their colleagues’ safety – then, despite all the strict safety measures, their efforts are equally pointless. The employees must themselves be dedicated to safety. The management can certainly encourage it, but it needs – above all – to be a key focus in recruitment and training. Only organisations which manage to do that are truly safe.



**Chris van Dam**

*Chairman Dutch Safety Board*

## 2 Investigations

In 2025, the Dutch Safety Board completed 156 investigations and started 140, of various sizes. Through its investigations, the Dutch Safety Board aims to improve safety in the Netherlands. In the aviation, shipping, rail and industrial sectors, it often has an obligation to investigate. In other categories, it can decide for itself whether to conduct an investigation. Usually there's a reason for this, such as the collapse of the Wilhelmina Tower in Valkenburg and two accidents during military exercises in Güz Altmark and Munster Nord. In 2025, a thematic investigation was launched into collisions with bridges and locks.

### 2.1 Overview of investigations

As of 31 December 2025, 101 investigations were ongoing.

|  | Started in 2025 | Completed in 2025 | Ongoing as of 31-12-2025 |
|--|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Emergency assistance Fremantle Highway   |                 | 1                 |                          |
| Collapse of ramps at multi-storey car park in Nieuwegein   |                 | 1                 |                          |
| Safety of Migrant Workers  |                 | 1                 |                          |
| Children in the asylum system  |                 |                   | 1                        |
| Follow-up study on care for people with severe mental health vulnerabilities and those around them |                 |                   | 1                        |
| Lifting accident Lochem  |                 |                   | 1                        |
| Safety risks due to extreme rainfall   |                 |                   | 1                        |
| Collapse of the Wilhelmina tower, Valkenburg   | 1               |                   | 1                        |
| Collisions with bridges and locks  | 1               |                   | 1                        |
| Accidents during the Güz Altmark and Munster Nord military exercises                               | 1               |                   | 1                        |
| Shipping investigations  | 10              | 6                 | 6                        |
| Shipping incidents not extensively investigated (reported periodically)                            | 101             | 109               | 55                       |
| Aviation investigations  |                 | 4                 | 4                        |
| Aviation incidents not extensively investigated (reported periodically)                            | 24              | 30                | 25                       |
| Rail investigations  |                 | 1                 | 1                        |
| Industry investigations  | 2               | 3                 | 3                        |
| Defence investigations   |                 |                   |                          |
| Other investigations   | 1               |                   |                          |
| <b>Total number of investigations</b>  | <b>140</b>      | <b>156</b>        | <b>101</b>               |

## 2.2 Occurrence reports

The Dutch Safety Board receives occurrence reports through a variety of channels. Certain occurrences, for instance in aviation, shipping and industry, are subject to a reporting requirement.

The Dutch Safety Board assesses incoming reports to identify whether an initial or further investigation should take place.

In 2025, the Dutch Safety Board received 530 occurrence reports. For some reported occurrences, the Dutch Safety Board has a statutory obligation to investigate, and it investigates such reports automatically. Reports that are not subject to that obligation are carefully assessed on a case-by-case basis to see whether an investigation is warranted. The Dutch Safety Board does so based on a number of factors, with one important consideration being whether the occurrence offers sufficient opportunities for achieving safety benefits. Account is also taken of the seriousness, impact and scope of the occurrence, and the Dutch Safety Board considers other investigations related to the occurrence as well. The question then becomes the extent to which an investigation by the Dutch Safety Board can deliver added value. Finally, the Safety Board's powers are limited by the applicable legislation and regulations. In principle, it does not investigate occurrences that involve the maintenance of public order.

The Dutch Safety Board also receives reports in the form of letters from members of the public. Each letter is assessed for opportunities to learn safety lessons.

| Sector   | Occurrence reports |
|----------|--------------------|
| Aviation | 247                |
| Shipping | 254                |
| Industry | 1                  |
| Rail     | 28                 |

# 3 Situation regarding follow-up to recommendations

Parties that receive recommendations from the Dutch Safety Board are obliged to respond to them. For each report, the Board publishes a memorandum setting out the responses; these are referred to as 'follow-up memoranda'. The Board considers it important to provide information on what has been done in response to its recommendations and what can be improved. Parties are themselves responsible for ensuring that recommendations are actually followed up on.

If the Dutch Safety Board makes a recommendation to the relevant minister, the minister responds to the Board. If the recommendation is addressed to another party, that party responds to the relevant minister. It has also been stipulated that the minister must then decide – within one year of receiving the response – whether further measures are necessary. The minister will then inform the Dutch Safety Board about this, as well as the party that received the recommendation.

The Dutch Safety Board is also required to report annually on the follow-up to its recommendations. A number of these follow-up memoranda from 2025 are highlighted below, with a brief description of the investigation and the follow-up to the Board's recommendations. These follow-up memoranda and the responses received from the parties involved are available in full on the Dutch Safety Board's website.



## 3.1 Collision between a water taxi and a harbour tour boat (January 2025)

The report on the collision on the Nieuwe Maas included five recommendations, primarily addressed to Watertaxi Rotterdam and the Rotterdam Harbour Master's Division.

| Recommendation   | Core of recommendation   | Conclusion on follow-up  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Recommendation 1</b><br>(Watertaxi Rotterdam)                             | Bring internal guidelines into line with legislation and regulations; ensure consistent compliance, including through regular training sessions.   | <b>Partially followed up on.</b> Watertaxi Rotterdam is in consultation with the Harbour Master, is monitoring compliance, and has stepped up training, but it remains unclear how the guidelines will be brought into line with the relevant legislation and regulations. |
| <b>Recommendation 2</b><br>(Watertaxi Rotterdam)                             | Reduce distractions for the skipper; for example ensure an ergonomic workplace, relevant information, and a selective communication channel.   | <b>Followed up on.</b> Watertaxi Rotterdam has put measures in place, such as developing a collision warning system.   |
| <b>Recommendation 3</b><br>(Harbour Master)                                  | Ensure that the consultation with the parties involved is a regular <b>decision-making consultation</b> with specific, verifiable arrangements (including regarding navigational behaviour and communication). | <b>Followed up on.</b> The Harbour Master is organising periodical consultations directed by the (National) Harbour Master, during which decisions are recorded and reviewed.  |
| <b>Recommendation 4</b><br>(Municipality of Rotterdam, Harbour Master)       | Implement measures to reduce the <b>complexity of the fairway</b> on the Nieuwe Maas and to organise it in a way that ensures safe use.  | <b>Partially followed up on.</b> The parties are holding periodic consultations, and inspections and official reports have been implemented, but the complexity of the fairway has not yet been reduced.   |
| <b>Recommendation 5</b><br>(Minister of Infrastructure and Water Management) | Develop <b>legislation and regulations</b> governing the commercial transport of twelve or fewer passengers by water.  | <b>Not yet followed up on.</b> The Minister has taken steps to follow up on the recommendation, such as initiating a process to create a legal framework and setting up a working group on Navigation Speeds on the Nieuwe Maas.   |



### 3.2 Railway accident in Voorschoten (March 2025)

The report on the railway accident included five recommendations, one addressed to the State Secretary for Infrastructure and Water Management (IenW) and four to ProRail.

| Recommendation   | Core of recommendation   | Conclusion on follow-up  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Recommendation 1</b><br>(State Secretary for Infrastructure and Water Management) | Ensure that in the commissioning of ProRail, values other than availability of the network and track integrity – such as <b>safe working and the safe passing of trains at worksites</b> – are embedded. Remove the barriers for ProRail regarding innovations and the creation of a facility for recording information. | <b>Not followed up on.</b> The State Secretary states that he continues to urge various parties to focus on safety, but the Safety Board finds that the role of commissioning authority is not being exercised to the full and that weighing up public interests (such as safety) must be undertaken in an explicit and transparent manner.      |
| <b>Recommendation 2</b><br>(ProRail)   | Set up a <b>facility where information on rail accidents and near misses is recorded and put to use</b> for the entire sector.   | <b>Partially followed up on.</b> ProRail is extending the existing recording system (ProVAT) to create a central reporting facility and intends to enter into binding agreements regarding the reporting of incidents.   |
| <b>Recommendation 3</b><br>(ProRail)   | <b>Maintain control over the safety</b> of works in all phases, use the facility that is to be established for risk analysis, and use industry professionalism to make situational trade-offs.   | <b>Partially followed up on.</b> ProRail is taking steps to maintain control over safety and is continuing to carry out 'bow tie' analyses. However, the Safety Board sees no evidence of actual improvements and warns that simplifying regulations should not become an end in itself.   |
| <b>Recommendation 4</b><br>(ProRail)   | Promote worker safety and, where tracks are not out of service, ensure <b>robust worksite shielding</b> , stop using <b>island possessions</b> and temporary crossing periods, and tools to monitor the status of tracks.  | <b>Not followed up on.</b> ProRail does not specifically address the need for robust worksite shielding for the entire worksite and makes no commitment to stopping island possessions and temporary crossing periods.   |
| <b>Recommendation 5</b><br>(ProRail)   | Reduce the <b>negative consequences of night work and excessive working</b> , without increasing safety risks, and ensure that self-employed workers comply with the Working Hours Act as a minimum.   | <b>Not followed up on.</b> ProRail is introducing measures to improve the effectiveness of night work and to move work to daytime hours. It does not, however, show how this will prevent an increase in safety risks. There is also no specific commitment to ensure that self-employed workers comply with the Working Hours Act as a minimum. |



### 3.3 Near mid-air collision in the Rotterdam Control Zone (CTR) (May 2025)

This report led to three recommendations, addressed to Air Traffic Control the Netherlands (LVNL), ICAO, and EASA. The assessment utilises the ENCASIA criteria (Adequate, Partially adequate, Not adequate).

| Recommendation                             | Core of recommendation  | Conclusion on follow-up   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Recommendation 1</b><br>(LVNL)          | Ensure, in the short term, that arriving VFR (visual flight rules) traffic and departing VFR traffic in the CTR of Rotterdam The Hague Airport, have no <b>crossing flight paths at the same altitude</b> . | <b>Not adequate.</b> LVNL announced short-term measures (removing routes), but these had not yet been implemented at the time of publication of the memorandum.   |
| <b>Recommendation 2</b><br>(LVNL)          | Include the objectives of Regulation (EU) 2017/373 ATS.TR.100 for VFR operations in class C and D airspace in LVNL policy in order to <b>prevent collisions between VFR traffic</b> .                       | <b>Partially adequate.</b> LVNL is conducting best-practice sessions aimed at reducing risks, but it remains unclear to what extent LVNL actually intends assuming responsibility for preventing collisions between VFR traffic in controlled airspace. |
| <b>Recommendation 3</b><br>(ICAO and EASA) | Alter the <b>retention period</b> of background communication and aural environment recordings in air traffic services from 24 hours to <b>30 days</b> .  | <b>Partially adequate.</b> Both ICAO and EASA have taken action (ICAO: referral to ATMOPSP for technical assessment; EASA: inclusion in Rulemaking Task 0719), but the likelihood and scope of any actual change in the regulations remain uncertain.   |



### 3.4 Compromise on Room to Manoeuvre (June 2025)

The report on the management of shipping safety in the North Sea included two recommendations addressed to the Minister of Infrastructure and Water Management.

| Recommendation   | Core of recommendation  | Conclusion on follow-up  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Recommendation 1</b><br>(Minister of Infrastructure and Water Management) | <b>Improve management of the risks to shipping safety</b> that result from the positioning of fixed objects (by understanding the risks and effects of management measures, a realistic safety goal, comprehensive assessment, etc.). | <b>Partially followed up on.</b> The minister is seeking a new approach to managing risks to shipping safety, taking into account various elements from our recommendation (including scenario thinking and simulations). We are critical of the slow pace and the fact that it does not apply to existing objects. The minister's response also fails to address the recommended periodic evaluation. |
| <b>Aanbeveling 2</b><br>(Minister of Infrastructure and Water Management)    | In consultations with other North Sea countries, press for the <b>international frameworks</b> to be modified.  | <b>Followed up on.</b> In international consultations, the minister has pressed for the international frameworks to be modified. An initiative has been undertaken within the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to create a multi-year programme aimed at safeguarding shipping safety in a rapidly changing maritime environment.   |



### 3.5 Touchdown before threshold (June 2025)

This report led to a single recommendation, addressed to Amsterdam Airport Schiphol. The assessment utilises the ENCASIA criteria (Adequate, Partially adequate, Not adequate).

| Recommendation  | Core of recommendation   | Conclusion on follow-up   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Recommendation 1</b><br>(Amsterdam Airport Schiphol) | <b>Restrict the use of Runway 22</b> for Eye-to-Wheel Height Category 4 aircraft landings, until adjustments have been made to ensure the minimum threshold clearance for such aircraft can be achieved. | <b>Partially adequate.</b> Schiphol has not imposed the restriction because a risk analysis indicated that there might then be greater operational risks. The airport has, however, taken specific steps to address the underlying safety problem, such as relocating the PAPI and the alignment markings to improve vertical guidance, in accordance with EASA requirements. |

# 4

# Organisational development

## 4.1 Multi-year programme

In 2024, the Dutch Safety Board commissioned a number of evaluations and recommendations aimed at increasing its effectiveness. In order to achieve all these aims in a responsible manner, the Board established a multi-year programme in the summer of 2025.

The programme was set up with involvement of the whole organisation and focuses on pathways for the short, medium, and longer term. It covers various topics, such as the investigation process, external orientation, and organisation and business operations. The ultimate aim of the multi-year programme is to make the Netherlands safer by means of investigations.

## 4.2 Core values

Starting in 2025, the Dutch Safety Board will operate on the basis of three new core values.

**Independent:** The Safety Board is objective and impartial. We do not focus on apportioning blame but on learning from occurrences. We are unprejudiced, give both sides a fair hearing, and arrive at our own judgement from a neutral standpoint.

**Careful:** The Safety Board's investigations are thorough. We talk to those involved, treat information confidentially, and analyse occurrences with the help of experts. We reflect openly and critically on our working methods and undergo regular appraisals.

**Dedicated:** The Safety Board is dedicated to making the Netherlands safer. We work on behalf of people whose safety depends on others. We learn lessons from occurrences, make recommendations to improve safety, and pay attention to victims and their families.

# Annual social report

## 5.1 Staffing and employment conditions

This part of the annual report describes the staff organisation at the Dutch Safety Board. The Works Council and the Company Emergency Response Team (CERT) also report on their activities in the year just ended.

### Turnover and staffing level

The Dutch Safety Board, including its three permanent Executive Board members, has a staffing capacity of 85.00 FTE. The staffing level in 2025 was 78.46 FTE, with a total of 84 employees. In 2025, seven employees left the Safety Board as part of a mobility scheme or upon reaching retirement age. Eleven new employees joined us.

### Sickness absence

The sickness absence rate for 2025 was 5.7%. This was higher than in 2024 (4.6%).

### Complaints Committee for Undesirable Conduct

The Centre for Public–Sector Labour Relations (CAOP) provides secretarial support to the Dutch Safety Board’s Complaints Committee for Undesirable Conduct. In accordance with the Safety Board’s Regulations for Undesirable Conduct, a member of staff can submit a complaint about undesirable conduct, such as harassment, sexual intimidation, aggression, violence, and discrimination. The Complaints Committee advises on the complaints that are submitted to the competent authority. No formal complaints were received under these regulations in 2025. However, two reports were submitted regarding integrity. In accordance with the Dutch Safety Board’s integrity policy, these were investigated by an external investigation committee.

### Working conditions and safety

There were no incidents related to working conditions and safety in 2025.

### Trauma care

Trauma care is a service offered to Safety Board staff who require psychological support as a result of their investigation work. The service is provided by an external expert party. In 2025, that party was not called upon to offer support. The Colleague Support Team was called upon in five separate situations in 2025.

### Confidential advisor

In 2025, the Dutch Safety Board worked with an external confidential advisor from the occupational health and safety service, as well as an internal confidential advisor. The external confidential advisor was approached by three employees. Ten people approached the internal confidential advisor; a number of them spoke to the latter on more than one occasion.

## 5.2 Executive Board and Agency

### The Executive Board

Chris van Dam was appointed chairman with effect from 1 May 2023. The other permanent members of the Executive Board are Erica Bakkum (who is also Deputy Chair) and Scott Douglas.

### *Associate Executive Board members*

The associate Executive Board members support the permanent Executive Board members on the basis of their sector-specific expertise and attend Executive Board meetings. Based on their expertise and experience, they are also involved in specific investigations. In 2025, the Dutch Safety Board had the following associate Executive Board members:

- Dr Colette Alma-Zeestraten MBA
- Prof. Yvonne Burger
- Prof. Jop Groeneweg
- Maria Henneman
- Rear Admiral (Rtd) Huub Hulsker
- Marjolein ten Kroode MCM MIM
- Ruben Sicking

After completing his two terms of office, Rear Admiral (Rtd) Pieter Bindt stepped down as an associate Executive Board member in October 2025.

### Agency

The Board is supported by an Agency headed by a Secretary Director and made up of a Management Team, investigation clusters, and support departments.

The investigation clusters cover the following sectors:

- aviation
- railway traffic
- shipping
- industry

There are also a number of knowledge domains:

- building construction and fire
- crisis management and emergency response
- culture
- defence
- digital security
- finance
- climate and ecology
- food safety
- road traffic
- health
- social safety

The Agency has two staff departments:

- Operations
- Corporate Affairs

### 5.3 Works Council

Following elections, a brand-new Works Council (WC) comprising five new members was formed in January 2025. With a fresh perspective, they focused, among other things, on the following topics:

- evaluation of the new format for performance reviews;
- flex working and hybrid working;
- onboarding of new employees;
- security checks on new employees;
- employee survey.

The Works Council members met with colleagues to hear about their wishes, concerns, and ideas. In connection with this, it conducted 69 contact plan meetings and 7 exit interviews. In the first round of discussions, it focused on people's experience with the new performance review form. The Works Council discussed the key points with the director, requesting clarification, information, or action where necessary. The performance review form has since been amended in several respects. In the second round of discussions with colleagues, the Works Council focused, among other things, on the opportunities for career advancement within the organisation. The key themes that emerged from these discussions will be shared with the director in early 2026.

The Works Council held eight formal consultation meetings with the director, with informal discussions taking place on a number of occasions in between. The matters discussed included the priorities referred to above, the 2025-2030 multi-year programme, social safety, the duties of the deputy Secretary Director, integrity policy, staff regulations, the 2026 budget, and information security. The Works Council made sure that the interests of the employees were on the agenda for all these meetings. For example, it requested that greater account be taken of the additional capacity demand on colleagues during implementation of the multi-year programme, and that an implementation plan be drawn up for this purpose. The director agreed that this would be done.

In response to a request from the director, the Works Council issued an opinion in 2025 regarding expansion of the management team. Its opinion led the director to commission an external expert to carry out a more detailed analysis of the background and rationale for the expansion. The analysis was completed at the end of 2025 so that its findings could be incorporated into the decision-making process for the expansion in 2026. The director undertook to keep the Works Council updated on this matter.

### 5.4 Company Emergency Response Team

The Safety Board's company emergency response team (CERT) has ten members. They spring into action under the leadership of the head of the CERT when an incident takes place in the office building. The head of the CERT is supported by a team leader; they jointly direct the CERT in the event of an incident.

In 2025, two colleagues left the team and two new colleagues received training. All members of the team have completed their refresher training. An evacuation took place in April 2025. In 2025, there were a couple of minor call-outs with CERT team members providing first aid. The Evac chair was disposed of and replaced by evacuation mattresses; these have been hung up on the fourth floor in both stairwells. The CERT team members have been trained in how to use them.

**6**

# Annual financial statement

In accordance with the letter of approval dated 4 December 2024, the Ministry of Justice and Security set the contribution for 2025 at € 17,280,000.

The statement of income and expenses shows a negative result of € 553,836. The year 2025 has been used to assess whether the government contribution is sufficient. In the course of 2025, various management decisions were adopted regarding the Safety Board's strategic course; as a result, some items differ from the budget. The most important decisions concerned investigations, staff, external hiring, and IT. The sum of € 553,836 from the result has been charged to the equalisation reserve, which therefore amounts to € 1,731,587 as at 31 December 2025.



# Dutch Safety Board

## **Dutch Safety Board**

C.J.L. van Dam, chair

E.A. Bakkum

S.C. Douglas

V.J. Batelaan, acting secretary director

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