

	Health, Safety, Quality and Environmental Alert	Alert number: 44-14	Document Reference: AMG/F/HSQE/001
	Significant Safety Events up to and over the Christmas Period	Issue Date: 31/12/14	Author: Steve Milroy

(To be posted on HSQE Notice Boards for a Period of 1 MONTH from date of issue)

Background:

On the 15th and 16th December, members of staff in High Output were observed conducting activities which were not compliant with working adjacent to open lines (ALO). In addition to this other staff members were observed working on the live side of TRS2 without additional protection in place.

These members of staff would not have been able to reach a position of safety had a train passed and the consequences of this are all too real for many of us who tragically lost a colleague in very similar circumstances.

On 17th December, it was reported that a member of the public tripped and suffered an injury when they used a foot crossing at Darby Green LC in Wessex, the foot crossing surface was removed in preparation of a track renewal and was temporarily replaced with track ballast up to rail level.

Tripping when using a foot path across an open line has the potential for a horrific outcome. (take a moment to consider pushchairs and elderly pedestrians !!) The linespeed is 70mph and is used by over 140 people per day. This follows a similar event at Widmeads in 2011



Before



After

In addition to these events above:

02nd December we had a near miss between a passenger train and track workers at Slough.

07th December we had staff in the four foot of an open line attempting to place isolation earths on live Overhead Line Equipment (OLE) at Stratford.

All are now subject to ongoing Local Investigations

On reflection, our statistics might highlight that December was a relatively safe month as we didn't hurt many of our colleagues !

The statements above demonstrates just how much luck played its part in us not having to tell a workmate or a member of the public's family that they won't be coming home.

Over the Christmas period many of our IP Track worksites had clear evidence of basic site safety rule violations from the non use of PPE, (Helmets, Glasses and Dust Masks etc) to walking by unsafe acts and conditions, in most cases, no challenges were made including managerial and supervisory staff who should be leading by example.

We need to be far better with regards to setting examples for others, we must absolutely never tolerate unsafe behaviour. We must challenge these, if we don't then we don't change and we will continue to rely on luck when it comes to safety.

As we approach 2015, it gives us our chance to put a line in the sand and start afresh with a renewed commitment to safety and to changing our safety culture for the future.

Getting the job done with no overruns fundamentally requires us to get the job done safely, NO SHORTCUTS, NO DEVIATIONS and following the agreed Safe System of Work (SSOW).

We must also speak up when we feel that the SSOW is inadequate or is being compromised.

Remember no job is that important to us that we should ever compromise safety to achieve it.

We need to make everyone proud to be part of our Safety Culture Change

The choice is yours – Choose to work safe, **You** choose to work at Network Rail, Choose to work unsafe, **You** choose not to work with us

Action Required with immediate effect:

All IP track delivery staff to be briefed and have a conversation with line managers on the contents of this notice and to the potential seriousness of these events.

Remember- **Safe Behaviour is a requirement for working at Network Rail to make sure everyone goes Home Safe Everyday**

In addition:

A specific safety presentation prepared by the IP Director of S+SD aimed at all staff will be issued to Programme Directors and Managers in the coming days.

They are to ensure that the contents of this presentation is communicated to their Principal Contractors and briefed to their own respective teams via specific safety stand down events in the first working week in January 2015.

Source: Network Rail