

	Health, Safety, Quality and Environmental Alert	Alert number: 21-14	Document Reference: RSS/F/HSQE/001
	Trench Collapse	Issue Date: 17/07/14	Author: Steve Milroy

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

Background:

On Sunday 6th July 2014 at Stafford (Stafford Alliance Programme), a colleague was trapped when an excavation for a new under track crossing (UTX) chamber partially collapsed. He remains in hospital in a serious but stable condition. Our thoughts are with our injured colleague and his family.

The British Transport Police (BTP) and Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) attended site and started an investigation. A formal investigation involving Network Rail and Stafford Alliance partners has begun.

The Stafford Alliance programme has currently stopped work at both Stafford and Norton Bridge. Work will be resumed after reviews are completed.

While we are investigating the causes of the incident, we should all consider the following for similar work:

- Are your works properly planned and risk assessed? Have site surveys been taken into account?
- How are you briefed on risks associated with excavations?
- Do you know what plans and permits are needed? Are they always in place before work starts?
- Do you fully understand the required safety measures for any temporary works?
- Are you trained and assessed as competent to work within an excavation?
- Do you know who your competent person is?
- Do you know how changes to original plans are risk assessed and new plans re-authorised and briefed?
- Do you know how excavations you are working in should be battered back, benched or suitably supported to ensure they are safe?
- Everyone is responsible for their own and their work colleagues' safety. We must all personally intervene if we feel a situation or behaviour might be unsafe. Raise concerns with your line manager/supervisor and use the work safe process if necessary.