

	Health, Safety, Quality and Environmental Alert	Alert number: 36-15	Document Reference: AMG/F/HSQE/001
	GWAUN CAE GURWEN - RUN AWAY IRON MEN	Issue Date: 25/05/15	Author: Steve Milroy

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

Description of Incident

On 1 November 2014, pair of special trolleys (known as Ironmen) were being used to transport a 52-foot length of rail, weighing around one tonne from an access point at Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen to Raven level crossing in Garnant Carmarthenshire.

While the Ironmen were in transit they ran out of control for a distance of more than five miles along the Garnant Branch line. Two track workers travelled with the runaway Ironmen (one on each) as far as Raven level crossing, where they shouted a warning to four colleagues who were removing the road panels from the level crossing, before jumping off. The men working on the level crossing were able to move away shortly before the Ironmen ran through their worksite. The Ironmen subsequently ran through three further road crossings and a number of footpath crossings before they had slowed sufficiently for a manager to be able to stop and secure them.

It was fortunate that no one was seriously injured during this incident. In alternative circumstances the outcome could have been very different and we could be discussing a fatality rather than a near miss.



Things to discuss:

Planning – would we have planned it differently? Would we have taken external conditions into account when planning the event for example gradients, likely weather conditions, resource level.

Are we confident - our teams on site know the ratio of men to iron men?

Are we confident – that we have a culture that would enable staff to challenge working practices?

Source: Colas Rail