

Safe Culture - the many building blocks



everyone
home safe
every day

Dear all,

Safe Organisation:

Culture + diversity x train service reliability

Tackling violence against women

One of the amazing things about being a failed engineer, is that I still try and look at things in a formulaic way. Perhaps I'm trying to be kind to myself about not being very good at physics, or maths, or exams, or football!



Rob Cairns,
Regional Managing Director

This often leaves me trying to link things together. I think linkages play a vital role in the forming of belief structures, which in turn inform behaviours and attitudes. These give us our culture and, despite it paining me, we must face in and own the fact that we always get the culture which our leadership deserves.

I was incredibly heartened to read Louise Haigh, our new secretary of state for transport, describe her priorities and identify a clear link between tackling violence for women, and a safe and reliable transport network. This was profound for me, as it was only last month that we declared the exact same priority in our regional health and safety strategy. This begins to set out the linkages between a safe organisation, a safe culture, diversity of thought and the recognition of needing to recognise barriers such as violence towards women in order to promote these priorities. In reality, we would take a stand against these things through the moral spirit which burns within us, but it is also interesting to consider the business linkages as well between what's right, and where we're trying to be.

Having experienced some extremely difficult circumstances at home recently, with my daughter Olivia's ongoing mental health challenges, it has caused me unfortunately to be in regular liaison with medical teams, the police and the social services. It was on the Sunday night of the euro finals – and my being an avid football disliker – that I found amazement and shock in hearing a police officer explain to me that their response times would be increased markedly later that evening if England win the game, due to unruly celebrations. Or, in the event England were to lose, that their response times on the Monday would be drastically increased, owed to the dramatic surge in domestic violence that they are compelled to plan for in the aftermath of lost matches.

My reaction to this was interesting. I was so surprised to hear this link being explained to me from a recognisable position of authority, that I began to cast doubt in my mind as to whether it was true. I noticed myself doing it, and was able to stop myself. I chose to intervene and stop the process my mind had automatically started, to diminish the thoughts of things I didn't like, because I have another strong belief structure that says all that is needed for very bad things to triumph is that good people say nothing. That police officer wouldn't have made that remark in the way he did if there weren't thousands of women suffering mental health issues at the hands of violence or abuse. Therefore it's important that we don't become one of those good people that say nothing, and we owe it to talk and debate these issues, and encourage others to do so.

Who knows what the future holds for my daughters, but I feel I owe it to them to have these issues raised and spoken about in a way that causes people to listen, so that the world may be a safer place for them.

Thank you and stay safe,

Rob

This update is provided by the Wales and Western Communications team. For any queries, please contact walesandwesterncomms@networkrail.co.uk



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