

Staff walking in close proximity to live OLE contact wire

Issued to: All Network Rail line managers, safety professionals and RISQS registered contractors

Ref: NRB 18/02

Date of issue: 22/01/2018

Location: Crewe

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Overview

An overhead line incident occurred at the North end of Crewe station.

The overhead line contact wire parted as an electric train passed causing damage to the train's pantograph and resulting in the contact wire hanging down.

A Network Rail Mobile Operations Manager and British Transport Police officers were first on site.

When overhead line staff arrived they found that staff had been walking in close proximity to the live contact wire that was hanging down. An emergency switch off had not been requested.

The parted contact wire is believed to have been within 30cm of head height and staff had walked beneath it. In September 2014, less than 25 miles away, a train driver suffered extensive electrical burns in very similar circumstances when they left the cab after the overhead line had been damaged.

Discussion Points

While we are investigating the incident please discuss the following with your team:

- Who should you contact if you believe the overhead line equipment (OLE) may be damaged?
- What precautions must be in place before you can approach but not touch OLE?
- What precautions must be in place before you can touch OLE?
- What other circumstances might increase the risk of injury when attending OLE incidents?
- What are the additional risks during the hours of darkness (or in a tunnel)?

Copies of Safety Bulletins are available on [Safety Central](#)