

Safety Bulletin

A serious incident has taken place



Trench collapse causes specified injury

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

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Location: Stamford Underbridge, Eastern

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Overview

On 30th September during installation of drainage works, at Stamford Underbridge, a survey levelling rod was left in a trench by mistake. A trench box had been in use earlier but not when a supervisor entered the trench (2.5 – 3.0 metres deep) to retrieve the rod.

As the supervisor was leaving the trench a section of the unsupported clay wall fell and struck the supervisor's back and legs causing them to fall to the trench floor.

Fire and rescue teams attended site and recognising the restrictive nature of the site, and the danger involved in trench collapse, took time to safely remove the supervisor from the trench.

The injured person was taken to hospital by ambulance having sustained a fractured pelvis.

Discussion Points

- NEVER assume that it is safe to enter or work in an unsupported trench or excavation pit.
- ALWAYS check that the appropriate controls are in place and permit requirements are met.
- While this accident is being investigated, please discuss the following with your team;
 1. How does risk awareness 'drift' on your sites? What do you see?
 2. When and how are you using safety conversations to embed risk awareness and safe practice on our sites?
 3. Discuss the importance of the responsibility to stop and challenge unsafe practice.

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