

Safety Bulletin



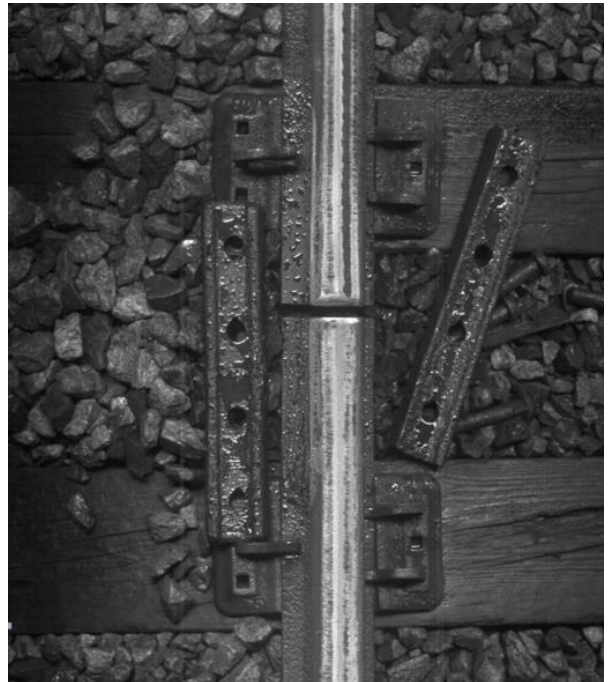
Fishplates found missing following track inspection

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

Ref: NRB25-03

Date of issue: 18/09/2025

Location: Park South, Cumbrian Coast line



Overview

On Thursday 4 September a review of data gathered from an Ultrasonic Test Unit train identified a track joint with all bolts and fishplates detached from the rail at Park South on the Cumbrian Coast line.

Actions were taken immediately to protect the line until repairs were carried out.

While the incident is subject to an independent Level1 investigation that has not yet concluded, some initial facts have been established.

A Basic Visual Inspection (BVI) of the track was completed at this location on 20th August in a routine midweek night line blockage. The BVI identified a cracked fishplate at a joint adjacent to this one.

Track standards require that a cracked fishplate is replaced within 24 hours of discovery. The team had sufficient access to replace the fishplate in the access they had so made arrangements to do so.

Due to difficulties in installing the replacement fishplates, the fishplates on the adjacent joint were removed to allow some movement of the rail. For reasons not yet understood, these fishplates were not reinstalled before the line blockage was handed back.

The Level 1 investigation will seek to understand the underlying reasons for this event.

Discussion Points

- What processes are in place to ensure the asset is safe for passage of trains following maintenance activity?
- How do you ensure work is completed as required before leaving a site of work?
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