



## Minor foot injury exacerbated by incorrect footwear

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

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Location: Westbury Aggregate Handling Depot

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## Overview/Underlying causes

### Overview

Whilst hand digging a trial hole, an operative came into contact with a buried sharp steel spike which penetrated the non-reinforced sole of their boot, causing a minor puncture wound to their right foot. Had they been wearing the correct boots with midsole protection, this would most likely not have resulted in an injury.

The operative received first aid treatment and attended hospital where a precautionary tetanus shot was given.

### Underlying cause

The sponsor had allowed the operative to purchase their own PPE with insufficient guidance and did not carry out adequate PPE checks / assurance prior to them starting on site.

Incidentally, the same Principal Contractor (PC) had reported a similar incident four years ago. Although appropriate actions were implemented at the time, with memory fade and staff changes, the importance of continually re-emphasising lessons learnt is evident.

The poor protection offered by unsuitable boots was discussed with the individual and they were made aware of the importance and need for high standard, compliant footwear for the construction work they were undertaking.

PPE checks were immediately undertaken across all sites to ensure compliance with Network Rail's Standard and the content of future sub-contract orders is to be reviewed to include full PPE specification requirements.

## Key message

- Check your boots. They should comply with Network Rail's Standard NR/L2/OHS/021 – Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). This standard "applies to all NRIL employees, **and contractors / suppliers working on NRIL's behalf**" and states that "All safety footwear provided shall comply as a minimum with the requirements of EN ISO 20345:2011" which, in turn, requires midsole protection (SBP, S1P, S3 or S5)
- For Network Rail employees, any footwear you request through Network Rail and the official NR iProc ordering system will be compliant.
- As a reminder to our Suppliers, Reg.4 of the PPE at Work Regulations 1992 (rev.2022) state that PPE must be provided by the employer.
- Suppliers / PC's – What assurance do you have in place for your supply chain to ensure safety standards are embedded?



Footwear on site should conform to standard EN ISO 20345: 2011 Personal protective equipment – Safety Footwear. **S3 – midsole protection**