

# Shared Learning



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## Track measurement conducted without adequate competence and conductor rail isolation

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

Ref: NRL26-03

Date of issue: 18/06/2026

Location: Harrow & Wealdstone to Watford Jn Fast Line Possession

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## Overview

On 16 March 2026, a track survey using a track measuring trolley was carried out in a third rail area before the planned DC isolation was taken. The isolation had been scheduled for 01:00hrs, but the survey was completed beforehand. The issue was raised by the Operational Delivery Manager (ODM) at 00:24 during handback.

The individuals involved were aware that an isolation had been planned later in the shift. After discussing how to complete the work, they decided to use the full access time and believed conductor rail shields would provide sufficient protection while using the track measuring trolley. They were under the impression that the trolley would remain more than 300 mm from the live conductor rail without taking in consideration Product Acceptance (PA) limitations.

No accident or injury was reported. However, the investigation found that the survey had been carried out in a live conductor rail area without the required isolation and earthed protection in place. The individuals believed that they could use the equipment as it was not designated as a trolley.

## Underlying causes

The investigation found that the staff involved had not received formal Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) familiarisation or upskilling in the use of the track measuring equipment, which is the current route to competence for operation of this trolley type.

It was also identified that the individuals involved were not aware of the Track measuring trolleys PA requirements. Certificate, [PA05/07350](#) states that the equipment shall only be used in areas of third or fourth rail once the supply is isolated and earthed.

A lack of understanding of familiarisation requirements for this equipment was also identified. Incident records confirm that staff had neither been trained nor formally familiarised in its use, with the investigation highlighting broader uncertainty over whether track measuring trolleys are recognised and managed as trolley equipment.

## Key message

- Trolleys are manually propelled rail mounted devices supported simultaneously on both rails this includes conventional track trolleys used for transporting materials tools and equipment, and also inspection and maintenance tools fitted with any combination of rail wheels rollers or low friction slides.
- Plant Capability Development Group (CDG) is reviewing the competence requirements for track measuring trolleys. Currently, OEM familiarisation applies, and Portable, Transportable and Mobile Plant (PTMP) 16 is not suitable. PTMP competency Framework could be found at [Safety Central](#).
- Conductor rail shields must not be used as an alternative. Work must comply with NR/L2/RMVP/0200, Product Acceptance and OEM requirements, with isolation and earthing in place before use in third or fourth rail areas.
- Work planned under isolation must not commence until controls are in place. Where competence, equipment, or controls are unclear, work must stop until confirmed.

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