

Shared Learning

The Thameslink Programme

Issue Date: 26th October 2017 - For further info contact mike.netherton@networkrail.co.uk

Issue Number: TLP081 Title: Mobile Tower Pole Came In Contact with an Energised Conductor Rail

Overview of Event:

On 30th July 2017 at New Cross Station during a 2 Part Possession, a mobile tower was erected to inspect L221 Signal Gantry. The outriggers on one side were positioned between the conductor rail and running rail of No 3 Up Line. On the other side, both scaffold legs were positioned between the conductor rail and running rail of the Down Fast line.

As the possession moved into Part 2, operatives were dismantling the scaffolding, after carrying out a survey, when a scaffold pole was dropped and came to rest between the No 3 Up Line conductor rail and the Down Fast running rail, causing a flashover.

A COSS and team member were tested positive for drugs following incident.

General Key Messages:

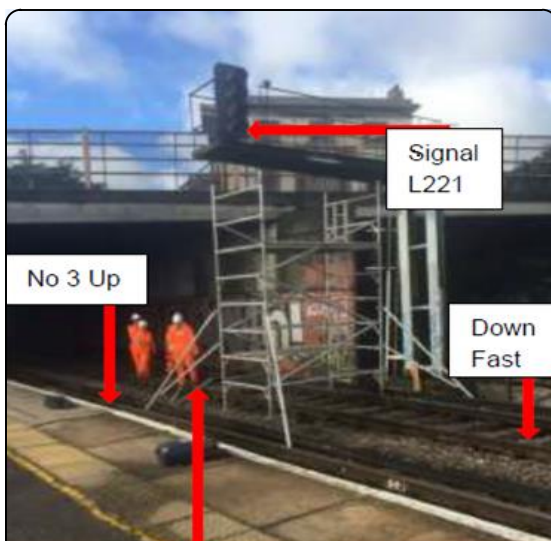
- Ensure that the complete work team is briefed and that they fully understand the track layout and isolation limits.
- When lines under possession change, during parts of multipart possessions, stand teams down and re-brief the new arrangements.

Causes:

Immediate – Work party were unaware an isolation had been lifted on an adjacent line and a metallic scaffold pole came into contact with a conductor and running rail causing a flashover.

Root and Underlying Causes

- Two COSS's failed to come to a clear understanding of the work site limits and isolated lines between Part 1 and Part 2 of the possession . Furthermore, although briefed, they both failed to confirm that they understood the detail of the Briefing.
- The COSS did not communicate to the Engineering Supervisor (ES) or Authorised Person (AP) that the work team would be erecting a mobile tower scaffold , nor was the use of a mobile scaffold tower mentioned in the 'white board briefing'.
- The senior COSS agreed to work even though he had to rearrange personnel commitments, which he left site to attend later in Part 2 of the possession. He had also broken his reading glasses and could not read the track diagrams clearly.
- The civils construction team had a number of personal on leave during the run up and the actual works, this resulted in disjointed planning and lack of robust communication of the detail of the working activities.
- The reproduced resolution of track diagrams contained in the Safe System of Work (SSOW) pack was poor.



Section of scaffold pole resting between the No 3 Up Conductor Rail and Down Charing Cross running rail.

Actions Taken As a Result of the Investigations:

- COSS's used on Thameslink to have competency formally assessed.
- Introduction of compliance checks at site level, when scaffolding is used and to confirm understanding of possession arrangements.
- Increased frequency of random D&A testing to deter substance abuse.
- Site Supervision to undergo competence checks related to tasks they supervise.
- Contractor to ensure adequate site presence of supervisors.
- ES/AP's briefing for multi-part possessions are to be clearly communicated to all COSS's and confirmation received that they have a full understanding of the safe work limits for each part of the possession.
- COSS's to stand-down work teams and re-brief any changed arrangements when moving between parts of possessions.
- Introduce process to ensure version control and legibility of SSOW packs.