

Shared Learning

The Thameslink Programme

Issue Date: 2nd March 2018 - For further info contact mike.netherton@networkrail.co.uk

Issue Number: TLP085 Title: Work Group Crossing Open Line

Overview of Event:

As part of planned works, a team were tasked with recovering redundant materials within a blockade. The area they were working, was located on a viaduct, 10 roads wide, 8 under possession with 2 open to traffic. The plan was to access and egress the track at 2 different access points, both of these planned routes were located on the side of the viaduct which was under possession.

The COSS who had previously worked in the same area, was aware of an access point located between the two detailed in his plan and decided to take the team across the 2 open roads, to leave the track. *No team members challenged this change.*

While crossing the open lines one of the group noticed a nearby signal displaying a green aspect, at the same time one of the team is reported to have stood on an energized section of conductor rail and received a "tingling sensation". The COSS then realised this part of track was open to traffic and immediately led his team to a place of safety.

Once the group were in a safe place the individual, who had stood on the conductor rail, had his feet and boots examined for burns, fortunately none were visible. The IP was taken to hospital where ECG and other tests were completed and no anomalies were found.

Key Messages:

- Briefings from the ES to the COSS should be clear, concise and the understanding checked before COSS's are allowed to access site.
- COSS's should familiarise themselves with the area under possession including isolated sections, especially in multipart possessions.
- All COSS's should carry out a Live Line Test witnessed by their workgroup before accessing the track and starting work.
- When there is a change of plan, STOP, review, and where necessary seek authorisation.
- Team members should not be afraid to challenge.

Immediate Cause:

- Team crossed an open line.

Underlying Causes

- COSS not paying attention to Engineering Supervisors (ES) brief and ES not checking COSS understanding.
- Negligence by the COSS in not briefing the team as per the ES brief, SSOW pack or Conductor Rail Permit (CRP).
- COSS not carrying out a Live Line Test to demonstrate conductor rail was isolated
- No application of Point of Work Risk Assessment and poor task briefing to the workgroup
- Operative not utilising PTS training in basic track safety and standing on rails.
- COSS carrying out supervisor duties as well as the COSS's duties.

Circled area approximate location of access Point and event



Photo of Event

Actions Taken As a Result of the Investigation:

- Re-training, assessment and monitoring of the COSS involved.
- Implementation of non-working COSS's to remove any conflict between production and safety.
- All Task Briefing documents for work in possessions, with the potential to impact on open lines to be reviewed by the contractor's safety team.
- For future possession work, open lines to be sign posted at the most appropriate point on site as a visual reminder to teams.