

**No: IGS 194**

## **Infrastructure Group Safety Bulletin**

### **Actions arising following Severn Tunnel RRV near miss** **26<sup>th</sup> April 2009**

**Target audience: Machine Controllers, Crane Controllers, Engineering Supervisors, Project Managers, Rail Plant Support Engineers (RPSE), OTP operators, Section Managers, [Function] Maintenance Engineers, Infrastructure Services Managers and Section Planners.**

#### **Description of Incident**

In the above near miss incident, water from earlier rail head works combined with contamination from the working environment to cause low adhesion conditions. As a consequence, a Liebherr 900 'high rail' vehicle was unable to brake to a full stop as it approached a worksite. At the time the RRV was propelling a trailer mounted personnel carrier and towing a flat bed trailer whilst travelling down a 1:100 gradient.

A more serious incident was avoided by prompt warnings from a member of staff travelling within the personnel carrier who alerted staff at the worksite to the oncoming vehicle.

#### **Actions to be taken**

**All staff involved with the planning and undertaking of work with OTP, are reminded that they must take into account the extended distance required to stop RRVs when operating on wet or contaminated rail head conditions, gradients, and when towing or propelling trailers.**

Specifically, staff involved with planning and undertaking work with OTP, should note the following:

- a) Adverse environmental and weather conditions and some work processes will cause rail head contamination, and will as a consequence reduce the brake force available and extend vehicle stopping distances.
- b) The potential for extended stopping distances as a result of these factors must be considered at both planning, and during the process of undertaking the work.
- c) When undertaking a risk assessment for the work to be completed, work planners must take in to account the potential for extended stopping distances as a result of either the process to be carried out by the OTP, or by other activities being undertaken on the same worksite which could affect the braking performance of these vehicles.
- d) OTP operators must also consider the potential for rail head conditions to change during the period that work is being undertaken
- e) Where rail head contamination or conditions adversely effect OTP operations, operators must drive accordingly by reducing speed, making allowances for extended stopping distances, and carrying out running brake tests at regular intervals during the shift to test the effectiveness of the brakes. Operators are also reminded that a brake test is required when OTP is first placed on track irrespective of conditions.
- f) Operators must be able to stop OTP within the distance that can be seen to be clear of any obstruction / work group, taking into account environmental conditions, track adhesion, track gradient and the load being hauled or propelled.

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