

No: IGS 244

## Infrastructure Group Safety Bulletin

### Action to be taken in the event of loss of ballast support on bridges

#### **This bulletin is for the attention of:**

All Track Maintenance and Operational Operations and Customer Services Staff.

#### **Background**

Last year a river scour incident occurred, causing the partial collapse of a bridge structure.

Initially reported as a rough ride, the fault was discovered to be a significant hole in the structure and a serious loss of ballast to the up line.

The up line was immediately closed to traffic but the adjacent down line, which appeared unaffected, was allowed to remain open under an emergency speed restriction. At this moment in time it was not possible to establish that the bridge was safe and the down line should have been closed to traffic immediately.



Figure 1: Hole in Ballast



Figure 2: Damage to structure



Figure 3: Visible damage under track

#### **Action Required**

**Where there is a loss of track support over a bridge such that the line is thought unsafe for the passage of trains, staff are reminded:**

- The adjacent tracks must also be blocked until the on-call NR Route Structures Engineer agrees it is safe for the passage of trains to be resumed.
- This agreement will follow the examination of the structure by a competent bridge examiner or Network Rail Structures Engineer.
- Where the bridge carries four or more tracks; the on call Route Structures Engineer may advise by phone, the lines other than those directly affected, that can remain open to traffic.

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