

No: IGS 217

Infrastructure Group Safety Bulletin

Local Knowledge and Safe Systems of Work

This bulletin is for the attention of all those who plan, check or implement safe systems of work for people working on or near the line.

Background

Investigations into a number of recent incidents have highlighted the importance of access to, and use of local knowledge in the planning, checking and implementation of safe systems of work. This bulletin is to remind those who carry out such work of the requirements and guidance within NR/L2/OHS/019, Safety of People Working on or Near the Line, with regards to local knowledge.

Sources of local knowledge

Within the guidance to the standard sources of local knowledge are identified as:

- Hazard Directory,
- Rules of the Route,
- Sectional Appendix,
- Signalling Diagrams,
- Access point information.

Other sources may be used which include diagrams and schematics, photographs, videos, etc. supplemented by personal knowledge of the layout of the infrastructure at the site at which the work is to take place.

Implementing a Safe System of Work

There is a specific requirement within the standard for a COSS/IWA to check that they are familiar with the location of the work for which they have been provided with a COSS pack. This familiarisation may be undertaken by the study of the content of the pack, other sources of information as described above and, where considered necessary due to the complexity of the work or the site, a site visit prior to the work taking place.

Actions Required:

1. **If you plan or check safe systems of work** for people working on or near the line you must have access to and use relevant sources of local knowledge required to plan or check the safe system of work.
2. **If you are a COSS/IWA** you must satisfy yourself that you have access to and use relevant sources of local knowledge required to implement your safe system of work and ultimately keep you and your group safe.

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