

Safety Advice

Action required following a serious incident

Non-compliant conductor rail short circuiting straps

Issued to: All Network Rail line managers, safety professionals and RISQS registered contractors

Ref: NRA 15/10

Date of issue: 15/12/2015

Location: Third rail locations

Contact: [James Snowdon](#), Senior Engineer (M&E) (Contact Systems), STE



Approved clamp shown on left, non-compliant, ill-fitting clamp on right

Overview

It has been identified that at least one independent safety equipment supplier is selling conductor rail short-circuiting straps that are not from the approved supplier, with non-compliant rail clamps.

Consequently there is a significant risk that they will not fit the running or conductor rails correctly, with the result that they can either fall off, or be blown off in the event that the conductor rail is inadvertently energised, thus failing to provide the required protection to staff.

P&B Weir Ltd are currently the only manufacturer with product acceptance for conductor rail straps. Clamps manufactured by them all bear the legend "P&B J117-NSE" stamped into one side plate, and the complete strap assembly has a unique serial number engraved onto the underside of one clamp, usually the centre clamp on a 3-clamp strap.

The non-compliant clamps that have been found do not carry any manufacturers inscriptions.

Additionally, they can be identified by the method of manufacture, the clamp bodies being formed by bending a single piece of steel; the approved P&B Weir clamps are fabricated by welding the two sides and bottom piece to make the body. The bending process used on the non-compliant clamps can also result in the metal being overstressed, creating cracks on the outside of the bends.

The photograph shows the differences between the approved (left) and non-compliant (right) clamps.

Immediate action required

- All conductor rail short circuiting straps are to be checked and verified as being to the approved P&B Weir design. All others are to be quarantined and rendered permanently unusable.

Copies of Safety Advices are available on [Safety Central](#)