

Shared Learning



The Thameslink Programme Issue Date: 12th August 2015 - For further info contact declan.keane@networkrail.co.uk

Issue Number: TLP035 Title: Possession Irregularity (1st May 2015)

Overview of Event:

A stone blower (a railway track maintenance machine) operated by a third party, entered the Up Sidings North within the Horsham sidings. The approach of the stone blower was observed by a Carillion Banksman who was banking for a 20t excavator working on an excavation adjacent to No 2 sidings.

At the time, it was understood that the sidings were under possession (by a non-Thameslink Supplier), to support the planned ALO arrangements. Through the investigation it was identified that the possession arrangements had changed and these changes were not adequately communicated in advance.

Visibility at the site was good and the Banksman stood the excavator down before the Stoneblower, travelling at a walking pace, approached the adjacent worksite. At no time were operatives on the ground exposed to risk.

Underlying Causes:

Immediate Cause

The Horsham Sidings were not under possession, therefore there were no restrictions on the movements of MPVs (Multi-Purpose Vehicles) and / or On Track Plant (OTP) in and out of the sidings.

Root and Underlying Causes

- **Process** - Whilst the local arrangement was largely deemed to be adequate, the responsibility for taking the possession of the sidings was unclear.
- **Responsibilities:** The COSS working for Carillion did not seek confirmation as to whether or not the 'third party' representative was acting as Designated Person at the time (**NOTE:** The Designated Person as defined within Handbook 13 of the Rule Book is responsible for setting up protection so that people carrying out work will be protected from train movements).
- **People:** The original COSS who was involved when the local arrangements were first developed left the project in early 2015. Additionally the NR Construction Manager who was involved in the preparation of the local arrangements retired from the business in March 2015.
- **Communication:** The local arrangements were verbally communicated on a daily basis. Through the investigation it was identified that there was no log or documented evidence confirming activation of the local arrangements.

Actions Taken As a Result of Investigation:

- **Local Arrangements:** The local arrangements were subject to a detailed review and all interfacing parties were involved. Particular emphasis was placed on (a) clarification (physically marking) the location of the PLBs and their proximity to open lines and (b) the process for signing into the sidings by the COSS.
- **Interface Meetings:** Fortnightly interface meetings have been set up, where all interfacing parties are invited and attendance is mandated (Thameslink and non Thameslink suppliers). All parties can discuss the upcoming scope of planned works and detail the planned train movements within the depot.
- **Briefing Pack:** A briefing pack was developed to explain the local arrangements (using photographs and diagrams) and the local procedures to ensure that all of those responsible are fully conversant with the process and why the protection arrangements are in place.

Diagram/ Photo of event:

A stoneblower



General Key Messages:

- Well-structured interface meetings are critical to the success of your projects. Many of the interfaces may be outside the control of a project. However, understanding what the "other" arrangements are will assist all parties in safely planning their works.