

No: NRB 15/03

Network Rail Safety Bulletin

Worker suffers electric shock from dc third rail at Latchmere Curve

For the attention of: All Network Rail Staff, Principal Contractors and Contractors who are involved in the planning or working in the vicinity of electrical equipment

During possession works a Strapman was requested to move a short circuit strap they had previously attached to the conductor rail at the boundary of a third rail isolation. The operative removed the short circuit strap and went to reapply it on the other side of an insulated block joint. When they re-attached the short circuit strap to the third rail there was a flash and they suffered serious burns to their hands and legs. The operative was taken to hospital for treatment.



Never assume equipment is isolated
– always test before touch.



Always test before applying
earths or straps.



Always be sure the required plans and
permits are in place, before you start
a job or go on or near the line.

While we are investigating the causes of the incident, please take the time to consider the following and discuss in your teams:

The following steps are designed to keep staff using short circuiting devices safe. Is anything preventing you from being able to follow these steps? What can you do to overcome any problems?

- Always wear approved rubber gauntlets – these will be marked class 0 and should be tested prior to use with an approved tester.
- Always test the conductor rail using an approved live line tester – this must include using an approved Proving Unit to verify that the tester is working correctly **BEFORE** and **AFTER** testing the conductor rail.
- Always apply a short circuiting bar **AFTER** you have confirmed that the conductor rail is not live.
- Always clean the rails using a wire brush.
- Always then apply the short circuiting straps.
- Re-familiarise yourself with the process for applying short circuiting straps as set out in **NR/WI/ELP/27140 (April 06)**, the DC Electrified Lines Working Instructions and Network Rail's Lifesaving Rules.