

Network Rail Safety Bulletin

Fatal Accident to Lookout

For the attention of: All railway industry staff.

Background:

On Wednesday 22 January 2014 a lookout for a team of ultrasonic testers was struck and injured by a train as it crossed lines to terminate at Newark Northgate station. Regrettably he died 10 days later.

The lookout acknowledged the approach of the train and moved to a position of safety. Before the train passed however he turned and started to walk back towards his previous position when looking out for trains.



Investigation:

While it is clear what happened, our investigation to understand **why** it happened is ongoing. We should now take time to consider how we can manage the risks involved with working on or near the line with lookout protection (Red Zone).

Action required:

Discuss with your colleagues what can be done to reduce risks associated with working on or near the line with lookout protection:

Safe System of Work – Can your work be done other than red zone with lookouts? What would you need to do to plan it at a higher level in the hierarchy next time?

Positioning site lookouts – When your COSS positions your site lookout, is consideration given to positioning them in a permanent position of safety?

Staying vigilant – If you are doing routine work you have done numerous times before in that location with the same safe system of work how do you make sure that you stay focussed on the risks?

Recommencing work – When you stop work for a train to pass, do you always wait for the permission of the COSS before you leave your position of safety?