

# EVENT LEARNING

Safety & Sustainable Development

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**Incident Date / Time:** 19<sup>th</sup> May 2013, 0430 hours

**Location:** Hitchin (ECML 32m 25ch)

**Works Taking Place / Incident Type:** Re-railing work to replace a pair of insulated block joints

**Issued By:** Nick Hilton

**Project Name / Number:** Hitchin Grade Separation / 102390

**For the attention of:** All Scotland and North East

## DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT

A track welder suffered two broken bones in his foot when a 60ft length of rail rolled onto it. The gang were replacing block joints and had left a length of redundant rail on its side on the ballast shoulder, obstructing the area where the welder needed to grind. When they tried to turn the rail upright so they could move it, it rolled further than expected and trapped the welder's foot.

## CAUSES

The rail had been left in an obstructing position, on an uneven part of the ballast, due to poor planning and supervision of the work.

No rail turners were available to the gang on the night, meaning they resorted to an unsafe method of working and the wrong equipment just to "get the job done".

A revised risk assessment for the unplanned placement and moving of the rail had not been undertaken in the Task Briefing.



*The reader is required to take action where appropriate to implement the following;*

**ASSESS** - Always ensure that the risks associated with any task have been adequately identified and properly briefed before you start work, and that proper controls are in place.

**CHALLENGE** - Be prepared to question and challenge work methods if you are unsure or think that the proposed task may be unsafe.

**PLAN AHEAD** - Ensure that the right equipment for the task is available before you start work, and be mindful of the impact your decisions and activity will have on subsequent work.

**RE-ASSESS** - Any alteration to the original task must be re-assessed, and any new risks identified, appropriately controlled and briefed.



Never undertake an activity unless you have been trained, assessed as competent and have the right equipment.