Lessons Learnt from a Significant Event

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Title: Murphy’s Yard Kentish Town – Authorisation of On-tracking prior to issue of Form C
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Overview of Event

- On 6th October 2013, A Nominated Person (N.P.) suggested personnel could on-track machines without issuing a Form C permit.
- The N.P. had instructed the earthing parties to go to the necessary accesses once they had been booked in with the Engineering Supervisor. The N.P. tested the Overhead Line Equipment (OLE) at the Road Rail Access Point (RRAP) at Kentish Town and advised the earthing teams that they could apply earths as per their Switching Testing Earthing Details (STED) form.
- During the waiting period for all earths to be applied, the time pressure of the work was highlighted to the N.P. on a number of occasions by the Machine Controllers.
- The N.P. offered to facilitate the access of Road Rail Vehicles (RRV) on to the RRAP between already applied and tested earths. The machine controllers were not satisfied that appropriate safety measures were in place to provide a safe system of work for the machines and personnel, thus declined to access the RRAP.

Underlying Causes:

There are a number of underlying facts that contributed to the event:

- The investigation has concluded that there was inadequate planning for track access times.
- The travel times from Murphy’s Yard at Kentish Town, were longer than originally anticipated when planning for the earths to be applied.
- Isolation teams were delayed due to track access issues.
- Perceived peer pressure on the N.P. to take the Isolation in a more prompt manner may have led him to make the suggestion to on-track prior to him issuing Form C permits.

Key Message:

- The N.P. has been placed on his employers ‘At Risk Register’ and will be monitored and re-assessed
- Planning must take account of required resources and travelling time to other locations. Failure to do so causes delay and may lead to personnel being put under pressure to make incorrect decisions.
- Never commence a work activity without first receiving a briefing and where required being issued a permit to work for the activity
- Personnel should be encouraged to challenge the safe system of work for any activity where they have concerns and they should be commended for doing so