

## **Oxford Near Miss 2014**

Network Rail Section manager Matt Farrell tells us about an incident near Oxford where he was nearly hit by a train

Matt wants to share CCTV footage to encourage conversations to stop incidents like this happening again

"I recently had an extremely near miss in Oxford. This is a busy part of the network with a lot of through traffic and trains pulling in and out of the station and the up and down sidings.

"My team and I were carrying out a number of planned switch and crossing inspections just outside of the station area. I was working with my supervisor to do the inspections and we had two other colleagues' onsite acting as our controller of site safety and lookout.

"Our lookout alerted us of an approaching train. We all acknowledged him and moved to a position of safety. I knew exactly where the train was heading and what line it was on and also what line it was crossing over to."

### **Position of safety**

"While in the position of safety I decided to walk up to the next set of points, this meant that I would be in position to undertake the next inspection when the train had passed me.

"As I did, my mind wandered for just a moment. I was thinking of what I needed to do next on site and once back at the office. It was only when the train sounded several warnings that I realised I was stood in the four foot, right in the path of an oncoming train.

"The train was travelling at around 20mph at the time. If any faster I might not be here to share the story. I was tremendously lucky that the driver was on the ball and alerted me that I was in danger.

### **"I wouldn't have moved"**

"The worrying thing that sticks in my mind is that if the train had not given me any warning I wouldn't have moved!

"Quite simply, complacency set in. A section manager's role is a demanding one, as are many others on the front line. We can all quite easily fall victim to this. We must all stay disciplined when out on or near the line.

"My advice to everyone on the front line is, no matter how busy you are, stay focused, make sure you are well aware of your surroundings and always put safety first.

**"Everyone home safe every day."**