

Case Study: BCR in Action

John Loughman, project manager (change) based in Basingstoke (Wessex), shares his experience of Business Critical Rules (BCR), and their implementation within his Route; focussing on busting the myths around BCR, and looking at the improvements they can bring.

John said “BCR is designed to simplify the way we manage risks within Network Rail with the aim of understanding the risks we face and using specially created control documents to allow us to control them.”

“Wessex Route entered the BCR trial; understanding and improving risk for Plain Line Track (PLT). PLT is the plain track which doesn’t include switches and crossings. The trial started in November 2014 and the Business Critical Rules for PLT went live in September 2015.

“Moving from the trial to Business as Usual (BAU); implementation took a bit longer than it should have done because we were trying to implement BCR online at the same time. BCR online is the online system which provides access to all the BCR products – such as the control documents and risk BowTies. It’s the go to place for all the Business Critical Rules and their supporting information.

“The introduction of BCR has given our local managers the opportunity, and framework to make changes to the way they work in order to improve Safety and Performance. It is important that people remember that BCR does not make the changes to Safety – it is the way BCR is used to manage risk, and plan for it, that creates a safer, more productive environment to work in. This relies on the work and input of managers and their teams!”

Positive impact



John goes on to discuss one of the initiatives that has been introduced as a result of the implementation of BCR on Plain Line Track. “We have introduced ‘High Speed Clamping System’ (HSCS) which allows us to keep trains running at line speed when rails are clamped following the removal of a defect. This improves performance, as trains are not delayed due to the implementation of emergency Speed

restrictions, and removes the necessity to pay large Schedule 8 payments. A schedule 8 payment is the money paid to train operators as compensation when trains are delayed due to Network Rail works. This device prevents additional disruption to the operation of trains and supports safety and performance going hand in hand.”



The future

John discussed “As BCR has only been implemented on Plain Line Track so far, it is largely just the Pway (permanent way) community that are impacted due to their work on PLT.

As BCR is implemented for further assets, such as switches and crossings and buildings, it will open the door to much bigger changes within the rail industry. It is a great step in improving the safety of our people and getting Everyone Home Safe Every day.”