

Manual handling incident with an MC3 'Frog' grinder

Issued to: All Network Rail line managers, safety professionals and RISQS registered contractors

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Location: Waterloo station, Wessex Route

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Overview

A five person team carried an MC3 'Frog' grinder through London Waterloo station on 9 August 2017 to get it onto the track. Three members of the team were left to lower the machine from the platform onto the track.

Two members of staff were positioned on the track, while the third member of the team remained on the platform, lowering the machine down to them. The machine dropped faster than expected and trapped one person's hand between the grinder handle and the platform.

The member of staff suffered a deep cut to his finger and realising that the injury was significant, went straight to St. Thomas's hospital so that his injuries could be cleaned, X-rayed and stitched.

An MC3 grinder weighs around 110kg and after a previous Prohibition Notice in Wales Route was the subject of an earlier Safety Advice ([NRA 16/02 issued February 2016](#)) which requires safer ways to move them and, if manual lifting was unavoidable, a minimum of four people.

This injury in Wessex is the second in just three months while handling an MC3 grinder with too few people. In May another worker was injured in LNE Route while unloading one from a vehicle.

Early investigation showed the workers at Waterloo had not prepared thoroughly for their task, including by swiping-in to Sentinel. One person had not swiped-in since April.

Discussion Points

While we are investigating the incident please discuss the following with your team.

- Did the earlier Safety Advice get briefed to all of your teams?
- Do you truly explore mechanical solutions, to prevent the need for manual handling?
- Lowering a load from a vehicle to the ground or from a platform to the track is higher risk. How can you reduce that risk?
- What line management checks do you undertake to know that teams comply with safety measures?
- Are we ALWAYS swiping in via Sentinel? It must be every time we go on track.

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