SINGLE APPROACH TO ISOLATIONS

NR/L3/ELP/SAI25 - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) V9.1 Updated October 2026

This document will evolve over time as more questions are submitted. To submit your question, please email: ESDSAISupport@networkrail.co.uk

This document is broken down into numbered sections. Please click on the relevant numbered links below to navigate to the section needed:

1. Abbreviations
2. The SAI25 Standard
3. Technical Queries
4. Forms
5. Training and Briefing
6. DRACAS
7. Ad-hoc Queries
8. Appendices

Useful links

- SAI25 standard
- Safety Central
- DRACAS

- Anglia Route email support – AngliaESDSupport@networkrail.co.uk
- North West & Central Region email support – SAI25enquiries@networkrail.co.uk
- Central email support – ESDSAIsupport@networkrail.co.uk

***New** &/or **Updated** - Detailed against new / updated questions

Updated links due to change to Safety Central being updated.

Latest questions as of 30.10.2026.

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1 Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Description
AP	Authorised Person
COSS (OLP)	Controller of Site Safety (Overhead Line Permit)
DNO	Distribution Network Operator
DRACAS	Data, Reporting, Analysis and Corrective Action System
ECRM	Electrical Risk Control Measures
EIDF	Earthed Isolation Details Form
ERA	Electrical Risk Assessment
ERAR	Electrical Risk Assessment Reviewer (duty)
ERAs	Electrical Risk Assessor
ERAF	Electrical Risk Assessment Form
ESSoW	Electrical Safe System of Work
LWF	Live Working Form
NP	Nominated Person
OLE	Overhead Line Equipment
OLP	Overhead Line Permit
OTP	On Track Plant
RRAP	Road Rail Access Point
RoLE	Reminder of Live Exposed
SAI	Single Approach to Isolations
TNO	Transmission Network Operator

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2 The SAI25 Standard

2.1 Question: Why are we introducing a new process NR/L3/ELP/SAI25, when the current one NR/L3/ELP/29987 works?

Response: There are compelling safety and compliance reasons for a step change in how the workforce is protected from electrical danger when working on or near OLE. Investigation into the root causes of serious electrical safety incidents (for example, Ardrossan, Hendon, Hillmorton, Kensal Green, Slade Lane, and Wolverton) highlighted common causes that can be addressed by changing the way work is undertaken on or near OLE.

Additionally, the introduction of NR/L3/ELP/SAI25 allows Network Rail to demonstrate improved compliance with the Electricity at Work Regulations.

It is being introduced in phases to replace the current standard NR/L3/ELP/29987 and is currently deployed in Anglia and North West Routes, with the rest of Eastern, North West & Central & Scotland Regions deploying as per their communicated schedules.

NOTE: Deployment contact details are in the useful links section at the top of the document.

2.2 Question: How will I know what standard I am working to?

Response: You will receive Regional SAI25 updates and a 'go-live' cascade prior to going live with the new standard. Post 'go-live' date, the isolation documentation can be used by the NP to confirm if the earthed isolation will be planned and delivered in accordance with SAI25 e.g. ERAF & EIDF. If you are unsure, then please contact your line manager for clarification.

2.3 Question: I have received SAI25 isolation documentation to take an earthed isolation, and I have not received any training. What should I do?

Response: Stop. As per the 'Life Saving Rules', you should only complete work that you are competent to undertake. Contact your line manager and advise them that you cannot complete this earthed isolation as you have not completed SAI25 training.

2.4 Question: How will the new standard and processes improve safety?

Response: The new standard will improve safety by:

- Introducing an enhanced electrical risk assessment process
- Emphasising electrical hazard identification
- Introducing new electrical risk control measures to decrease the risk of inadvertent contact with electricity
- Introducing the ESSoW categorisation hierarchy
- Introducing new competences and up-skilling existing personnel

2.5 Question: How do we raise an issue with a process within the standard?

Response: Any issues that you might have about the process within the standard should be raised via the DRACAS form which is located at SAI25 DRACAS Form. This includes any issues on the briefing materials.

2.6 Question: How do we add tasks to the approved Category E & L lists?

Response: You need to raise an application to the Network Technical Head of the standard, stating the task and the justification as to why it is always safe to complete without an Electrical Risk Assessment.

Once the application has been received, a decision will be made as to whether it can be included in the approved CAT L or CAT E list. If successful, this will be electrically risk assessed and added to the list.

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3 Technical Queries

3.1 Question: Where do I go for technical support if I have any queries regarding following the process and/or use of the new forms?

Response: In the first instance you should contact your line manager for support in using the new standard. There are also individuals within the deployment areas that can support further, and these individuals can be contacted via the email addresses below.

- Anglia Route – AngliaESDSupport@networkrail.co.uk
- North West & Central Region – SAI25enquiries@networkrail.co.uk
- Central National Project Team – ESDSAIsupport@networkrail.co.uk

These individuals can also call on the central teams where required. Out of hours support also exists.

Any queries can also be submitted via DRACAS.

3.2 Question: If NP is not ERAs who completed part 2 of ERAF does the NP need to do a site visit to check any of the ERAF content? *New

Response: For an NP to be prepared ahead of the day of the work, it is recommended that a pre-isolation walk out is completed so they are comfortable to brief AP's COSS(OLP)s etc... rather than be under pressure and checking as and when you get there. An ERAF Part 2 walkout and NP pre-isolation walkout can be conducted at the same time.

3.3 Question: When accessing and tracking under live is used in conjunction with an earthed isolation, what does the NP need to check? *New

Response: The NP needs to check that the on/off tracking arrangements under live is approved by the ERAs and endorsed by the E&PME or delegated authority and confirm that conditions on the ERAF are met and the ERAF recipient has a clear understanding of the ESSoW arrangements.

3.4 Question: What should I do if the COSS (OLP) is uncontactable? *New

Response: NP should confirm that the OLP is no longer required &/or everyone has left site (no one still working that requires an OLP(s)) and the OLE is fit to re-energise.

3.5 Question: What is the difference between CAT D and CAT L restrictions and requirements, as both allow incursion into the 2.75m zone? *Updated

Response: CAT L allows for OTP to on track and travel where it has no attachments or movements out of gauge. Where OTP does have attachments or movements out of gauge, this should be Electrically Risk Assessed under CAT D. For the full list of requirements, please see the most up to date CAT L list. Where an electrical assessment is required i.e. if the OTP does not meet the requirement stated in the Category L List, this should be undertaken by an Electrical Risk Assessor (ERAs).

3.6 Question: Are Along-Track Limits considered Residual Electrical Hazards? *Updated

Response: No, Along-Track Limits are the limits of the Overhead Line Permits and not Residual Electrical Hazards. OLP Along-Track Limits shall have RoLE equipment applied, however not noted as Residual Electrical Hazards, otherwise an ESSoW Cat A would be impossible to be achieved. Please see Appendix B.

3.7 Question: Are there other examples of mitigation measures relevant to the risk of back feeding from auxiliary transformers?

Response: Yes, please see the information within SAI Issue 5, Module D, Clauses 6.2, 6.3 & 6.4.

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3.8 Question: Is Module 7 Clause 8.6.3 applicable to Module D and the HVIEC form?

Response: Yes, the Module is still applicable, and there has been a future update to the standard following the use of interim guidance notes.

3.9 Question: In terms of an emergency or rapid response to an incident, how will the system work in that scenario?

Response: Every earthed isolation must have an electrical risk assessment, even those that follow an emergency switch-off or rapid response.

3.10 Question: With regards to the ESSoW categories, who determines what the category is, where has it been documented, and do you need to capture it in the PPS?

Response: The ERAs determine the ESSoW category in line with the information received from the work requestor in line with the information received about the work task, and task delivery method.

3.11 Question: What does it mean Category A except crossing DNO/TNO lines? *Updated

Response: TNO/DNO crossing are permitted in an ESSoW Category A earthed isolation, and the risk is dealt with via the earthing requirements. Additional electrical risk control measures can be used however are not always required. For this Category A earthed Isolation, you will need to print out the 'Appendix A – Continuation' sheet of the ERAF excel file.

3.12 Question: If multiple work activities have been combined into one Earthed Isolation after the FINAL IPF has been released, how do I manage the ERAFs?

Response: Where there are multiple work activities that have been combined to one Earthed Isolation provider by the Route Isolation Provider, the Lead Earthed Isolation Provider must combine the content of the ERAFs and build an overarching ERAF that includes every Overhead Line Permits along track limits and associated identified residual electrical hazards and their electrical risk control measures.

The guide for completing the ERAF is located here: ERAF Completion Guidance

3.13 Question: What happens when an Earthed Isolation is required following an Emergency Switch-Off?

Response: The requirements for how to manage an ERAF after an Emergency Switch-Off is located within this guidance note: ERAF Post ESO Guidance

3.14 Question: What happens when a change is required to the planned ERAF at the time of implementing the Earthed Isolation?

Response: The requirements for changes to the ERAF at the time of the Earthed Isolation are within the emergency standards change and detailed in SAI25, Module 2 clause 8, **AND** Module 7 clause 30 onwards.

3.15 Question: Can you provide further clarity on a suitable working method, if CME earths are required to be applied to the sealing end in close proximity to the track feeder disconnector being worked on?

Response: Clause 4.2 and 4.4 of Module D states that where it is not practicable to apply a CME between breaker and lineside disconnector, different points of isolation and earthing relevant to the distribution equipment might be required.

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4 Forms

General Information

4.1 Question: Are ERAFs and ORFs meant to be retained?

Response: Yes. The ERAF and ORF should be retained as part of the overall electrical safe system of work documentation in line with the existing requirements for the retention of EIDF Form B etc… There is no change to the existing requirements that have been in place for many years. If you want more information, please refer to the corporate records retention schedule (NR/L1/INF/02220).

Overhead Line Permit (OLP)

4.2 Question: What process should I follow if I have lost / misplaced my OLP? *New

Response: Contact the Nominated Person (NP), confirm your name and contact number and advise them that OLP you have been issued has been lost or misplaced. The NP will record the lost OLP and confirm the arrangements to issue a replacement OLP and undertake another briefing if required.

Live Working Form (LWF)

4.3 Question: Who provides "The relevant electrical sections, lines and limits" on the Live Working Form (LWF), and will this information be provided by the NP / AP or ECO? *New

Response: The NP, AP &/or OLE17 holders will provide the detail. The ECO will assist if required.

4.4 Question: How does the person requesting the switch-off, verify on site that the electrical sections have been switched-off? *New

Response: They do not verify a switch off. They treat the OLE as 'Live' as per the LWF declarations and use approved live working techniques and equipment only.

4.5 Question: What are the acceptable reasons for using an LWF over applying for an Earthed Isolation?

Response: Acceptable reasons vary depending on the circumstances. However, some reasons might include:

- Controls in the approved CAT E list are met.
- There is too much operational impact (safety and performance), due to the time and location of the work. E.g., Manchester Piccadilly station throat.

Electrical Risk Assessment Form (ERAF)

4.6 Question: If 2 different ERAs' complete and sign a single ERAF i.e., ERAs 1 completes and signs Part 1 of the ERAF, then ERAs 2 completes and signs Part 2 of the ERAF, who holds overall accountability for the Electrical Risk Assessment?

Response: As stated within the ERAF Completion Guidance, *'The ERAs that signs Part 2 of the ERAF is the person signing off the whole document for use. Therefore, this ERAs is overall accountable for the content within the ERAF'*.

4.7 Question: If the site visit is waived, does the Electrical Risk Assessment Reviewer (ERAR) have to sign both part 1 & 2 of the ERAF? The decision to waive the site visit is only in part 2 as the site visit in part 1 is not mandatory.

Response: No, the ERAR would only be required to sign Part 2 where the site visit is waived. However, if the ERAR has signed part 1 for a reason stipulated within Module 2 of SAI25, they must also sign Part 2.

4.8 Question: Do I have to complete Appendix B on the ERAF?

Response: Appendix B on the ERAF is not required to be completed to enable the sign-off of the electrical risk assessment. However, it is advised to completed Appendix B as this will help build the EIDF earthing locations.

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4.9 Question: When justifying the appropriate selection of the ESSoW on the ERAF, what does economic impact mean?

Response: An example of economic impact could be where it is not possible to isolate and earth an all areas of overhead line, therefore not managing to achieve a Category A earthed isolation due to rules of the route/timetabling. Therefore, the work activity must be checked to understand if it is safe to continue with the Category B, or whether to wait for the Category A earthed isolation on another date.

If the work can be completed safely under the Category B ESSoW, then Economic Impact would be selected to state that it was not possible to achieve a Category A, yet with appropriate controls in place, it is safe to proceed with the work.

4.10 Question: When justifying the appropriate selection of the ESSoW on the ERAF, what does safety impact mean?

Response: Sometimes it may be safer to implement an ESSoW Category that is lower down the hierarchy due to the balance of risk. For instance, working with live line poles to remove something from the overhead line might be safer than implementing an earthed isolation to do the same thing. Implementing an earthed isolation might present risks when applying earths and electrical risk control measures and therefore if a competent person believes it's safer to use calibrated live line poles and tools this is a good justification for safety impact.

4.11 Question: Do the electrical risk assessments have a shelf life? Some activities are only undertaken every 12 months.

Response: An ERAF has a maximum validity period of 12 months, after which it shall be re-assessed by an ERAs to understand if any new hazards are present due to any infrastructure change.

4.12 Question: The ERAF (Risk Assessment section) asks for the 'From / At' of the residual hazard and the 'To'. For the 'From/At' section does mean that is the structure where the REH is? *New

Response: The columns are intended to be used as 'From' and 'To' where a Residual Electrical Hazard is present across an extended area e.g. adjacent live OLE 'From' structure G74/30 'To' structure G74/46.

The 'At' part becomes relevant when the Residual Electrical Hazard is present at one specific location e.g. a cable sealing end at structure G74/36.

4.13 Question: Does the Nominated Person implementing the Earthed Isolation get issued with the ERAF Part 1 and Part 2 or just the ERAF part 2? *New

Response: The NP should only receive ERAF Part 2 of the ERAF and the associated site visit, where required, shall be completed as close as reasonably practicable to the planned date of the task in accordance with Module 2 clause 5.3.4

Form B

4.14 Question: Where there are multiple form Bs and HVIECs are being issued, does every Form B needs to have the HVIEC detailed if it is being used as a point of isolation? *New

Response: Only the ECR and NP who requires the HVIEC to undertake the work will endorse the From B with the HVIEC. The points of disconnection will be reference on any other form B that are issued to any other NP.

5 Training and Briefing

5.1 Question: Who is affected by the introduction of NR/L3/ELP/SAI25?

Response: Anyone (Network Rail and contractors) who is required to work on the rail network where OLE is present within the routes included above.

Training and briefing are available for:

- Nominated Persons
- Authorised Persons
- ECOs

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- COSS(OLP)
- Machine Controller/Operators and PosRep
- Level A Distribution holders
- Route [Incident] Controllers
- People who request work to be carried out

For more information speak to your line manager or visit Safety Central.

5.2 Question: If I have completed the training or hold multiple competences / complete multiple duties, will I need to complete the detailed briefs for every competence/duty?

Response: Yes. Different information is briefed and focused on each competence group.

5.3 Question: What competencies are achieved once the training is complete?

Response: If you have attended NP SAI Upskill &/or NP DI, you will receive NP SAI &/or NP DI as a child to your parent competence. If you have attended ERAs course, you will receive ERAs as a parent competence.

5.4 Question: Can a Nominated Person who has completed SAI25 training work in an area that works in accordance to NR/L3/ELP/29987 after completing the training? *New

Response: NPs who have previously held 29987 NP and now hold NP SAI NP can work in both Wales and Western and SAI areas. If an individual has only held NP SAI, then they cannot work in Wales and Western

5.5 Question: When will the SAI content be available for recertifications?

Response: Recertification content is currently being updated and will be available soon. Contact your local deployment team if you have any concerns about competences expiring.

5.6 Question: What are the workplace assessment requirements after completing the ERAs course?

Response: After completion of the ERAs course, an individual is awarded the competence requiring mentorship. Through mentorship and through evidencing of completed ERAFs, an individual will undergo workplace assessment for full awarding of competence. Safety Central.

5.7 Question: Will I have to complete an assessment after receiving a brief?

Response: No. As this is not an authority to work, you will not be required to complete an assessment. However, you **may** be questioned at the site of work about your knowledge of SAI and the changes implemented by those controlling the Isolation &/or site of work.

5.8 Question: As a contractor, how will I know when I require training?

Response: If you work within the SAI deployment area, you will be approached by a member of the local deployment team to attend training.

5.9 Question: I have completed the eLearning; how is this updated on Sentinel?

Response: Those completing eLearning (AP and those completing the LWF briefing) do not require an update to their Sentinel profiles. You will receive a completion certificate (electronic copy or screenshot of the completion), which we advise you keep a copy of, to demonstrate you have completed the course.

5.10 Question: If I complete a detailed brief, will it automatically update my Sentinel profile?

Response: No. Completion of the detailed briefings will not lead to automatic update. Therefore, you must request an update to your Sentinel profile.

Sentinel is a competence management system for the rail industry and not usually utilised in this way. From lessons learned during previous projects, we requested Sentinel be utilised as a way of recording this 'learning

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event,' and be able to be viewed on an individual's profile via the Sentinel app/website.

NOTE: Completion of a detailed briefing is not an authority to work.

5.11 Question: How do I get my Sentinel profile updated?

Response: In Network Rail, your Competence Delivery Specialist (CDS) will be able to update your profile. External organisations will have a Sentinel coordinator who will be able to complete this for you following notification from you.

5.12 Question: I requested for my brief completion to be logged onto my Sentinel profile prior to attending site and working under NR/L3/ELP/SAI25, but this has not yet been done. What should I do?

Response: Prior to attending a site of work, ensure that you have confirmation (e.g., an email from your manager) stating you have viewed the required material.

6 DRACAS

6.1 Question: What is DRACAS and why is DRACAS used?

Response: Data Reporting Analysis and Corrective Action System is the means of raising any issues associated with the implementation of this change, assessing their impact, and resolving them in the most appropriate way. This includes briefing issues. Any queries should be submitted via DRACAS

NOTE: Issues regarding training should be addressed via the training feedback loop. Where this is not possible, DRACAS entries will be accepted.

6.2 Question: Will I be informed about the progress of my DRACAS submission? *Updated

Response: All submissions will be logged and then categorised and analysed by the DRACAS working group for the appropriate action. You will be informed as soon as your item is logged and contacted upon closure of the item. If you item cannot be closed immediately, you will be contacted if more information is required, and at incremental stages you will be provided an update until it is closed.

7 Ad-hoc Queries

7.1 Question: What are the different ESSoW categories?

Response: The categories are A, B, D, E and L. These are covered in more detail on overview brief.

8 Appendices

8.1 **Appendix B**: Additional Guidance for ERAF Usage / OLP ATLs vs. REHs

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