

SafetyFirst



Welcome to the Winter edition of our newsletter Safety First.

On behalf of Ganymede, I would like to thank those of you who worked through the Christmas period. You put your festive celebrations on hold to cover the many projects being carried out around the clock, on possessions and blockades throughout the network. Over the holiday period you covered a wide range of shift patterns to ensure successful delivery and incident free, a big well done to all of you involved.

Last year you were all a credit to the industry for the hard work and dedication given throughout the demanding time when the coronavirus pandemic struck. You were there on the frontline, being adaptable to the different ways of working and keeping our railways operational at such an uncertain time. The difficulties continue as we enter a third lockdown, this to help combat the new variant of the virus upon us, but hopefully as the country starts the mass vaccination, we will begin to see light at the end of this very long tunnel.

Also last year the industry witnessed an upturn in accidents and Ganymede individuals suffered a significant number of injuries. A number of these were from the incorrect tool being used or the tool not being used correctly, with ten people getting hurt through difficulties extracting rail fastenings and reverting to the use of heel bars and hammers. It is essential the utmost care and attention is taken when using tools and equipment and vitally important the correct tools are used to carry out the task in hand. If you are unsure you must Speak Up to the site PIC and voice your concerns.

Our newsletter has all the usual articles and features containing information and advice around your safety, health and wellbeing but we do have a new feature around environmental sustainability and corporate social responsibility which will become a regular feature in the newsletter going forward.

In the meantime, look after yourself, your loved ones and follow government advice and site guidance; this will help you and your colleagues stay safe, especially whilst at work and carrying out your duties.

Take Care and Stay Safe

Gary Lobue
Head of HSEQ



LESSONS LEARNED

Recharging portable electrical equipment

While staying in a hotel between night shifts, one of our operatives had placed their headtorch on charge. It was plugged into a bedside USB charging socket in the hotel room and the helmet and torch were placed on the bed whilst they went to sleep. A couple of hours later the operative awoke when the battery had overheated, exploded and caught fire.

It set light to the mattress and bedding. The hotel fire alarm did not sound and the fire was put out before any major damage was caused and there were no injuries sustained. The USB Charger had come with the head torch which was powered by two re-chargeable batteries. It is important to note that some imported lithium ion batteries and electrical goods powered by them, do not meet UK or EU safety standards. Even if a product displays a CE marking, it does not necessarily mean that the product is compliant and therefore safe.



Remember

- Only use the charger that is supplied with the device you are charging
- Regularly check the condition of your re-chargeable equipment for signs of damage, wear and tear that could affect its safety, especially kit that is exposed to weather conditions
- Only use equipment that has been supplied by your employer/sponsor or that has been purchased from an approved manufacturer/supplier
- Avoid leaving items on charge and unattended
- Avoid leaving items being charged on surfaces such as soft furnishings
- If anything you are charging generates excessive heat, disconnect and cease use of the equipment immediately

A lot of people are now working from home which means there is a lot more portable equipment being used and being re-charged regularly. The above event is a lesson learnt and could have happened in a person's home, so always remember to carry out user checks on all your electrical equipment.

Verification of the Safe System of Work within the Safe Work Pack

A recent event highlighted the importance of verifying the Safe System of Work within the Safe Work Pack and further checking it is appropriate when on site.

Back in September 2020, a Safe Work Pack was prepared for a Separated Site of Work at Marsh Barton requested by the Planning Scheduler. The Safe Work Pack was produced for three shifts and issued, verified, authorised and accepted as per the 019 requirements.

On the first shift additional arrangements were issued to the COSS/PIC for a line blockage to be taken and to meet at an access point that was not stated in the Safe Work Pack. The line blockage was taken and the work was carried out for the first and second shifts, however on the third shift a different COSS highlighted that the actual site mileage and access point were not in the planned Safe Work Pack and therefore the information in the pack did not cover the actual site they were working at. However in this instance, the line blockage did cover the work being carried out and there was no danger to the workforce of approaching trains, but in other circumstances it could have been a different matter.

Three different COSS's received the planned Safe Work Pack for the shifts in question and it was the third COSS who picked up them being at the wrong location, this was due to him checking that the Safe Work Pack covered the site requirements.



LESSONS LEARNED

A number of underlying causes have been identified around this event but we would like to draw your attention to the fact that when carrying out PIC/COSS duties you must follow the requirements of [NR/L2/OHS/019 Safety of people at work on or near the line](#) and you must take on board the following 5 points;

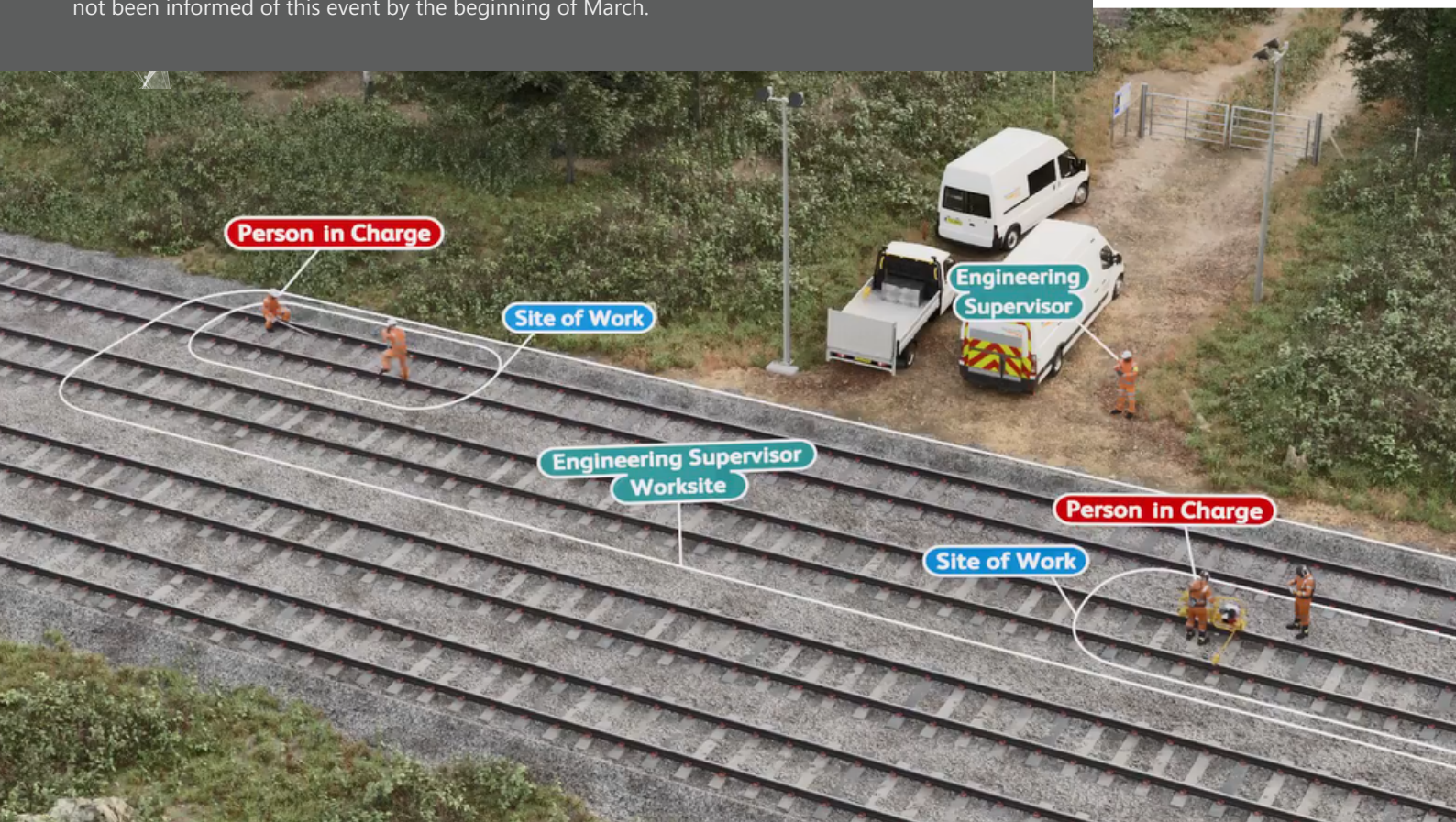
- Verify the proposed Safe Work Pack is appropriate and fit for purpose
- Only accept a Safe Work Pack that has been authorised by the responsible manager
- Check that the planned Safe Work Pack is appropriate for the conditions once on site
- Implement the requirements of the Safe Work Pack
- Brief the group on the relevant parts of the Safe Work Pack, including re-briefing where there are any changes to risks, location or personnel (e.g. change of shift)

The PIC/COSS is to record any on site changes to the Safe Work Pack and return the completed Safe Work Pack to the planner.

019 PRINCIPLES BRIEFING

The 019 Principles video briefing, released in 2020, focuses on maintenance (route business) with the Person in Charge being integral in the process of planning and delivering safe work. If an organisation is a supplier of resource to route businesses which work under the Person in Charge principles, all PTS competence holders are required to complete the video briefing.

Ganymede fit into this category and therefore all our workforce who hold PTS will have to receive the video briefing before 31st March 2021. Arrangements will be made for you to receive the video briefing but you must contact your Ganymede office in the event you have not been informed of this event by the beginning of March.



SPOTLIGHT ON SAFETY

During the pandemic the safety department received a report that the guidance around maximum number of operatives travelling in vehicles was being ignored. This was a breach of our COVID-19 policy and was putting other operatives at risk of contracting the virus. Under Health and Safety laws Ganymede have a duty of care to protect all staff that are working on their behalf. This complaint was dealt with swiftly to stop any reoccurrence. The report was sent in anonymously and we would like to thank that person for having the courage to speak up and bringing this discrepancy to our attention.

If you are experiencing problems with the protective screens fitted in your Ganymede vehicle, please contact the fleet department ASAP.



CLOSE CALL WINNER

This month's close call winner is Matt Cook from our Special Projects team in Doncaster. Whilst at work Matt observed a group of operatives climbing up a steep narrow bank, holding on to a palisade fence, crossing over a tunnel, then climbing down a steep wet bank to access the other side.

Matt spoke to the operatives, even though they were not from Ganymede or part of the vegetation clearance job he was working on (they were working on graffiti removal), Matt explained that their actions were not safe they agreed and moved on. This is an excellent example of someone speaking up when they see an unsafe act, and not just ignoring it. Well done Matt!

Remember, for every Close Call raised Ganymede will donate £1 to support our charity partner, Samaritans.

SAMARITANS

Reporting a close call is simple and it could prevent an accident or injury in future.

You have a chance to be awarded with a £150 voucher for reporting a close call that makes a difference.

Need to report a close call?

PHONE 01332 861 840

TEXT 'Close Call' followed by your report to 78866* or

EMAIL closecall@ganymedesolutions.co.uk

*Text messages MUST start with 'Close Call' followed by your report for them to be received.

**DON'T IGNORE IT,
CLOSE CALL IT!**



Wake up your ankles



When we reviewed our accident/incident data, we have had a number of ankle injuries. The majority of ankle injuries are caused by rotational injury – when your ankle is twisted past resistance level. This injury can be exaggerated by the weight of the individual, the heavier you are, the greater the damage you will do to your ankle if you twist it.

Ankle injuries often occur when walking to site, we can help prevent or reduce the likelihood of injuries to ourselves by warming up.

There are some simple exercises which you could complete to warm up and wake up your ankles.

- Toe Stands – stand on your toes with your feet slightly apart, slowly lower your heels and raise again 10 times. If you feel adventurous, try lowering and raising on each foot in sequence
- Ankle Spins - whilst sitting down, turn your toes in a circular motion, 5 times clockwise followed by another 5 anti-clockwise
- Seated Knee Raises – lift your knee and then lower it. Lift your knee and lower it, as if you were marching and repeat 5 to 10 times

Hand Arm Vibration

Hand arm vibration (HAV) is a problem that affects many thousands of workers and causes serious and permanent occupational illness. HAV is a vibration transmitted into workers hand or arms when using hand-held power tools such as breakers, hammer drills, chainsaws, or hand guided tools such as compactor plates.

Excessive or prolonged exposure to vibration damages the nerve ends and blood circulation system that can result in long term pain and even loss of fingers/hands. The symptoms may appear within months of exposure or in some cases may take years to appear.

Vibration comes from using handheld vibrating tools and from contact with material that is being cut or worked on by vibrating equipment.

The Symptoms

- Fingers going white, particularly in cold or wet conditions and becoming red and painful on recovery
- Pins and needles
- Loss of sense of touch and loss of grip strength
- Severe pain or numbness

What can you do?

- Follow the guidance given on site – if you are asked to use wearable technology – please do so, it's for your protection
- Where possible wear gloves to keep your hands warm, which will help the circulation in the fingers which will reduce the chances of HAV
- Ensure you use the most appropriate tool for the job and use the tool correctly and in accordance with your training
- Exercise your fingers during your work breaks, this will improve blood circulation
- Chemicals in tobacco can affect blood flow – it is recommended you stop smoking or cut down

If you have any symptoms please Speak Up. The first warning signs of damage are tingling in the fingers – stretching and flexing the hands will usually sort this out. If it continues for more than a minute, take a break and let your Supervisor know.



A.D.V.I.C.E: Relationships

The coronavirus outbreak is dramatically changing our lives, including our relationships with our families, our friends and our workplaces.

Many of us have made sacrifices, had to find new ways of seeing others and found ourselves spending far more time than we're used to with those who share our homes. It can be helpful to remind ourselves to be extra patient and understanding with each other and ourselves.

Many tips about how to maintain good relationships are as relevant and important now as they were before coronavirus. For instance, all five of the Mental Health Foundation's top tips for nurturing healthy relationships are as important now:

- Give time - put more time aside to connect with your friends and family
- Be present - this means really paying attention to the other people in your life and trying not to be distracted by your phone or your work or other interests
- Listen - really listen to what others are saying and try to understand it and to focus on their needs in that moment
- Let yourself be listened to - honestly share how you are feeling, and allow yourself to be heard and supported by others
- Recognise unhealthy relationships - harmful relationships can make us unhappy. Recognising this can help us to move forward and find solutions
- It is important to be mindful of how we speak to others, no matter how someone looks or acts, you truly never know what's happening in their lives.

During this strange and difficult time, it's also worth considering additional ways to protect our relationships and try to cope a bit better with some of the relationship problems the virus creates.

For the full A.D.V.I.C.E. article on Relationships, visit the Ganymede blog on our website.

Couch to 5k

Physical health and mental health are closely connected. As we have just entered the third period of lockdown, mental health conditions are reported to be on the rise. For some of us we are lucky enough to continue to work through lockdown and that can help us keep physically and mentally well, but not always.

One of the things we are still allowed to do in lockdown is to go outside to exercise once a day. For some people being able to get outside to walk or run is what helps them rationalise these strange times we are living through. Exercise can help reduce stress, improve sleep, self-esteem and memory.

This could be the time for you to consider taking up running, the NHS App 'Couch to 5k' has been around for a while and is a great way to start running in a structured way. The programme runs for 9 weeks (that could take you out of lockdown!) and enables you to gradually build up your running, so you can eventually run 5k (30 mins) without stopping. It recommends three run's a week and has a weekly podcast for each session to download, which will tell you when to run and when to walk. If you struggle with any week's progress you can repeat that week until you are comfortable to move on.

Take a look at the NHS Website, if running isn't your thing, there's plenty of information on how to get started with exercise and some really varied workouts you can do at home. There are also workout plans (and podcasts) to supplement your running.



HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Sleep Hygiene

Good sleep hygiene is about the routines you have before you go to sleep and having a regular sleep pattern. Having a good routine helps you enjoy higher quality, more restful sleep for enough time each night. Good sleep on a regular basis is critical to maintaining balanced mental, emotional, and physical health, it helps you stay focussed during the day, regulate your mood, and feel more productive.

The most important elements of sleep hygiene require the following from your bedroom;

- **Temperature – neither too hot nor too cold**
- **Darkness – the darker, the better**
- **Quiet – the quieter, the better**
- **A comfortable place to lie down and stretch out**

The goal is to wind your mind and body down for sleep, try to go to bed and get up at the same times each day, stay off electronic devices for at least 30 minutes before bedtime and avoid large meals and alcohol before sleeping.

For those that work shifts, it can be more difficult to create good sleep hygiene, but there are things you can do to help:

- Stick as closely as possible to normal day and night pattern of food intake
- Aim for three satisfying meals across a 24-hour period
- Avoid or minimise eating between midnight and 6am and try to eat at the beginning and end of the shift
- Avoid large meals for 1-2 hours prior to sleep
- Eat breakfast before day sleep to avoid waking due to hunger
- Choose whole foods, vegetables, lean protein, eggs, nuts etc – avoid sugar rich products such as soft drinks, bakery items, sweets, and non-fibre carbs (like white bread)
- Avoid caffeine within 4 hours of the end of your shift
- Block out light whilst you sleep and try to decrease your light exposure before you go to bed
- Let people know when you will be sleeping to try and limit the disturbances



5 top tips for healthier eating this Winter



FLIGHT FLU

When you are ill, it's important to keep eating and drinking. Keep a store of meals that are easy to cook and prepare in your freezer/store cupboards.



AVOID COMFORT EATING

Sometimes the cold weather and long nights can increase the temptation to comfort eat. Resist the urge, but if you're hungry between meals try a cup of homemade vegetable soup or a bowl of stewed fruit to fill the gap.



GET YOUR 5 A DAY

Make sure you try to keep eating the recommended 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day. Mix other root vegetables (carrots, parsnips, turnips) with your mashed potato to boost your intake.



HAVE HEALTHY SNACKS AVAILABLE

Fruit, seeds/nuts, yogurts, smoothies and soups are great examples of healthy snacks that will help you steer away from snacking on unhealthy food.



BUY FROZEN

Don't be afraid to use frozen vegetables, they are sometimes more nutritious than fresh and will last well in the freezer, so there is less waste.

DRIVING IN WINTER

Never are daily vehicle checks more important than during the cold dark winter months. Whether you are driving a company vehicle or your own, it is essential that your vehicle is in roadworthy condition to keep you and other road-users safe. Whilst driving in bad weather and in darkness it is especially important to check the following items.

- Check your brakes work correctly, call the hire company or take your car to a garage if they start to squeak or you felt any brake judder
- Make sure all lights work correctly to ensure you will be seen by other drivers
- Check your tyres have at least 2mm of tread across the entire width of the tyre
- Keep the wiper blades clean and free from grease
- Ensure your screen-wash is always kept topped up
- Always carry a scraper or de-icer and make sure all of your windows and mirrors are clear before you set off



Lightfoot Reminder for approved drivers – The PIN number you have been given is unique to you, not the vehicle. Do not share it with any other driver or you could end up paying for their fines and/or damages.

Know your speed limits

It is extremely important for you to know the legal speed limits for your vehicle as a lot of people forget the differences between a car and a van.

To be absolutely clear, all of the vehicles provided by Ganymede solutions, from the small 2 seat vans to the big Mercedes Sprinters, are classed as Goods Vehicles (not more than 7.5 tonnes) and are governed by the following speed limits.

BUILT-UP AREAS	SINGLE CARRIAGEWAYS	DUAL CARRIAGEWAYS	MOTORWAYS
MPH	MPH	MPH	MPH

It is also important to understand the penalties for being caught speeding in a commercial vehicle. There is a popular misconception that you will be automatically issued with a "Fixed Point Notice" of a £100 fine and three points but this is no longer the case. Guidelines introduced in 2017 mean speeding penalties are now judged based on the amount you exceed the speed limit by and the potential risk you presented to other road users. Speeding in a van is automatically classed as being more dangerous than in a car because of its size and weight.

This is reflected in the penalties van drivers receive which are split in to three different bands:

- For the offences deemed least serious, classed as Band A, you would receive the usual 3 points on your licence, but the fine can be set to anywhere between 25%-75% of your weekly wage
- For Band B offences, you will receive up to 6 penalty points or a driving ban up to 28 days and a fine anywhere between 75%-125% of your weekly wage
- For the most serious Band C offences, you will receive up to 6 penalty points or a driving ban up to 56 days and a fine anywhere between 125%-175% of your weekly wage



SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



Ganymede is passionate about being socially responsible. As part of our commitment, we have identified four main areas that we are working towards throughout 2021:



**COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**



**EQUALITY, DIVERSITY
AND INCLUSION**



**ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT**



**EMPLOYMENT AS A
SOCIAL ISSUE**

As a business we have much planned in order to achieve our socially responsible strategy and will keep you updated regularly in this newsletter and on social media channels.

SAMARITANS

We are pleased to announce that we are continuing to partner with the Samaritans. Did you know that every 7 seconds, Samaritans answers a call for help. Ganymede can help the Samaritans make sure there's someone there to listen. It costs £5 for the Samaritans to answer a call for help. For every £1 donated, 85p goes on their services and just 15p is invested in raising the next £1.

Together, we can make sure that no one ever feels alone. We will continue to raise as much money as we can for the Samaritans, including everyone raising close calls - for every close call raised, Ganymede donates £1. You may have seen on our social media channels, that on 18th January, Ganymede took part in the #BrewMonday campaign to have a virtual check in with our colleagues. As well as maintaining the health and wellbeing of our employees, for every individual that joined a call, we also made a donation to the Samaritans.

