

# Safety First

Welcome to the Summer edition of our newsletter Safety First.

We are now well into the Summer season, when usually most of us would have our holidays and take a well earned rest. Unfortunately, there is still the uncertainty of when we can venture to overseas destinations. So, what better chance to boost the UK tourist economy by taking our holidays in the UK and hopefully experience some good British sunshine.

## Welcoming back live events

Sunshine and warm weather takes me back to last month and to day 1 of the Rail Live exhibition, which was the first live event for the industry since the coronavirus lockdown 16 months ago. It was so refreshing attending a live event of this nature and meeting so many industry colleagues. It was quite amazing to see all the specialised suppliers showcasing their innovations, technology, and plant/machinery on such a grand scale, but for me, it was an event for the railway people to come together, wearing the upper body orange clothing and collaborating in a unique way that has been so sorely missed throughout this pandemic.

This is hopefully the start of live events, meetings and seminars, which will also enable Ganymede to re-launch our Safety Moments events. This will get us back on track engaging, promoting, and sharing our safety, health, and wellbeing initiatives with you all in person. This is something we are looking forward to and will advise you on any developments.

## The importance of securing access gates

I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate a recent safety notice sent out by Network Rail regarding the importance of securing access gates. You must ensure access gates are closed secure/locked when entering or leaving a site. Remember unsecured access points allow trespassers, including children, to access the railway infrastructure, creating a safety and security risk. It also provides an opportunity for crime and malicious acts to occur. If it is not possible to secure an access gate, report it immediately to the PIC, then raise it as a fault and report a Close Call. Let's not give any invite or opportunity to members of the public to encroach on the railways.

I hope you enjoy the content of our latest edition, get your well-earned holidays whether in the UK or overseas. As always, take care and stay safe.

**Gary Lobue**  
Head of HSEQ



# LESSONS LEARNED

## Near Miss at Creswell Station

A Ganymede operative was carrying out PIC/COSS duties for Copping Stone Repairs on the Down Platform 1 at Creswell Station. The COSS took the planned line blockage of the Down Mansfield Line with Shirebrook Signal Box as protection for the team to carry out the planned works. The workgroup preceded onto the station to assess the planned repair works and mistakenly went onto Platform 2, direct from the station entrance.

The Network Rail team highlighted several coping stones that needed repairing and assumed this was the works to be carried out. However, this was the wrong platform, situated on the Up Mansfield line. One of the operatives was exposed at track level to a train approaching on the Up Mansfield line and had to scramble back onto the platform out of the way of the passing train resulting in a near miss.

On summarising this near miss event, it is evident from the immediate cause that the COSS was not familiar with the location. He became complacent with the ease of access on a basic, uncomplicated site of work, and assumed his colleagues from Network Rail had knowledge of the area and had identified the correct location.

The mistake was compounded by him not checking the documentation in his safe work pack, such as the sectional appendix and signalling diagram extract, to configure the correct lines and directions of traffic. He accepted the SWP when it was apparent there was insufficient information for the safe system of work and task being carried out.

From the outcome of the Level 2 Investigation, there were also several significant planning failures around the requirements of NR/L2/OHS/019 Safety of People at Work On or Near the Line. This included a lack of consideration to the hierarchy of the SSOW method of protection, safeguarded working and the lack of understanding around the roles and responsibilities of the Responsible Manager, PIC and Planner.



This 'near miss' should have been avoided with 'lessons learnt' around the following duties carried out by the COSS:

- **Verification of the Safe Work Pack** – You must verify the proposed SWP is appropriate and fit for purpose and only accept a SWP that has been authorised by the Responsible Manager. Remember to check that the planned SWP is appropriate for the conditions once on site.
- **Site/Area Familiarisation** – You should always ensure you are familiar with the area you are working in and this should be achieved with the provision of the documentation within the safe work pack such as sectional appendix, signalling diagrams and hazard directory etc. Also, plan to carry out a pre-site visit if you are not familiar with the proposed site.
- **Briefing and Control of the Work Group** – You must implement the requirements of the SWP, brief the group on the relevant parts of the SWP, including re-briefing where there are any changes to risks, location or personnel. You must ensure all the work group sign to confirm their understanding of the SSOW before allowing them on site.
- **Role of the PIC** – This person must be involved in the planning and who is on site and where the work is being undertaken, they have the overall accountability of supervising and overseeing works. This person will normally be the team leader (or equivalent) and hold COSS competence to make sure planned controls are put in place, to keep persons safe from trains, activity, and site risks.



## Reduction in Open Line Working – Taking Line Blockages

As you will be aware, Network Rail have been issued an Improvement Notice by the Office of the Rail Regulator which includes a requirement to remove unassisted lookout working by July 2022. However, a challenge of achieving this by July 2021 has been issued which has been successful in several areas, due to all Network Rail Regions plans to rigorously control and eradicate unassisted lookout working on open lines to comply with the July 2021 deadline.

With this in mind, there will be more emphasis and provision made for line blockages to be taken for the works normally carried out under unassisted lookout warnings. We do understand that operatives who hold COSS competence and who normally set up safe systems of work on open lines may not have the experience of taking line blockages. Therefore, we have set out the process below from the Rule Book, Handbook 8 for you to familiarise yourselves with.

Line blockages will be pre-planned and you will receive the details within your safe work pack. Remember to ensure you verify the details before accepting the safe work pack and it is important you are familiar with the site and area of the line blockage limits.

You must agree all of the following with the signaller.

- The line or lines to be blocked
- The nature of the work
- The locations between which the work will take place
- The amount of time needed to do the work
- The time after which permission can be given for the line blockage to start
- Which signals will be kept at danger or block markers at which the route will be closed to protect the activity, including those in both directions on a single or bi-directional line
- Any additional protection needed
- If the work will take place beyond points that need to be used for train movements
- The arrangements if single line working is taking place
- The arrangements to apply at each level crossing

You must complete a line-blockage form (NR3180) and must read your entry to the signaller to confirm that it is correct. The signaller will tell you when the protecting signal has been placed to danger and will confirm that the signal will be kept at danger.

### Additional Protection

You must arrange for at least one of the additional protection arrangements to be provided on the line to be blocked whenever this is possible. However, you must always do so if the work will affect the safety of the line. You must agree with the signaller what additional protection will be provided. The signaller will not give you an authority number until the additional protection is in place.

Remember the full process of taking a line blockage is detailed within Rule Book, Handbook 8 IWA, COSS or PC Blocking a Line, visit the Safety Hub on the Ganymede Website to access and download the Handbooks if needed. Please contact us if you require any help or clarification around the taking of line blockages.

## Close Call Winner

This period the Close Call winner is **Billy Bushnell** from our Portsmouth Office.

Billy was carrying out his duties for Network Rail Wessex and while working on site at Wilton Junction, he noticed the cap of a Jerry Can not secured, causing it to leak fuel on the ground. Billy responded by using a spill kit to clean up the area ensuring the spillage was fully cleaned up and securely fastened the Jerry Can. This is a very positive Close Call raised and closed out by Billy and his prompt actions stopped an environmental issue of ground contamination and also a possible risk of fire.





## Close Call Reporting

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

As we are constantly encouraging people to report Close Calls, we thought it would be good to remind people of what a Close Call is and what needs to be included in your report.

**A Close Call is anything with the potential to cause harm, and includes unsafe conditions (physical/environmental) or unsafe acts (behaviours). This means it has the potential to:**

- Harm a person including minor, major injuries and fatalities
- Harm the environment and/or protected species
- Damage railway infrastructure, plant, vehicles, tools, equipment, systems and information

If you see something that could cause harm or damage:



It's really important that the report contains all the information to enable it to be recorded and where necessary, followed up quickly and efficiently.

**Location** – make sure you provide an exact location (ELR, Mileage, Chains Up or Down and Type, if not familiar with the location then use cabinet reference number, bridge or signal box number, what3words App, GPS etc). Try and provide a physical description of the location – what would help someone find it?

**Describe the problem** – What could go wrong? Describe the problem. Give as much detail as possible and explain what could happen, the person reading/seeing your Close Call may not appreciate what could result from it.

**Solution** – Explain what you have done to resolve the Close Call, and explain what is required to be done – what type of role is required to fix it? The more information you provide, the easier and quicker it will be to resolve.

## Did you know?

### Ganymede have more mental health first aiders.

It's been widely recognised that since the start of the pandemic mental health for many people has suffered. People have been affected in different ways, some directly through loss of earnings, others indirectly through the anxiety of being in lockdown and the uncertainty around when life will go back to 'normal'.

Ganymede have a number of mental health first aiders throughout the business, but we have recently undertaken a 2-day mental health first aid course, and now have more people able to provide support. The feedback from this training has been excellent, with the trainer being able to share some very direct experience of mental health conditions with us.

If you would like to talk to someone in confidence, please feel free to contact us and someone will be happy to listen. We have mental health first aiders at all of our offices, so speak to your local office for details or alternatively email us in confidence on the email below and one of our team will contact you.

[health&safety@ganymedesolutions.co.uk](mailto:health&safety@ganymedesolutions.co.uk)



# CSR AND SUSTAINABILITY

## Supporting the Samaritans - 72 hole Golf Challenge

Having supported Samaritans for a number of years as our Corporate Charity Partner, it has been great to see how our Rail Operations teams are embracing this great cause.

Michael Clegg and Danny West from our Doncaster office, along with one of our frontline track operatives Dean Petty, set themselves a golfing challenge of playing 72-holes to raise awareness and funds for Samaritans. In total, they raised an incredible **£1,171!**

Michael said, "Despite teeing off at the crack of dawn on Monday, it was great having Danny and Dean as part of the team. Being a Resource Manager in Doncaster, I know and appreciate just how critical Samaritans are for our local communities and in particular for the Rail Industry. Throughout 2020, Samaritans have provided support to people struggling through unprecedented times. Being able to show some appreciation by raising money and awareness is something myself, Danny and Dean were really proud of."

Dean commented "The day was a fantastic event to show support for Samaritans and raise money alongside two of my work colleagues. Danny and Michael have always looked after me and when they asked me to take part, I jumped at the chance. I have seen and spoken to people in the industry on track who are struggling with mental health and Samaritans are an excellent charity who support those in need."



**Danny West, Dean Petty and Michael Clegg looking forward to the 19th**

## World Environment Day



**Saturday 5th June was 'World Environment Day'.**

This is an initiative by the United Nations as a day when we can all reflect on what is happening to the Earth and take action to protect our environment.

At Ganymede, we are working hard as a business on sustainability and the environment. We have some great initiatives, but we decided to take this as an opportunity for everyone to get involved and take a pledge to demonstrate their support to preserve or enhance the environment. We set out a few pledges for people to choose from – or they could submit their own. Some of the most popular pledges were:

- Reduce food waste
- Eat more consciously – try a meat free day or more a week
- Grow fruits and vegetables and make sure they are eaten
- Avoid mowing my lawn to allow nature to take over for a period

**We look forward to this being an annual pledge and hearing how people have got on.**

## PPE & Workwear Recycling

As we mentioned in our last Safety First Newsletter, we are piloting a PPE and workwear recycling scheme at our Doncaster Manvers office. We are pleased to confirm that Network Rail have kindly agreed to us having a recycling bin at Marshgate and Roberts Road.

As long as your PPE isn't contaminated, it can be returned and will be made into other products. We hope to extend this out to our other offices next year.

So, remember – don't just bin your old PPE and workwear, drop it off to be recycled.

## Industrial Deafness

If you spend lots of time working in a noisy environment, you may be at risk of hearing loss. This is because exposure to loud noises can permanently damage your hearing, resulting in Noise Induced Hearing Loss, or NIHL. This often affects people who spend time working with noisy equipment, such as pneumatic drills, power tools and loud machinery.

Factors that can influence hearing loss include how much noise you are exposed to, how long you are exposed to it for and if you wear suitable hearing protection. Hearing loss can be unexpected when exposed to a sudden, extremely loud noise or gradual when exposed to loud noise over a period of time. With hearing damage, you may find that hearing conversations becomes more difficult, or even impossible. Your family may complain that the television is turned up too loud.

You may also find it difficult to catch certain sounds like 't', 'd', or 's' and you may confuse similar words. So words like 'track' may be heard as 'rack'. Hearing people over the telephone can also be a struggle and you may notice you start to favour one ear as it is easier for you to hear. You may also notice a ringing, buzzing or humming noise in your ears when in a quiet place. A way to tell if the noise around you is too loud is to try this test. If you have to shout at people about two metres away, this could mean that the noise levels are high and so could potentially damage your hearing.

Hearing loss through exposure to noise is preventable but once your hearing is lost it won't come back. There are ways that you can help to protect your hearing at work:

- Make sure that you do what is asked of you by following any work practices, for example working in and around exclusion zones
- Limit the amount of time that you spend doing noisy jobs
- Choose the best type of hearing protection for your needs
- Always wear your ear plugs or defenders when you are expected to, and wear them correctly
- Look after your hearing protection and ensure that it is well maintained
- Keep the noise down at home too – think about the volume on your TV, car radio and headphones. Wear protection when riding motorbikes or when you may be doing DIY at home
- You must attend health surveillance appointments when requested to do so. These appointments are not optional and focus on spotting signs of hearing loss early to prevent further problems.

If you do have any concerns, speak to your local office as soon as a problem is noticed.

## Seasonal Safety Tips - UV Safety

We're well into the British Summer time now and although our weather can be varied the strength of the sun's rays isn't connected to the temperature, up to 80% of dangerous UV rays can get through a cloudy sky. Skin cancer cases are on the increase in the UK – and they're rising faster than in the rest of Europe.

**Try to check the weather daily and look out for the UV index, it's usually provided, this will tell you the risk for that day.**



1,700 people get skin cancer caused by sun exposure at work in Britain every year - and 60 people die, so please remember to stay safe in the sun:

- Cover up**
- Protect your head**
- Seek Shade**
- Use sunscreen**
- Check your skin**



## Driving whilst tired

It perhaps comes as a surprise to many, but tired drivers can be just as dangerous on the roads as those under the influence of drink or drugs. In fact, 1 in 5 accidents on major roads can be directly attributed to fatigue. A survey conducted by the AA found that 1 in 8 UK drivers admitted to falling asleep at the wheel and over a third say they have continued to drive despite being scared they would fall asleep.

Falling asleep at the wheel is the last stage of fatigue and will almost certainly result in a collision but there are warning signs before getting to that stage that can't be ignored. The early warning signs when driving are usually frequent yawning or rubbing eyes and a feeling of tunnel vision where you cannot recall the stages of the journey you have already completed. Our first reaction to these feelings is to turn the radio up and/or open the windows and this may raise our alertness for a few moments, but you soon revert back. If you find you are sleepy, you should pull into the next available services or rest-stop, have a coffee or caffeinated drink, and take a short nap (15-20 minutes) while the caffeine kicks in. If this isn't possible, you should park up in the first safe location and make a phone call via the "On-Call" process. It may then be possible for another member of your team to be signed up as an emergency driver or for another team to come and meet you. Whatever you do though, do not continue to drive if you are not fit to do so.

**Ultimately, the only thing that will prevent tiredness and fatigue is sleep, if you are struggling to get adequate sleep in your rest periods here is some advice that might help:**

- Try to keep a regular sleep routine whenever possible
- Turn electronic devices off an hour before you go to bed
- Eat a healthy balanced diet and try to keep regular mealtimes
- Don't eat heavy meals just before you drive, as the digestion process makes you feel sleepy
- Avoid alcohol – drink-driving is obviously an offence, but even just one small alcoholic drink during your rest period could cause you to feel drowsy the next time you are behind the wheel
- If you regularly wake up still feeling tired, speak to your GP. You may be suffering from a medical condition like sleep apnoea
- Plan routes in advance so that you don't end up detouring and driving for longer than you absolutely need to
- Stop regularly on long and/or monotonous journeys to break up the drive, stretch your legs and get some fresh air
- If there's more than one approved driver in the vehicle, take turns driving on long journeys

## Spotlight on Safety

We first trialed the Lightfoot driver behaviour devices on vehicles in Doncaster and Wales in February 2020, and from the day the devices were turned on **Michael Earp** has consistently maintained elite status. His overall performance has been exceptional, with a massive reduction in harsh driving and speeding events almost immediately and a permanent place in the top 10 drivers across the business.

It's clear that the safe and efficient driving style required by Ganymede has become second nature to Michael and he is a credit to our business.



**Michael Earp maintains elite driving status**



**Liam Keen and Jason Mercer receive their £100 voucher**

While accessing the track to carry out a Buried Route Survey, Liam Keen and Jason Mercer from the Ganymede Projects Team witnessed a member of the public walking down the four foot on the up-line. Liam shouted to the individual; who began to run in the opposite direction towards Fitzwilliam station. At this point Liam noticed a train approaching and made an attempt to stop the train, he then contacted the signaller and carried out the emergency call process requesting all lines blocked between South Kirkby and Fitzwilliam Station. The signaller notified Liam that he had been contacted by the previous train driver and ensured him that all traffic had been stopped. At this point, the individual crossed all three lines and jumped back onto the upside to continue running. British transport Police, who were notified by Jason, attended Fitzwilliam Station to take over the scene.

We commend both Liam and Jason for their quick thinking and prompt actions arranging for the lines to be blocked and contacting the emergency services and almost certainly preventing a member of public being struck by a train on this very busy high speed railway line.