



SAFETY FIRST

RAIL NEWSLETTER
WINTER 2025



The Winter 2025 Safety First newsletter brings together essential updates for our rail teams. Learn about new procedures, lessons from recent incidents, upcoming safety standards, and the steps we're taking to support health, wellbeing, and continuous improvement across the workforce.

WELCOME | LESSONS LEARNT | H&S FOCUS

WELCOME

to the Winter Edition of Safety First

As we move into the colder months, the risks on the railway change with the season. Shorter daylight hours, heavy rain, ice and frost all contribute to hazardous underfoot conditions, increasing the potential for slips, trips and falls, the most common cause of workplace accidents. We must stay alert and adapt how we work to stay safe. The environment and site conditions of the railway present many challenges, and it is essential we respond to them with care and awareness. Watch your step and mind how you go.

I do not want to sound critical in my introduction, but it is important we all take a moment to reflect. We have seen a rise in behavioural safety events recently involving our frontline workers. We recognise the dedication of our frontline teams; your commitment in often tough and unpredictable conditions is essential in keeping the railway moving and delivering for our clients. However, dedication alone is not enough. Safety must come first in everything we do.

We continue to see behaviours that put people and the railway at risk, and this must change. Instances such as the use of fraudulent Sentinel IDs to access sites, reporting for duty while unfit to work due to injuries or undeclared prescribed medication, and basic lapses in situational awareness such as using the wrong access points, walking in unsafe areas or placing protection on the wrong line are all avoidable and unacceptable in safety critical environments. If in doubt, stop and speak up. Guesswork has no place in safety critical environments.

We also need to challenge poor behaviours during downtime on protection duties. Long inactive periods can lead to fatigue, workers becoming uncontactable or vehicles left idling unnecessarily. These issues point to culture as well as conduct. Non-technical skills such as clear communication, strong concentration and sound decision making are every bit as critical as technical knowledge. Our Lessons Learnt article features and reiterates the importance of the above and the need for improvement in our behaviours.

However, we never overlook the hard work and dedication you continue to show throughout another demanding season. Your efforts are genuinely appreciated. Please continue to take care, report close calls and speak up if you ever feel unsafe. Only by challenging poor behaviours and looking out for one another can we ensure everyone goes home safe every day.

This edition of our newsletter includes the usual safety, health, wellbeing and environmental articles that benefit us all. We have detailed the changes to work experience entries as we move away from the paper-based logbooks, and we have also provided an update on the SAI-25 OLE and how the changes affect certain competencies and duties of the workforce.

Enjoy the read, and as always, take care.



Gary Lobue
Head of HSEQ

LESSONS LEARNT

Recent incidents involving track workers have once again shown that even when technical processes are well understood, failures in non-technical skills and behaviour can create serious safety risks.

Incident 1: Line Blockage Irregularity

During a planned line blockage, detonator protection was incorrectly positioned on the wrong line. As a result, a train ran over the detonators on an unaffected route.

The planned protection was required to be placed clear of the points to allow other train movements. However, the appointed person mistakenly installed the detonators and stop board through the crossover rather than on the correct running rail.

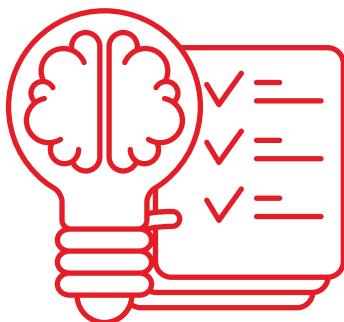
Underlying issues identified:

- Incorrect identification of line and location
- Lack of self-checking prior to placing protection
- Insufficient verification with the Person in Charge (PIC) or Controller Of Site Safety (COSS)

Incident 2: Conductor Rail Isolation Irregularities

A recent increase in conductor rail isolation irregularities across Kent and Sussex has highlighted a series of recurring issues during Level B strapping duties. These include:

- Individuals working alone without their designated assistant
- Use of incorrect access points, leading to work being carried out at the wrong location
- Incorrect placement or attachment of DC straps
- Incomplete equipment being taken to site
- Loss of communication with team members or the Person in Charge (PIC)



Common Non-Technical Skill Failings

Recent events have highlighted recurring behavioural and cultural themes relating to situational awareness, communication, teamwork, and decision making. These represent common non-technical skill failings that continue to contribute to safety incidents.

Behavioural Themes

- Complacency: Routine work leading to overconfidence.
- Poor Challenge Culture: Reluctance to speak up or stop work when unsure.
- Procedural Drift: "Shortcutting" or skipping required checks.
- Lack of Attention to Detail: Failure to double-check positioning and access points.

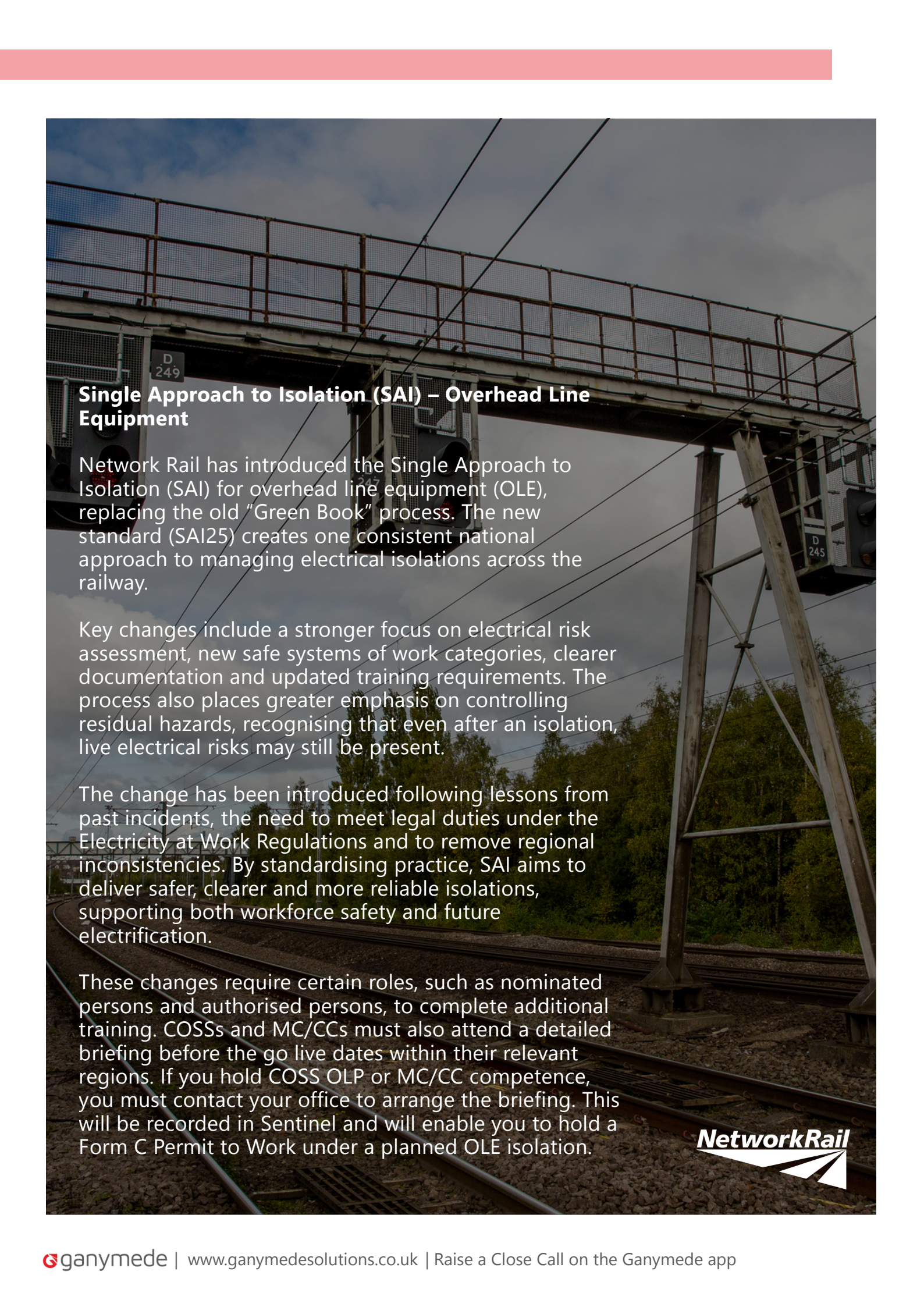
Key Takeaways

- Pause and Verify: Always confirm the correct line, location, and equipment before starting.
- Speak Up: If in doubt, stop and seek clarification immediately.
- Work as a Team: Never carry out Level B Strapping alone. Mutual checking saves lives.
- Use the Safe Work Pack (SWP): It's your guide to safe, consistent delivery.
- Stay Connected: Maintain communication with your Engineering Supervisor at all times.

Final Thought – Lessons Learnt

These incidents were not caused by a lack of technical knowledge; they resulted from behavioural slips, lapses in communication, and reduced situational awareness.

By strengthening our non-technical skills and reinforcing the Stop, Think, Check culture, we can prevent repeat occurrences and protect ourselves and our colleagues.



Single Approach to Isolation (SAI) – Overhead Line Equipment

Network Rail has introduced the Single Approach to Isolation (SAI) for overhead line equipment (OLE), replacing the old “Green Book” process. The new standard (SAI25) creates one consistent national approach to managing electrical isolations across the railway.

Key changes include a stronger focus on electrical risk assessment, new safe systems of work categories, clearer documentation and updated training requirements. The process also places greater emphasis on controlling residual hazards, recognising that even after an isolation, live electrical risks may still be present.

The change has been introduced following lessons from past incidents, the need to meet legal duties under the Electricity at Work Regulations and to remove regional inconsistencies. By standardising practice, SAI aims to deliver safer, clearer and more reliable isolations, supporting both workforce safety and future electrification.

These changes require certain roles, such as nominated persons and authorised persons, to complete additional training. COSSs and MC/CCs must also attend a detailed briefing before the go live dates within their relevant regions. If you hold COSS OLP or MC/CC competence, you must contact your office to arrange the briefing. This will be recorded in Sentinel and will enable you to hold a Form C Permit to Work under a planned OLE isolation.



HEALTH & SAFETY FOCUS

Protecting Rail Workers from Industrial Diseases

Rail work brings unique risks. Three of the most common long-term health concerns are:

Hearing Loss

- Caused by constant exposure to loud machinery and track work.
- Can be permanent if not prevented.
- Always wear hearing protection and attend regular hearing checks.

Hand-Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS)

- Results from prolonged use of vibrating tools.
- Symptoms include tingling, numbness, pain, and reduced grip strength.
- Report early signs and limit vibration exposure wherever possible.

Silicosis

- A serious lung disease caused by inhaling silica dust from cutting, drilling, or ballast work.
- Irreversible but preventable with dust suppression, good ventilation, and protective masks.

Annual Health Surveillance

- Do not skip your company health assessment.
- These checks help spot early warning signs before conditions become serious.
- Participation protects both your health and your future.

Remember!

Awareness, early reporting, and regular health surveillance are your best defences. Complete your annual health surveillance self-assessment and inform us of any concerns affecting your health. Protect yourself today to stay healthy tomorrow.



SENTINEL LOGBOOK

Quick Guide to the New Process

We are moving away from paper logbooks and ensuring all work experience and competences are recorded directly in the Sentinel electronic logbook.

To make this process run smoothly, every Controller Of Site Safety (COSS) and team member must follow the updated swipe-in and logging procedure.

COSS Responsibilities

1. Swipe yourself in via the Sentinel App: record site, shift, travel time, and competencies used.
2. Swipe in the team: scan each card, check medical/competence validity, and record planned competencies.
3. Record the safety briefing: rescan cards to confirm everyone has understood the SWP.
4. Swipe out the team: do this before swiping yourself out.

Remember

- Every team member, even PTS-only, must be swiped in and out.
- Missing or incorrect entries can lead to competence loss and work disruption.
- Keep every shift fully logged and compliant.

This forms the first entry in your Sentinel logbook for the day. From today, every team member even if they are only using their PTS competence must be swiped in, logged and swiped out. COSSs are responsible for ensuring this happens every time.

Why it matters

- Missing entries can prevent competences from being maintained in Sentinel.
- If discovered during an assessment, this could result in competence loss and work disruption.

Let us get it right the first time. Following this process protects you and your competence. This procedure comes into force on **7 December 2025**.



SPOTLIGHT ON SAFETY

Well done to John Stern

Congratulations to John Stern from our Bellshill office in Scotland. John raised an impressive 32 Close Calls between July and September, setting a great example of looking out for safety every day. His actions help the industry identify and address potential risks before they become incidents, making a real difference to everyone's safety.

Well done to Matt Samutt and Louise Parker

RSSB Programme/Project T1323: Improving Workforce-Related Reporting Processes.

Ganymede was invited as one of the contingent labour suppliers, alongside representatives from principal contractors, to take part in this research project funded by RSSB.

The project provided the workforce with an opportunity to share how they report safety-related issues within the industry and how they feel about the reporting process.

Ganymede played a significant role in this project, most notably through Louise Parker and Matt Samutt, who helped facilitate interviews with a wide range of our workforce. The feedback we received was very positive, particularly regarding the efforts of Matt and Louise in coordinating and conducting interviews with operatives, including track staff at London Bridge and safety-critical staff at the Safety Moments event in Doncaster.

RSSB gave special recognition to Matt and Louise in their presentation to the wider RSSB and members' group. This is excellent personal feedback for them both and a real credit to Ganymede.

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



Gary Lobue, Head of HSEQ and Matt Samutt, Resource Manager and Professional Head for Track Quality



Louise Parker, Workforce Champion

NETWORK RAIL LIFE SAVING RULES

Working responsibly



Always be sure the required plans and permits are in place, before you start a job or go on or near the line.



Always use the equipment that is fit for its intended purpose



Never undertake any job unless you have been trained and assessed as competent.



Never work or drive while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Working with Electricity



Always test before applying earths or straps.



Never assume equipment is isolated – always test before touch.

Driving



Never use a hand-held or hands-free phone, or programme any other mobile device, while driving.



Always obey the speed limit and wear a seat belt.

Working at height



Always use a safety harness when working at height, unless other protection is in place.

Working with moving equipment



Never enter the agreed exclusion zone, unless directed to by the person in charge.

Declaration of Secondary Employment

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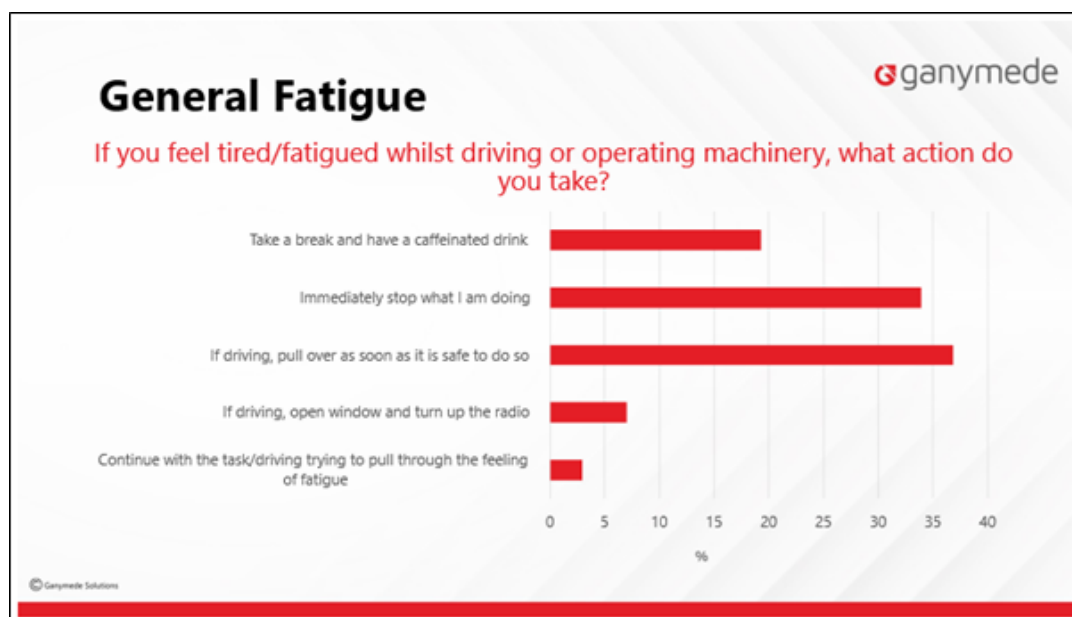
As part of our commitment to health, safety, and effective fatigue risk management, all employees are required to declare any secondary employment that could affect their ability to perform their role safely and effectively.

If you currently have any additional employment and have not yet submitted a declaration, please contact your local office to request and complete a Declaration of Other Employment form.

Thank you for your cooperation in supporting a safe and healthy workplace.

Fatigue Survey Results

In our Spring Newsletter, we launched our latest Fatigue Survey and were delighted with the number of responses. Thank you to everyone who took part. We have analysed the results and are now sharing them at various industry events. Overall, it is clear that our workforce is well informed about fatigue, understands the signs and symptoms, and recognises the risks it presents.



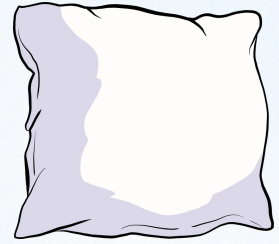
We have a large number of night workers, and it is important to acknowledge the challenges this brings, particularly regarding preparing for work and getting sufficient rest.

Did you know?

Night workers are at an increased risk of Vitamin D deficiency, especially during the winter months when daylight is limited. Vitamin D is essential for healthy bones, teeth, and muscles. The government advises everyone to consider taking a supplement during Autumn and Winter.

Getting Rest as a Night Worker

- Stick to a routine: Sleep and wake at consistent times.
- Create a sleep-friendly space: Use blackout curtains and earplugs.
- Avoid caffeine before bed: Stop stimulants 4–6 hours before sleep.
- Take short naps: A 20–30-minute nap can boost alertness.
- Limit screen time: Avoid phones and TVs for at least 30 minutes before bed.



Your safety starts with rest. Look after yourself and each other.

Use Your Hotel – Stay Safe, Stay Compliant

If a hotel has been booked for you during your work, you must use it, even at the end of your final shift. These accommodations are provided to ensure you are well rested and safe to travel home. Failure to use a booked hotel is a breach of company policy, and checks will be conducted. Not following this guidance may affect your eligibility for future work. Please prioritise your wellbeing and adhere to the policy.

To remind yourself of Ganymede policies, please [click here](#).

Supporting Second Chances: Careers Event at HMP Wandsworth

A big thank you to Dave Danch from our Ashford office for volunteering to support Southern Rail Enterprise (SRE) at a recent careers event held at HMP Wandsworth. Dave represented Ganymede, sharing insights into careers within the rail industry and the opportunities available through labour supply organisations.

These events offer inmates a valuable opportunity to explore potential career paths and build hope for the future. Dave's contribution helped demonstrate how the rail sector can provide meaningful employment and a genuine fresh start.

We appreciate his time and commitment to making a difference.



Winterisation: Be Prepared, Stay Safe

As colder weather sets in, working on or near Network Rail infrastructure brings additional risks.

Here are some key reminders to help you stay safe:

- Dress for the conditions: Wear thermal layers, waterproofs, and high-vis gear.
- Check your boots: Good grip is essential in icy or wet conditions.
- Stay visible: Test your torches and ensure site lighting is adequate.
- Fuel up: Eat well and stay hydrated, even in cold weather.
- Inspect vehicles and equipment: Check batteries, tyres, fuel, and de-icing tools.
- Watch for fatigue: Cold and darkness can drain energy, so take breaks and speak up.
- Report hazards: Don't ignore icy surfaces or poor lighting.
- Know your emergency plan: Keep a charged phone and torch handy.

Let's look out for each other. Stay warm, stay alert, and stay safe.

SUBCONTRACTOR FORUM

1 October 2025

We held our second Subcontractor Forum of the year at our Derby Headquarters, bringing together clients and supply chain partners to discuss shared challenges and explore collaborative solutions.

Incident Review & Lessons Learned

A recurring issue highlighted was individuals accessing the track without being certain of their location. In several cases, instead of seeking clarification, tasks were continued, which led to incident reports and lengthy investigations.

Reminder: If you are ever unsure of your location or worksite, move to a position of safety and contact the Person in Charge immediately.

Creating a Speak-Up Culture

Our Behavioural Safety Specialist led a session on building an environment where everyone feels safe to raise concerns and challenge unsafe behaviours. Many still fear reprisal, and we are committed to changing that.

Network Rail Presentation

Network Rail shared updates on the national rollout of the single approach to isolation, which aims to standardise and simplify safety procedures across the network.

Upcoming Safety Communication Standards

New Network Rail standards for recording safety-critical communications will be implemented in March 2026. These will require:

- All safety-critical communications to be recorded via a secure method.
- Ongoing monitoring and assessment of individuals performing safety-critical communications.

We thank everyone who attended and contributed to the discussions. Your input is vital to improving safety and strengthening collaboration across the industry.

A warm welcome to our new Safety Advisor, **Lindsay Andrew**



Lindsay joins us as a valuable addition to both the HSEQ Team and the wider company as she continues to develop her career in Health and Safety. In her initial months, she will focus on strengthening relationships between our local offices, clients, and subcontractors, ensuring our KPIs are achieved while promoting our core ethos: Safety First, Safety Always.

Keep an eye out for Lindsay visiting your site soon!

MEET YOUR HSEQ TEAM



Email: health&safety@ganymedesolutions.co.uk | Phone: 0333 011 2048

Gary Lobue - Head of HSEQ - 07827 962 485

Oversees the HSEQ management of Ganymede's internal and external requirements including the safety, health and wellbeing of our internal staff and external workforce.

Suzanne Thorpe - HSE Manager - 07928 620 609

Leads and project manages safety, health, and wellbeing initiatives, while coordinating environmental and social value sustainability efforts.

Lindsay Andrew - Health and Safety Advisor - 07597 074 159

Supports the health, safety and wellbeing of the Ganymede workforce by promoting a positive safety culture, conducting site inspections, delivering briefings, and supporting Workforce Champions.

GANYMEDE CLOSE CALL SYSTEM

To report a close call please head to our Ganymede app.



Have your say!

If you want to give us any feedback on the Safety First newsletter, scan the QR code on the right or click [here](#). All feedback is recorded anonymously and reviewed regularly by our HSEQ and Marketing teams.