

Accident frequency rate (AFR) period 03 - target audience: all staff

We have had four accidents and three incidents throughout March. The AFR for 2015 stands at 0.00 and the 12 month rolling stands at 0.10. The AFR is common industry measure of how many RIDDOR reportable accidents and incidents have occurred per 100,000 hours worked (the expected number of hours worked by a construction worker in his or her lifetime.)

Event learning – target audience: all staff

Accident – Labour Solutions – Stella West sub-station – IP was cutting 2x4 timber to make signs on the joiners bench with a circular saw. The IP had a short piece of timber to cut which meant he had to reach onto the other side of the saw to cut this, when doing so the saw jammed and kicked back causing a cut to the IP's finger to the bone.

Action: The timber was too short to be cut by this type of saw safely and a hand saw should have been used. This accident demonstrates the importance of using the right tool for the job. As a result of the IP taking a short cut, he exposed himself to an unnecessary risk by not going to get a hand saw which unfortunately resulted in an accident.

Accident reportable under RIDDOR – Labour Solutions – Urenco TMF – IP was adjacent to jersey concrete barrier when it was lifted and toppled over by a tele-handler which had transported it. First aid was given at site and IP went to hospital where he was detained for five nights. IP suffered a fracture and dislocation of his right toe, and a laceration to his right foot.

*Action: The client is reviewing the RAMS and identifying the right piece of plant and equipment for lifting jersey barriers. The IP was acting as a banksman for this activity, however the investigation showed he had never been trained as one. The message here is no matter how small you think the task is, if you require training to undertake an activity, **do not** do it unless you have had the relevant training.*

Accident – Labour Solutions – East Kent II – IP was releasing material in a bag using a shovel, when he cut his little finger on his left hand on a broken trough in the bag.

Action: The investigation revealed that there was no prescribed method for opening tonne bags to empty them, however this is a common practice across the

industry. A tool box talk has been held by the site team and all the gangs have now been provided with tools to cut the bags where required rather than driving a shovel into them.

Accident – Labour Solutions – LU Track Partnership – IP was pulling down a retainer clamp on a breaker, but as the clamp was tight extra force was needed. The clamp released and trapped the top of the IP's finger, causing a cut. The IP received first aid from his GP a tetanus injection as a precaution.

Action: Ensure that all tools are in a good condition when you pick them up from stores, by inspecting visually and check they are within their specified maintenance period with the Storeman. Avoid placing your fingers close to moving part that could cause entrapment and injury when operating or dismantling.

Incident – Labour Solutions – Gresty Lane re-signalling – A buried service power cable was struck by an operative driving a metal road pin into the ground to support the construction of wooden shuttering.

Action: There was a lack of awareness by all of the on-site civils operators of what constitutes safe digging practice and the lack of awareness of the process and standards with regards to spiking the ground when on NR infrastructure. This has been briefed to the project. Spiking of any kind requires the authorisation of both Network Rail and a senior project manager. The method of securing shutters has also been reviewed.

Incident – Rail Projects – East Kent II – A sub-contractor working on behalf of VGC was travelling on the Down Main towards Gillingham station at approximately 3mph where 29B & 29A points would be reversed to allow access into a siding to unload. 29B points were correctly set and before reaching the tip of the points the left side front wheel of the leading trailer derailed causing damage to 1no. spacer block. The trailer was not overloaded at the time and the current load was evenly distributed. The trailer was re-railed and then quarantined when the trailer reach its destination for inspection. NR assessed damage to the points that would be fixed under normal maintenance works. The persons involved had undertaken their duties as per the rule book.

Action: The trailer was quarantined by the site team at the time of the incident. Various examinations of the trailer proved inconclusive in identifying a fault. The trailer used was a Rexquote type which work using a triangular loading system to connect to the axle system. This system is notoriously less stable than using a 4 point loading system and as a result of the trailer being loaded, even correctly, could have been the reason why the trailer derailed when passing through the points.

EDI – target audience: all staff

The VGC Group understands the diversity of our workforce and believes that everyone has the right to be able to get on with their day-to-day life without experiencing discrimination.



Not all impairments are readily identifiable or visible, which means they are not immediately obvious.

Ask yourself:

- ✦ What would you count as a disability?
- ✦ Did you know mental health conditions such as anxiety, phobias and depression are covered by the Equality Act?
- ✦ Are you aware that a disability can also arise from breathing conditions like asthma and conditions affecting sight or hearing?

Remember to be aware in your daily activities, that some people you come into contact with may have a condition which has long term or considerable adverse effects on their ability to carry out regular day to day activities. VGC does not tolerate unfair treatment or behaviour.

If you have any concerns about equality, diversity and inclusion, please speak to your VGC contract supervisor or contact Laura Kenneally 01895 671 780.

Environment: fly tipping – target audience: all staff

Fly tipping is the illegal dumping of waste on land that is unauthorised to receive it. The most common types of fly-tipped wastes are tyres, waste from building and demolition work, asbestos sheeting, household and garden waste. It is illegal. While some people think that fly tipping on a construction site is OK, it is not.

Do

- ✦ Report any instances of fly tipping on site to your supervisor or manager
- ✦ Get details of fly tippers if possible eg vehicle registration, descriptions.

Don't

- ✦ Don't approach anyone fly tipping. They may be violent
- ✦ Don't touch or disturb the waste. It may be hazardous
- ✦ Don't ignore any cases of fly tipping on site.
- ✦ Don't bring rubbish from home to put in skips unless authorised. This is considered illegal fly tipping and disciplinary action may be taken.

Health: Depression Awareness Week 20-26 April – target audience: all staff

Most people experience ups and downs in life and can feel unhappy, stressed or depressed. Depression is different. With depression these feelings don't just go away; they can last for months, becoming so intense that carrying on with everyday life can become impossible.

Depression is common, and can affect anyone. In its mildest form most people can lead a healthy and active life with the right treatment and support. On the more severe end, depression can be devastating and even life-threatening, so don't go through it alone. Spotting the signs and getting help early can be vital.

- ✦ Tiredness and loss of energy
- ✦ Persistent sadness
- ✦ Loss of confidence and self-esteem
- ✦ Difficulty concentrating and making decisions
- ✦ Avoiding others and becoming isolated
- ✦ Not being able to enjoy things
- ✦ Undue feelings of guilt or worthlessness
- ✦ Feelings of helplessness and hopelessness
- ✦ Sleeping problems - difficulties in getting off to sleep or waking much earlier than usual
- ✦ Finding it hard to function at work
- ✦ Change in appetite

If you or someone you know is suffering from these symptoms for more than two weeks, it may be time to get help. Contact your medical practitioner or seek advice from the Samaritans 08457 90 90 90 for non-judgemental emotional support.

Please contact your VGC contract supervisor or HR department regarding any occupational health related questions - 01895 671 800.

Depression and anxiety don't discriminate. Do you?



Changes to CDM Regs 2015 - target audience: all staff

The new Construction (Design and Management) Regulations (CDM 2015) came into force on 6 April.

The main changes are:

- ✦ The CDM co-ordinator role is being removed

The following duties will become the responsibility of the client:

- ✦ Where there is more than one contractor, appoint a designer with control of the pre-construction phase as principal designer and appoint the contractor as principal contractor.
- ✦ Notify HSE of the project and ensure notification is displayed on site and updated as necessary.
- ✦ Take reasonable steps to ensure that the principal designer complies with the principal designer duties.

A new role, the principal designer, will manage, monitor and coordinate the pre-construction phase of a project.

Transitional arrangements - CDM 2015 recognises that there will be construction projects that start before the regulations come into force on 6 April 2015:

Where there is, or is expected to be, more than one contractor on a project:

- ✦ Where the construction phase has not yet started and the client has not yet appointed a CDM co-ordinator, the client must appoint a principal designer as soon as practicable.
- ✦ If the CDM co-ordinator has already been appointed and the construction phase has started, the client must appoint a principal designer to replace the CDM co-ordinator by 6 October 2015 unless the project comes to an end before then.
- ✦ In the period it takes to appoint the principal designer, the appointed CDM co-ordinator should comply with the duties contained in Schedule 4 of CDM 2015. These reflect the duties placed on CDM co-ordinators under CDM 2007 rather than requiring CDM co-ordinators to act as principal designers, a role for which they may not be equipped

Other transitional arrangements are:

- ✦ Pre-construction information, construction phase plans or health and safety files provided under CDM 2007 are recognised as meeting the equivalent requirements in CDM 2015
- ✦ Any project notified under CDM 2007 is recognised as a notification under CDM 2015
- ✦ A principal contractor appointed under CDM 2007 will be considered to be a principal contractor under CDM 2015

In all other circumstances, the requirements of CDM 2015 apply in full from 6 April 2015.

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l153.htm>

Bridge beam hit by excavator – target audience: all dumper drivers

A precast bridge edge beam that had been in position for approximately 15 hours became destabilized following contact by a 13 ton excavator resulting in one end falling to the ground. There were no injuries sustained in the incident.



Learning points

- ✦ Ensure the restricted access permit for height is followed.
- ✦ Improve the knowledge and understanding of the Prolec protection system on excavators to all members of the team (operators, supervisors, engineering team). Is Prolec system the appropriate mitigation (audible alarm for breach of height) or are physical restrictors required that would not permit the operator to override limits?
- ✦ Prolec system is engaged at correct height and regular checks to ensure this is done (supervisor, foreman)
- ✦ Improve the visual warning aids (eg GS6 goal posts) when approaching any structure. Structures should be protected.

14 tonne tracked excavator overturns on trailer ramp – target audience: all staff

On Monday 16 February 2015 at the A21 Tonbridge to Pembury dualling project, a tracked excavator slipped off a tractor-trailer ramp while being loaded onto a flatbed trailer.



Critical factors:

- ✦ No grip where metal excavator tracks met metal ramps
- ✦ Possible operator error – harsh operation of controls when slewing 180 degrees when positioned at the top
- ✦ Operative not following the safe system of work – a spare bucket was within the attached bucket.

Actions required:

- ✦ All loading and unloading of mobile plant **must** be completed on flat / level stable ground.
- ✦ All ramps, trailers and excavator tracks **must** be clear of excessive mud, foreign objects and debris.
- ✦ The surface of the trailer's ramps and deck must be protected by wooden and / or rubber type materials to enhance grip and stability when being accessed. Steel on steel must be avoided.
- ✦ All mobile plant operatives **must** be competent, follow their training and comply with site rules ie wearing of seat belts, clear safety zones, smooth use of foot and hand controls etc.
- ✦ When slewing around, the excavator boom must not be fully extended and tools or equipment should not be loaded in the attached bucket.

Identification of supplier staff on LU premises – target audience: all LU staff

Background - The purpose of London Underground's Standard S1552 Contract QUENSH Conditions is to control risk down the supply chain for contracted work on LU operational property or other LU premises where such work can have an effect/impact upon the operational railway. The Standard states that suppliers' personnel must be identified at all times when on or about the operational railway. However, there has been an increase in incidents of contractors wearing LU branded clothing, rather than the supplier they are working for. This brief is a reminder to all LU operational managers and suppliers regarding these requirements.

Instruction - Contract QUENSH Conditions states: The suppliers' personnel and their sub-contractors shall wear high visibility clothing which carries the supplier's company name, at all times when on or about the operational railway. The suppliers' staff shall not wear LU branded high visibility clothing, unless they are working under a 'labour only' contract and have been requested to do so by the LU project manager. High visibility vests shall comply with the requirements of LU Standard S1483 'High visibility clothing for going on or near the track'.

Welding equipment explosion – target audience: all rail staff

On the morning of Thursday 26 March a lineside fire was reported between Weybridge and Walton on Thames. Initial investigations indicate re-railing had taken place overnight in the area. Following completion of the works welding equipment was left track-side (although not close to the line) covered by a tarpaulin.



Underneath the tarpaulin were generators, igniters, propane and oxygen cylinders which were stored on their side. The fire caused the gas cylinders to explode with sufficient force to propel the oxygen cylinder 150 metres, over a lineside neighbour's house. A trolley wheel was propelled through the french window of the house into their kitchen. While NR is investigating the causes of this incident

please discuss the following with your teams:

- ✦ What fire risks exist in your workplace?
- ✦ What can you do to better manage these risks?
- ✦ How do you safely store and transport hazardous materials?
- ✦ What 'hot work' do you do that needs particular care?
- ✦ What can you do to better manage the safety of compressed gasses where used as part of your work?

Signing in and signing out - target audience: all rail staff

When working on NR infrastructure, whether working on or near the line or physical work that is not lineside on behalf of a project you must sign in and out with NSC. This is so that NSC knows who is on their network at any one time.

When working on LU infrastructure during engineering hours you must ensure you sign in the identified PWT (EH) who will book you on with the TAC. PWT (EH) must remember to book off with the TAC.

When working in possessions on LU infrastructure, it is more than likely to be a site access controller in place. You must remember to sign in and out on his forms at the start and end of his shift.

Should you forget to sign out you may risk other people's lives, if they have to access high risk areas to come to search for you, believing you may have been involved in an incident - not to mention the potential fines for causing late-running trains.

Drugs and alcohol testing – target audience: all rail staff

VGC has a Drug and Alcohol Policy that every worker who works for VGC must adhere to.

VGC has a limit of 0.13ml/l of a breath test sample taken for alcohol – this is less than half the drink drive limit. VGC have a zero tolerance approach to any banned drugs in your system that cannot be supported by a doctor's medical prescription.

VGC operates random D&A screenings at all times of the year which means you could be tested at any time.

If you are found to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol you shall be removed from site immediately and your employment could be terminated.

You are also required to tell your supervisor if you have been prescribed any medication that could affect your work, for example if you have been prescribed medication that can make you drowsy as a side effect.