

We wish you all a very merry Christmas and a very happy 2018.

Thanks to everyone working on our projects over Christmas. Please remember your responsibilities regarding alcohol and drugs while on duty and while driving to or from work - whether in a company vehicle or your own personal vehicle. All staff are subject to random tests. You should already be aware of the VGC zero-tolerance policy on alcohol and drugs. If not please ask your labour manager or HR to forward you a copy.



Lessons learnt

While carrying out works on a Highways project an operative was cleaning spoil that had been loosened by a vac-ex.

He drove his shovel into the loose spoil with his hands on either side of the shovel handle. When the shovel hit a piece of rock it stopped suddenly, and his hands slipped. As his body moved forward the handle came into contact with his groin.

He ended up in hospital for one day, followed by a few days off before he could return to the project.

Why did this happen?

X The operative was trained and competent in this work and with the tool. However he did not use the shovel correctly.

Because he believed all the spoil was loose soil, he had become casual in the way he drove the shovel into the loose ground.

This meant that when the shovel hit an unexpected solid object, he did not have the correct grip on the handle and lost his balance.

Accidents happen when you least expect them.

✓ Always use a tool the way you have been trained.

Reporting

Please remember to follow your project's procedure for reporting any injuries, accident or close calls. In addition please ensure you **also** inform your labour manager as soon as possible.

Cut 5 gloves

Cut 5 gloves do not provide enough grip for some tasks. If you find that your PPE is not suitable, and adds risk to your task, you must tell your labour manager.

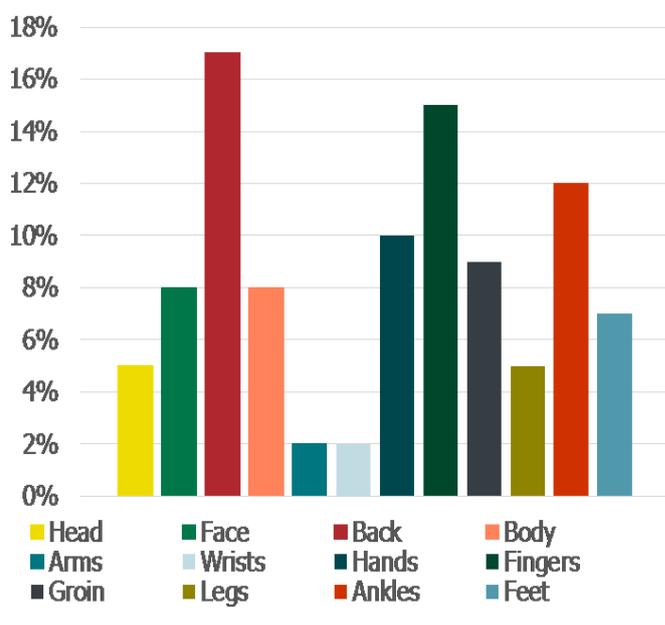
Make sure you have the right PPE to avoid hand injuries.

Injury trends

Most injuries are to the back - 17% of all injuries - followed by fingers at 15%.

Please raise any manual handling issues to your supervisor **before** there is an accident.

Body injury trends for 2017



Changes to working hours

If your hours change, please make sure extended hours are approved by your VGC labour manager in advance so that

- we can make sure you get paid
- we can add any additional controls needed

This is so we can comply with client and VGC procedures on working hours.

Safety briefings

In the last month VGC clients have issued 30 safety briefings to us. These have been briefed to the relevant operatives. They include:

- A14 - exposure to or contact with harmful substance/material
- A14 - inappropriate language and banter
- Skanska - struck by object (moving, falling or flying)
- Costain - winter driving and storage of COSHH

All operatives should have received a couple of briefings this month. If you have any questions please speak to your VGC labour manager.

See it, share it

The winner this month is key influencer Graham Walker, working on Siemens rail automation in Ashton Under Lyne.

At the cess side off the main up line at Bridge 7, a sharp needle was found. He sprayed a yellow circle round it, reported to his supervisor and the work group was briefed.

Text **07876 448 119**

Email **besafe@vgcgroup.co.uk**



Modern slavery

VGC is committed to ethical working. We are supporting Stronger2gether to encourage ethical practices in our industry.

Many of you have seen the 'Concrete' video - we will add a link to it in the next staff enews.

If you have any information you feel we should be aware of please contact HR on 01895 671800.

**stronger
together**

tackling hidden labour exploitation

Winter working

Please remember that conditions underfoot during winter can be unexpectedly icy.

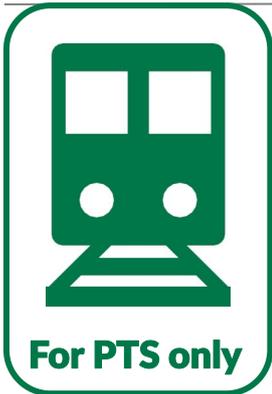
Unlit or poorly lit areas can also be hazardous at the start or the end of your shift.

If the area where you are walking is not properly lit or there are any pools of water that are not easily visible, please raise the matter with your labour manager.

Mobile phones

- Never use mobile phones or other hand-held devices whilst you are driving or operating any vehicle or plant.
- Only use a phone when you are in a position of safety and permitted to do so.
- Always check that it is safe for the other person to talk. Call back if not.

Always switch off your phone if worksite signage instructs you to do so.



ES, SWL2, PICOP, COSS, SWL1, IWA, MC, OTM only

Network Rail rule 303 change

From 2 December 2017

The maximum speed in T3 possessions has been reduced from 40mph to 25mph.

Also, drivers must be briefed to 'proceed with caution'.

This is after the voluntary temporary 5mph limit in worksites and 15mph limit in PICOP controlled areas (the 5/15 rule).

No speed must be greater than 5mph unless the safe system of work details this specifically, and then up to a maximum of 25mph, depending on:

- how far the driver or operator can see
- the distance needed to stop safely
- any maximum speed the COSS or IWA believes is safe in their work area.

If there is a lookout warning protection during darkness, or where the work site is either in or near a tunnel, the maximum permitted speed is 20mph.

The Industry Approved Code of Practice governing T3 possession speeds will not change.

Engineering trains continue to be

- Worksite=5mph
- PICOP controlled areas=15mph

OTMs

- Worksite 15mph
- PICOP controlled areas=15mph

Remember: the new maximum speed limit of 25mph is a **maximum** and not the default speed. In most cases, the speed will be lower than 25mph.

If you are a VGC-sponsored MC, OTM operator or hold COSS/IWA competency or above, you will get an approved briefing by a responsible manager. This briefing will be recorded and the signatures passed to our training department for uploading onto Sentinel.

This must be done by **15 January 2018**. If not, anyone whose competency requires it to be recorded may have that competency suspended by Sentinel until it is done.

