

**Accident frequency rate (AFR) period 12 - target audience: all staff**

We have had two minor accidents throughout the month of December. The final AFR for 2014 stands at 0.11. VGC would like to thank you for your efforts throughout 2014 in ensuring your workplace stays safe and that you act in a safe manner while working on our behalf. We ask that you please continue this into 2015.

**Accident and incident learning – target audience: all**

**Accident – VGC Rail Projects – Rail Delivery Fleet – Strained back** – *I P was dismantling the RDT train when his foot hit the ground he slipped on the ground causing a pain in his lower back. IP was able to continue his shift.*

**Action:** Ensure when dismantling any of the RDF trains that you do so via the designated access steps holding onto any rails until you reach the ground. Ensure your boots are in laced to the top and have a good tread to ensure good grip with the ground. Also ensure you have your head torch on so that there is enough light to see where you are standing during night hours.

**Accident – VGC Rail Projects – Rail Delivery Fleet – Bruised ankle** - *IP stood in hole that had been dug out between two sleepers which caused him to trip and twist his ankle causing bruising. IP was able to finish his shift.*

**Action:** Ensure when walking on or about the track your boots are in laced to the top and have a good tread to ensure good grip with the ground. Also ensure you have your head torch on that there is enough light to see where you are standing/where you're walking at night. If you happen to be involved in any sort of trial excavation in the track bed, please be sure to fill this back in once you have finished or highlight to those walking about the track.

**Incident – VGC Rail Projects – Rail Delivery Fleet – Damage to SCPV Wagon** – *during the loading process a S&C bearer panel was loaded incorrectly on the SCPV Wagon. When lifted into the diagonal position for transit the bearer damaged the wheel spark guard. This went un-noticed during the load examining of the wagon prior to departure, the train went into transit with 15mm clearance between the wheel and spark guard. This was noted once the train reach its destination and was returned.*

**Action:** There were a number of contributory factors that contributed to why this did not get picked up in the load examining process.

**Dry January – target audience, all staff**



**DRY JANUARY**

**Can you stay off the alcohol for 31 days??**

With Christmas been and gone, why not banish the booze this January and make a healthy start to the new year?

Take on the challenge and you're sure to lose a few pounds, save money and benefit your health. The benefits of giving up alcohol for a short period of time include:

- ✦ Feel better
- ✦ Save money
- ✦ Make a difference
- ✦ Improve sleep
- ✦ Lose weight

Drinking even a bottle or two of wine over the recommended guidelines each week can have serious health implications. Christmas in particular can be a time of excess and why not, it's Christmas after all! But overdoing it takes its toll on your body, wellbeing and wallet. Give yourself a break for a month to reset your energy levels and start the New Year with your best foot forward.

Visit [www.dryjanuary.org.uk](http://www.dryjanuary.org.uk) to get more information and tips. So go on, get thinking about your drinking and prove to yourself that you can say no to a tipples of two.

**Sustainability – target audience: all staff**

Sustainability at VGC is defined as, 'what we do today will not negatively or adversely affect the environment we work, live and play in tomorrow'. VGC divides how we work sustainably into three categories: social, economic and environmental.

Some of the environmental 'wins' that you can help us with are:

- ✦ Re-use site materials wherever possible
- ✦ Ensure you segregate site waste and place it in the appropriate recycling bins provided.
- ✦ Use public transport, cycle or share transport to work.
- ✦ Where you have the opportunity, choose renewable or recycled sources of materials.
- ✦ Turn off plant when not in use.

**Mobile elevated work platform crush injury – target audience: all IPAF staff**

**What happened?**

During a work activity, an operative was working from a MEWP at height just below ceiling level in a bored tunnel. A colleague noticed that the operative appeared to be in trouble and made arrangements for the MEWP basket to be lowered. Sadly his actions were too late; the operative had died, having been crushed between the MEWP basket and the ceiling.

**Immediate cause of the incident**

The operative had accidentally triggered the safety bar switch, raising the jib whilst he was looking down over the safety panel to see where the wheels were positioned when manoeuvring the lift.

**Contributory causes** The MEWP was set up without the overload system in place. Lack of emergency training for co-workers meant they were unable to quickly lower the MEWP basket

**Inadequate pre-task plan controls.** The mitigating actions/controls only referred to being cautious and to use the correct PPE.

**Recommendations**

- ✦ Ensure pre task plans address all perceived risks
- ✦ All MEWPS should be tested to confirm set up of overload protection and other safety devices
- ✦ Ensure that MEWPs cannot drive the wheels and move the boom at the same time from the basket
- ✦ Review emergency plan checklists for MEWP use
- ✦ Consider what anti-crush devices should be installed on MEWPS

**Update to ACOPS – target audience: all supervisor and management staff**

Please note the following ACOP (Approved Code of Practice) have been revised by the HSE. Please see a summary of the changes below.

**LOLER ACOP**

This revised edition of the ACOP brings the document up to date with regulatory and other changes. The guidance clarifies which equipment is subject to the provisions of the regulations and the role of the competent person.

**Confined spaces ACOP**

This edition brings the document up to date with regulatory and other changes. The guidance has been simplified to make the understanding and use of the document easier, particularly with clarifying the definition of a confined space.

Other changes include:

- a flowchart to help in the decision-making process
- Additional examples including new workplace risks such as specifically created hypoxic environments, fire suppression systems etc.
- Amendments relating to the need to check examine and test equipment.

**Changes to COSHH symbols – target audience: all staff**

Symbols to describe hazardous substances are changing to be brought in line with European Regulations. Companies have until December 2015 to comply, however you may start seeing the following on COSHH assessments.

	<b>Explosive</b>	
	<b>Oxidizing</b>	
	<b>Flammable</b>	
	<b>Toxic</b>	
	<b>Irritant</b>	
	<b>Corrosive</b>	
	<b>Harmful to the Environment</b>	
<b>New - Carcinogenicity and respiratory sensitisation</b>		
<b>New - Contains gas under pressure</b>		

## Importance of wearing safety glasses while working in all locations – target audience: all staff

In December a trainee OLE linesman (non –VGC) was struck in the face by debris after a porcelain insulator rolled off the back of a flat-bed truck and partially shattered on the concrete floor.

First aid was administered at the time and he was taken to hospital by ambulance. He was later transferred for an emergency operation, but sadly this was unsuccessful and he has lost his sight in his left eye. He was part of a three-person team involved in site clearance who had returned to the depot at Stockley to unload the vehicle. It is believed at this time, that he was stood away from the vehicle.

This accident highlights the importance of wearing low impact eye protection whether on site, in the yard, involved or walking close to other work operations. Please ensure you wear your eye protection as required.

## Community Relations Helpline change of number - target audience: all LU staff

London Underground currently operates several 24 hour helplines that enables members of the public to contact us to report the impact of our and other work on them and their community. LU has begun a programme of rationalising these numbers across our business units. The first part of this occurs in COO at 00:00hrs (midnight) on 31 December 2014, when we will be automatically transferring all community relations helpline calls received for JNP, BCV and SSL to one single number: **0343 222 2424**.

This will also apply to small works in CPD, but not the Major Station Projects which will retain their existing numbers.

## IP Track delivery alert - target audience: National Rail staff

On 15 and 16 December, members of staff in High Output were observed conducting activities which were not compliant with working adjacent to open lines (ALO). In addition to this other staff members were observed working on the live side of TRS2 without additional protection in place. These members of staff would not have been able to reach a position of safety had a train passed, and the consequences of this are all too real for many of us who tragically lost a colleague in very similar circumstances.

On 17 December, a member of the public tripped and suffered an injury when they used a foot crossing at Darby Green LC in Wessex; the foot crossing surface was removed in preparation of a track renewal and was temporarily replaced with track ballast up to rail level. Tripping when using a foot path across an open line has the potential for a horrific outcome. (Take a moment to consider pushchairs and elderly pedestrians!) The linespeed is 70mph and is used by over 140 people per day. This follows a similar event at Widmeads in 2011.



In addition to these events above, on 2 December we had a near miss between a passenger train and track workers at Slough; on 7 December we had staff in the four foot of an open line attempting to place isolation earths on live overhead line equipment (OLE) at Stratford.

On reflection, our statistics might highlight that December was a relatively safe month as we didn't hurt many of our colleagues! The statements above demonstrates just how much luck played its part in our not having to tell a workmate or a member of the public's family that they won't be coming home. Over the Christmas period many of our IP track worksites had clear evidence of basic site safety rule violations from the non-use of PPE, (helmets, glasses and dust masks etc) to walking by unsafe acts and conditions; in most cases, no challenges were made including managerial and supervisory staff who should be leading by example. We need to be far better with regards to setting examples for others: **we must absolutely never tolerate unsafe behaviour**. We must challenge these - if we don't, then we don't change and we will continue to rely on luck when it comes to safety.

Getting the job done with no overruns fundamentally requires us to get the job done safely, **no shortcuts, no deviations** and following the agreed safe system of work (SSOW). We must also speak up when we feel that the SSOW is inadequate or is being compromised.

Remember no job is so important to us that we should ever compromise safety to achieve it. We need to make everyone proud to be part of our Safety Culture Change, The choice is yours – Choose to work safe, you choose to work at Network Rail; choose to work unsafe, you choose not to work with us.