

Accident frequency rate (AFR) period 11

We have had two accidents and zero incidents in the past month. The 12 month AFR stands at 0.23.

Event learning

Action: Routes to be assessed. Prior and during works ensure adequate lighting is maintained.

Accident – IP tripped over a section of GEOGRID that was tie-wrapped to another section. The IP landed on their elbow causing a bruise / sprain.

Labour Solutions — Track Partnership

Action: Method reviewed and communication lines between machine operator and operative to be confirmed before any movements - maintain exclusion zones.

Accident - Operative was slinging a load of M11 strongbacks from between two other bundles. IP had their hand on the load to stabilise it and put tag lines on. As telehandler started to take the weight the banding became loose and the strongback slipped, causing a cut on IP's left index finger.

Labour Solutions — BMW Whitechapel

Please report it

Reporting incidents /close calls/ near miss and positive interventions is really important - please report anything you see that might be dangerous, or that sets a good example.

If you prefer to report in confidence, you can use the cards on site or contact a member of the HSQE team on 01895 671 890.

Outperformance

VGC Rail Projects

Costain commended VGC Rail Projects for their proactive and professional response with regards to dealing with the individual as well as briefing the core VGC Rail team on the company policy and randomly testing a selection of them—it has set the benchmark for other subcontractors on the project. "With regards to quality, I have been impressed with the quality of workmanship I have seen to date."

Pastorel Caplea

Received a C412 September SHE Award for safety and observation reporting on site.

Austen Harrison Snr, Austen Harrison Jnr, Drew Harrison, Nigel Roswell

The rail delivery team were commended for their effort during the last two deliveries, especially when facing circumstances out of their control. "Without their hard work and dedication to getting the job done it would no doubt have been a different outcome."

Jagdeep Singh, Prabu Kuttlykrishnan

Jagdeep and Pradu were commended by Team Leader Dan Cooper for exceptional hard work on site.

David Lewis

David was commended by Tom Franklin for Siemens for going beyond his expected duties to keep the railway safe and help protect the public.



VGC has joined 35 of the UK's top construction contractors and suppliers: we are now partners in the Supply School.

The school's purpose is to join forces and share best practice ways of promoting sustainability, together.

You can log into www.supplychainschool.co.uk

Your health matters

VGC recognises that our workforce is our most valuable asset. We are committed to improving the health of our people. Here are some tips on how to keep fit and well this winter.

Give your immune system a boost!

- **Get your 5 a day**

When it's cold and dark outside it can be tempting to fill up on unhealthy comfort food, but it's important to ensure that you still keep your diet healthy and include five portions of fruit and veg a day.



- **Get active** Even a little regular activity can lower the risk of developing major chronic diseases, such as coronary heart disease, stroke and type two diabetes, by up to 50%.
- **Improve sleep** Most healthy adults sleep for an average of seven to nine hours a night. If you're not getting enough sleep, it can affect your performance at work, and it can delay recovery from illness.
- **Quit smoking** Immunity will improve after just 30 days of quitting smoking.

Keep colds at bay

Viruses can survive up to several hours so good hygiene is important to avoid catching a cold.

Wash your hands thoroughly and regularly

- Always sneeze and cough into tissues; throw away used tissues immediately and wash your hands.
- Avoid touching your face. It is common for cold viruses to enter via the nose and eyes.
- Treat cold symptoms yourself with over-the-counter medications such as decongestants, paracetamol, ibuprofen or aspirin.

Remember: Before you start work in a safety critical role be sure to check all over-the-counter medications by calling the HR department – 01895 671 800.

Bowel cancer



Bowel cancer is the third most common cancer in the UK. 38,000 people are diagnosed with the disease each year. This type of cancer can affect both men and women. Bowel cancer is largely preventable and around two-thirds of cases could be prevented by lifestyle changes.

To reduce your risk of bowel cancer:

- Moderate physical activity five times a week.
- Keep a healthy weight.
- Boost the amount of fibre in your diet: eat five portions of fruit and vegetables each day. Choose whole grain bread, cereals, rice and pasta.
- Eat smaller and fewer portions of red and processed meat. Eat more fish.
- Cut down on alcohol and don't smoke.

Spotting the symptoms early

If you notice any of the symptoms below and they last longer than four to six weeks, inform your doctor immediately:

- Bleeding from the bottom without any obvious reason, or blood in your poo.
- A persistent change in bowel habit to looser or more frequent bowel motions.
- Tummy pain, especially if severe.
- A lump in your tummy.

Your GP or practice nurse can offer you further advice if you have any concerns or questions regarding prevention /symptoms of bowel cancer. Please contact your VGC Contract Supervisor or HSQE department regarding any concerns over occupational health disease - 01895 671 800.

Christmas period

The office will close on Wednesday 23 December 2015 and will reopen on Monday 4 January 2016.



If you are working over the Christmas period and need anything, please contact your supervisor directly who will be able to deal with any issues. If you do not have a contact number for your supervisor please ensure that you get this.

If you are working out of normal office hours and encounter a problem then please contact the VGC control centre on 07843 058 460.

The directors would like to thank everyone for all their efforts during 2015 and wish everyone a happy Christmas.

The following arrangements have been made for payments during the holiday period.

- Payment for hours worked 12Dec15 – 20Dec15 will be processed on Tuesday 22Dec15 for payment and will credit accounts on Thursday 24 Dec 15. **(This depends upon the projects submitting timesheets on time)**
- Payment for hours worked 19 Dec 15 – 27 Dec 15 will be processed on Wednesday 06Jan16 for payment and will credit accounts on Friday 08 Jan 16.
- Payment for hours worked 26Dec15 – 03Jan16 will be processed on Friday 08 Jan 2016 and will credit accounts on Tuesday 12 Jan 16
- Payment for hours worked 02 Jan16 - 10 Jan 16 will be processed as usual on Wednesday 13 Jan 16 and will credit accounts on Friday 15 Jan 16.

Get social

If you're on Facebook, LinkedIn or Twitter, please follow or like VGC Group (@VGCGroup) to get updates and info about colleagues and projects.



Exceeding working hours and double shifting

Double shifting and working hour exceedances are a problem in the construction and rail industries. They are dangerous because fatigue is linked to an increased risk of accidents.

The rules listed below apply to all work that you carry out with VGC and also any other sub-contract work you may carry out.

Working on a Network Rail site

You can work no more than;

- 72 hours in a seven day period
- 13 continuous shifts
- 12 hours in one shift.

You must also ensure that you are at work no longer than 14 hours - that includes your travel time to and from work.

Working on a London Underground site

You can work no more than;

- 72 hours in a seven day period
- 6 shifts in any seven day period
- 12 hours in one shift.

You must also ensure that you are at work no longer than 14 hours - that includes your travel time to and from work.

Working on a construction/civils site

Generally working hours for construction and civils sites are decided by that project. As a minimum you should be notifying your supervisor if you are asked to work more than the guidance given in the Network Rail Section above.

It is your responsibility to ensure you work in accordance with the hours set out above. Non-compliance or if you are found to be double shifting could result in disciplinary action or even legal action / criminal prosecution in the event of an accident.

Saving energy

As part of VGC's commitment to the environment and in an effort to reduce waste and CO2 emissions, we have recently committed to achieving ISO-50001.

This certificate is awarded to companies who can show that they are committed to reducing CO2 emissions and the energy and fuel they use.

Play your part and turn off your equipment when not in use.

- Report any defects - poorly serviced equipment could be dangerous and use more energy
- Driving just 5mph slower will save money and fuel.
- Turn off engines, laptops and lights when not in use.

We can all play a part and reduce energy and fuel use, by just thinking about the energy we use and turning off if it's not needed.

If you are aware of any way we can reduce our fuel, energy and waste, contact the HSQE team on 01895 671 890.



Network Rail Rule books

Changes are being made to the Network Rail Rule books.

The following modules and handbooks have been updated: G1, GLOSSARY, AC, DC, M1, M2, M3, OTM, P1, P2, POSA, RS/521, RS/522, S4, S5, S7, SP, SS1, SS2, T3, TS1, TS3, TS9, TS11, TW1, TW5, TW7, TW8, HB1, HB2, HB6, HB7, HB8, HB9, HB10, HB11, HB12, HB15, HB16, HB17, HB18, HB19, HB20, HB21 and briefing leaflet.

These changes are to come into effect from 5 December 2015. VGC supervisors will be issuing the new hand books out in the next couple of weeks.

If by 5 December you have not received any changed book that you believe is relevant to you, please contact the HSQE department on 01895 671 800.

Stay safe over Christmas

Over the Christmas period many people enjoy an alcoholic drink. Just remember that Network Rail, London Underground and many of our other clients have a zero tolerance on the consumption of alcohol at work or being under the influence at work. This policy is fully supported by VGC.

This time of year is also particularly important for families - do not take a chance at work or while you are driving.

Winter preparedness

Please be aware that with Christmas fast approaching, so is the winter weather. This means that icy conditions, rain, wind and even snow can affect your working environment.

Before you carry out any work, if there is a change in the working environment then stop work. All risks associated with the work should be reassessed before work is continued.

Before your shift you should also ensure that you dress appropriately for the weather, so that you stay warm for your entire shift.

Please also bear in mind that with winter conditions it may mean that that access and egress could be effected. Please take extra care when walking around site between jobs and welfare facilities.