

Lessons learnt

During an excavation a member of the team left the work area to collect some materials. The banksman did not see him return. He did not get an acknowledgement from the banksman or the excavator operator. **He was struck by the excavator and broke his foot.**

Why did this happen?

X The operative should not have entered the exclusion zone without first getting an acknowledgement that it was safe.

✓ The operative should have waited outside until the excavator stood down and he was given permission to enter.

Two operatives were pushing wheelbarrows along a geomat path to a spoil storage heap. **When the first stopped, the second operative did not stop in time, and hit the back of his ankle.**

Why did this happen?

X The two operatives were too close together for the second person to stop in time.

✓ The operatives should have kept a safe distance apart.

Norovirus - winter vomiting bug

Norovirus is one of the most common tummy bugs in the UK. It's more common in the winter, although you can catch it at any time of the year.

Although it usually clears up after a few days, it can be very unpleasant. Symptoms appear one to two days after you become infected. You can catch it by touching a contaminated surface.

Avoid catching bugs of this kind by washing your hands thoroughly with soap and water

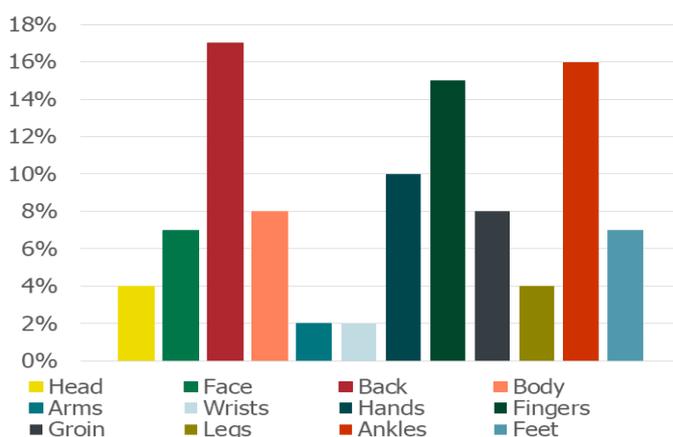
- after you've been to the toilet
- before you eat or drink or smoke.

Don't forget to let your line manager know if you will be off work sick.

Injury trends

Back injuries remain our highest percentage of injuries followed closely by ankles. Slips and trips account for most ankle injuries, and manual handling causes most back injuries.

Body injury trends for 2017



Annual leave

Your entitlement to annual leave is contained within your contract with VGC. You must take all leave within the leave year (Jan – Dec).

Please complete the leave request form and return to your VGC labour manager or recruitment consultant. Download the Word doc or pdf from vgcgroup.co.uk/forms or go to the online form at vgcgroup.co.uk/leave-request/

Please give **at least two weeks' notice** of your intention to take leave.

You may take a maximum of two weeks' leave at one time.

Do not book or pay for any holidays until your request has been approved by your VGC manager.

VGC will endeavour to approve your request for annual leave. However we have to take account of client operating requirements and the number of leave requests already approved.

At the end of the leave year any untaken leave will be lost – you will not be able to carry leave over into the following leave year, and we will not pay holiday pay in lieu of untaken leave.

See it, share it



The winner this month is Opeyemi Osiyemi who spotted an unsafe situation with plant exclusion zones.

(photo: Opeyemi (R) with Dennis Pollard SHEQ advisor (Dennis used to be a VGC key influencer) at Track Partnership



Text **07876 448 119**

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

Plant - people interface

On 14 December 2017 a UK construction worker (not VGC) was killed during vehicle movement. He was trapped between a delivery vehicle and a dumper truck. (The investigation is not yet complete.)

Please remember to be vigilant around moving vehicles and plant. An average of seven workers die each year after accidents involving vehicles and plant on construction sites. Please don't be a statistic!



New healthy habits in 2018

Are you planning a healthy new year?

NHS Choices has a free guide to help you develop healthier eating habits and get more active. The website has over 100 topics on Live Well, and there are some great stories, whether you want to take up a new hobby, burn some calories after the festive season or maybe address an underlying medical issue.



Language and banter on site

For an effective work environment, everyone has to feel welcome and part of the team.

At VGC we are fair and respectful, and we think about how we treat other people.

Language not offensive to one person may upset someone else. **Racial slurs, homophobic language and sexual innuendos will never be tolerated at VGC.**

If you hear any offensive or inappropriate language at work, please speak to your labour manager immediately. Even if it doesn't upset you, you will be helping someone else who does not feel able to speak out.

If you don't feel able to speak to your line manager, please call the HR department on 01895 671800 or use the anonymous online whistleblowing form at vgcgroup.co.uk/whistle

VGC has signed up to the *FIR Commitment: Better For Everyone* to show our support for fairness, inclusion and respect throughout the construction sector.



Safety briefings

In December 2017 VGC clients issued 24 safety briefings to us. They include:

- A14 - Nuisance, ecology, floodplain and watercourses
- Crossrail - Genie MEWP safety notices
- Costain - Alert following snowfall

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

Remember: If you are wearing high-vis or driving a VGC vehicle, you are the public face of VGC. So please bear in mind that your actions reflect on VGC as a whole.