

IN THIS ISSUE ▼

TOC reports:
Pages 2-3

FOC reports:
Page 3

Infrastructure reports:
Pages 4-5

London Underground
reports: Page 6

CIRAS is a completely impartial system that provides a way for rail industry staff to report safety concerns in confidence. However, concerns about safety should be raised through company channels first, where possible.

"CIRAS is doing a great job and I will continue to give it my full support"

Iain Coucher, Chief Executive, Network Rail

Ringling the changes 0800 4 101 101

In the last issue we announced the new CIRAS freephone number. This new number was officially launched on 10 September at the CIRAS office in

London. Key industry leaders were present including Iain Coucher (Network Rail), Adrian Shooter (Chiltern Railways), Len Porter (RSSB) and Paul Thomas (RSSB).

At the event CIRAS's Chairman, Helen Muir, complimented the team on the positive changes CIRAS has gone through in the last



18 months, including the new look of *The Reporter*. Helen also acknowledged the continuing improved relationship CIRAS has with the rail industry, thanking the companies for their support in raising the awareness of CIRAS

and the service it offers. In response, Iain Coucher said: "I would like to think that everyone in the rail industry was comfortable telling their line manager about a safety concern. The reality is that this is not always the case. For whatever reason, there are occasions when people do not feel comfortable or able. The industry needs a confidential reporting system, and CIRAS is doing a great job and I will continue to give it my full support".

It is expected that the new, memorable, freephone number will help even more safety concerns come to the attention of the rail industry. For updates on the number of contacts received by CIRAS visit www.ciras.org.uk.

Fact versus fiction

Myth: CIRAS isn't for you



The third myth in this series is that many people often think that CIRAS is not for them. On the contrary, CIRAS is available to everyone working in the rail industry, no matter what job they do. Anyone can contact CIRAS – reports range from risks on the track to concerns about safety in stations. If you have a work-related safety concern which hasn't been resolved through company channels, or that you don't feel able to report internally, then CIRAS is for you.



Industry leaders support CIRAS

IN SHORT

With help from your reports to CIRAS:

- First Great Western has decided to modify sun blinds in the cabs of 142 and 143 units, which will be done as soon as possible;
- Network Rail identified that there were backing boards of unknown material in location cabinets along the Southampton to Toton route, which will be tested for asbestos. In the meantime any work on the boards within these cabinets will be suspended; and
- Railsafe Systems have rebriefed staff explaining the correct procedure for dealing with defective detonators.

CIRAS NEWS

- CIRAS has a new range of promotional merchandise, including posters and leaflets, to publicise the new freephone number. If you would like any CIRAS merchandise please email clare.alder@ciras.org.uk.
- CIRAS is working on a project looking at slips, trips and falls, which currently make



up half of all accidents in the rail industry*. For more information on this, read the next issue of *The Reporter*. * taken from Network Rail's PSLG SIT Project.

EDITORIAL

- Editor: Clare Alder
email: clare.alder@ciras.org.uk
tel: 020 3142 5361
- General Enquiries: enquiries@ciras.org.uk
Please note that CIRAS cannot accept reports at this email address.
- Electronic Newsletter: if you would like to receive an electronic copy of *The Reporter*, email us at newsletterrequests@ciras.org.uk.
- The full version of all reports and responses contained in *The Reporter* are available on the CIRAS website www.ciras.org.uk.

Drivers 'not sounding their horns'



Can drivers be briefed on the necessity of sounding the horn?

CIRAS has received a report regarding some Heathrow Express drivers who do not sound their horns in acknowledgement of track workers. The reporter comments that this has been happening frequently in the last six months, with roughly only one in ten drivers acknowledging workers on the track. As Heathrow Express trains run on the overhead line, they are much quieter than other trains that use the route and it is, therefore, especially important for track workers to be aware of their approach. Services operated by other train operating companies sound the horn as required.

"it is especially important for track workers to be aware of their approach"

It is unclear why some drivers are not sounding their horn, since the *Rule Book* states, under module TW1, Preparation and Movement of Trains (section 10.2), that: 'you must sound the horn to warn anyone who is on or near the line on which you are travelling'. The reporter would like Heathrow Express drivers to be briefed on the necessity of sounding the horn to acknowledge those on and near the track.

Response from Heathrow Express:

This is a most surprising report and should have received a very simple response. Under no condition would Heathrow Express accept any deviation from the *Rule Book* and as the

"rest assured appropriate action will be taken to rectify this"

reporter clearly indicates, the sounding of the horn in this circumstance is very clear. I am not aware of any recent raising of this as an issue, but track workers should report any failure to sound the warning horn to us - rest assured appropriate action will be taken to rectify this.

For those who like the finer details

You may have noticed in the last year that *The Reporter* has undergone a few changes – improved layout and more photographs to compliment the reports – and, as a result, many of the reports and responses featured have now been edited. This means that we can now bring you even more examples of how CIRAS is helping the industry to be even safer.



For those of you who would like to read the reports and responses in full, these will be available for each issue under the resources section on the CIRAS website. To view the full reports please visit www.ciras.org.uk.

Shortage of Bardic lamp batteries

A reporter has noticed that it is a real struggle to find batteries for Bardic lamps, which drivers are required to use in emergencies.

According to the reporter, the shortage is likely to be widespread, but is certainly known to be a problem at Victoria, Charing Cross and Gillingham stations. It is quite rare to have to use them, but at times a Bardic lamp can be a critical piece of safety equipment. Bardic lamps – which make use of coloured filters that display white, red, yellow, or green shades – can be used for stopping trains, or walking on the track at night. Please could Southeastern investigate the shortage of batteries, and what could be done to prevent this?

Response from Southeastern

Southeastern would like to thank the reporter for bringing this concern to our attention. We consider it important to maintain and supply any equipment, especially safety related items required by our staff to carry out their duties.

We would encourage all employees to inform their manager immediately of any shortages or problems with equipment. Following this report it was discovered that there had been a shortage of batteries at certain locations. This was traced to an administration error in the ordering process. We have been assured by the local manager that this has been resolved. An appropriate procedure is now in place to ensure that adequate supplies of batteries are kept at all depots.

“a procedure is now in place to ensure adequate supplies... at all depots”

Looking forward, it is expected that the Bardic lamp will eventually be phased out for a more environmentally-friendly and lighter alternative, the 'halo lamp', which has recently been approved for use. This does not mean Bardic lamps are obsolete; we would like to assure the reporter that Southeastern will continue to provide replacement batteries for working Bardic lamps.



Image: Footplate Equipment

It was discovered there had been a shortage of batteries at certain locations

Update on vital information needed

A reporter is concerned that there do not seem to be enough section appendices available to DB Schenker drivers, resulting in a lack of potentially vital information about train speeds, stations and local instructions. Many drivers have out of date sectional appendices while some have none. Requests for new copies have been made without success. They are left to rely on notes from other drivers, and other handouts which, ultimately, do not contain the same amount of information about a route as a sectional appendix.

Can DB Schenker take steps to ensure that all drivers have the relevant up-to-date sectional appendices?

Further information:

The reporter believes this is a problem within DB Schenker in general, but refers specifically to the east coast main line.



Image: Adambro

Response from DB Schenker:

Our Operations Standards Manager has looked into the issue with sectional appendices for the LNE zone and can confirm that sufficient copies are ordered when the appendices are amended.

“staff are encouraged to speak to their production manager”

He has spoken with the local production managers about the importance of this documentation being available to their staff.

They have no knowledge of anyone requiring one – however, they are available on request, staff are encouraged to speak to their production manager if they feel that there is a lack of information available.

The whole issue of documentation is being looked into by a sub-group of ATOC Driver Management Group with a view to streamlining/reviewing requirements.

FOC REPORT

Is flank protection more dangerous?

Concerns have been raised by more than one reporter about possession planning and protection of track workers in the Anglia region. Rules concerning junction protections are not being followed. Additional information in weekly operation notices (WONs) use terminology that persons in charge of possession (PICOPs) are not familiar with. *Rule Book* module T3, section 5.2 covers detonator protection and states when such protection is not needed: "Because the signaller will keep the points concerned in the necessary position to protect the possession, you do not need to provide detonator protection where a crossover, siding or loop joins the line that is under possession". However, the Anglia route does not always use detonator protection at junctions. Detonator protection isn't placed at junctions in the hope that points will be kept in the correct position by the signaller. Instead of block signals being used, flank protection (FP) is

"better planning... would eliminate the need to use flank protection"

in use. It is assumed that the possession that is on the branch is providing sufficient protection for the main line. FP is not in the *Rule Book* and is a term that PICOPs are unfamiliar with as it is not part of the PICOP training course or assessment process. FP is thought to be dangerous because, if possession on the branch line was given up early or during the period of mainline protection, then it would leave the mainline unprotected. The PICOPs of both possessions would not know that they aren't fully protected.

Where there are two possessions at junctions, instead of using FP, one possession could be a bit shorter so that there are two protections in place at the junction. If not, two possessions could be combined as one larger one. For example, in the work undertaken at Highmeads loop, at the time the protection was due to be taken out on



Detonator protection isn't placed at junctions



Image: Keeping Track

Flank protection has been used in place of detonators

north London line possession, protection could have extended out to take the Stratford-Cambridge line as well. Both PICOPs will not be fully aware about who the other PICOP is that is protecting them. If they did, they could check if they are providing FP and that if a possession will be given up early or not. Better planning of junction protections would eliminate the need to use flank protection and allow compliance with the *Rule Book*.

"why does the Anglia route not always use detonator protection"

The reporter asks why does the Anglia route not always use detonator protection at junctions as per module T3, section 5; and if FP will continue to be used, could a written procedure that covers all the concerns be arranged or could the planning of junction protections be improved so that FP isn't used?

Response from Network Rail:

The use of FP has been in use on Anglia regularly over the past four to five years and only recently has been raised as an issue. Predominantly, the use of FP had been restricted to the north London line area. The use of FP had been utilised largely because insufficient protection was afforded on complex junction possessions. However, it has been noted that better cross boundary planning would remove the need for this type of use. To this end, and in an effort to move away from the use of FP, a conference was chaired by the Anglia Access Planner in May 2009 to agree set blocking points where there are interfaces with other routes. As a result, the future publications of the WON should see the use of FP removed.

The Anglia Access Planning Assistants have been advised that these set limits are now in force and commensurately there will not be a requirement for FP to be used going forward. In conclusion, the use of FP has been investigated and there is agreement that the method of protection is not fully in accordance with *Rule Book* module T3. Future final WON publications will not refer to FP from June 2009 onwards, with possession planning and draft weekly operating notices already in print being amended prior to final publication.

Incorrect information at access point

A report has been made regarding the apparently incorrect information listed on an access point at Fosseway Bridge between Bristol and Swindon. The reporter has noticed that the information displayed on this board implies that the lines are uni-directional. However if the photograph is carefully observed, two signals can be found, indicating that the lines are in fact bi-directional.

The reporter would like to bring this to the attention of Network Rail because they believe that the correct information should be implemented on access points to avoid confusion for any workers that may use them. He is concerned that if workers continue to work on the track without the knowledge it is bi-directional, they may be at risk of getting struck by a train.

Could Network Rail please look into having this information corrected so that workers in future will be aware that the lines are bi-directional?

Response from Network Rail:

As a short term measure, all signs at access points will be checked for direction of traffic and related information. Stickers have been ordered with bi-directional information on them and will be applied over the incorrect information on this particular sign.

It has been identified on the sign reported to CIRAS that the direction of travel is incorrect. It should read bi-directional travel and we are grateful for this report. All railway staff can find correct information in the sectional appendix; however we will also put this CIRAS report up on our notice boards as an alert. Maintenance staff are in the process of being briefed so that if the signs are showing the incorrect information, to inform the IMDM team so we can correct them.



Risks of off loading equipment at level crossings

A reporter is concerned that track workers in the Lincoln area are no longer allowed to park on level crossings to load trolleys with equipment. Previously, workers were able to park on a level crossing near the work site with their hazard warning lights on, after a possession had been taken. This allowed for the convenient loading of trolleys with equipment, taking no more than 10 to 12 minutes.

Track workers are now instructed to park their vans in a lay-by and carry the equipment along the road to the trolley. The trolley also has to be well clear of the level crossing, resulting in workers having to carry equipment along the track. Apart from the extra physical strain, the traffic and uneven ground poses a danger. Staff have been told that the change has to do with the highway code, but it appears only to have been applied to the Lincoln area.

"apart from the extra physical strain, the traffic and uneven ground poses a danger"

The reporter would like to know why track workers are no longer allowed to park on level crossings to load a trolley; if Network Rail has assessed the risks brought about by the change in procedure; if Network Rail would consider reinstating the old procedure of loading trolleys on level crossings if the new risk is deemed higher than the old one; and is this procedure being adopted nationwide or just in Lincolnshire?

Response from Network Rail:

Network Rail would like to thank the reporter for raising their concerns, giving us the opportunity to work as a team and resolve these concerns. Whilst the teams in Lincoln delivery unit have been instructed to change the way they load/unload vehicles at level crossings, the instruction was not as simple as "do not park on level crossings". The reporter's concerns are understandable, as the instructions require a change of practice that may be perceived to increase risk to the individual. However, these instructions protect both company and staff and have been implemented to minimise both physical and legal risk.

Deliberate obstruction of a public highway may be considered a nuisance in common law and if a member of the public is obstructed from going about their business, the individual causing the obstruction and Network Rail are at risk. If an accident occurs whilst a member of the public is attempting to pass an obstruction on a level crossing, the individual causing the obstruction and Network Rail are at risk.

The changes made require that teams wishing to access/egress the railway at a level crossing do so in such a way as to make certain that they do not obstruct a public highway, or park on a level crossing that is open to public use. A public footpath has equivalent rights of access and cannot be obstructed by the trolley whilst it is loaded, but this does not mean staff have to carry equipment across anti-trespass guards or along the track. This report has highlighted a need for further briefing to ensure a clear understanding. This briefing will be arranged in the very near future.



Image: Colin Bates

Headlights on '92 Central line stock

A reporter is concerned by ineffective headlights on the '92 Central line stock. Due to poor filters, the dim lights only allow drivers to see up to six feet ahead of them. At full line speed, this gives drivers little time to apply the emergency brakes if an obstruction is on the line. Incidents of this nature are rare, but have happened – one such incident happened at Mile End a few years ago when a roll of tarpaulin was blown onto the line and led to a derailment.

The reporter is concerned that whilst 20 per cent of the '92 stock light up the tunnels perfectly well, the remaining 80 per cent create tunnel visibility problems for drivers.

He questions why the lights on these trains cannot be replaced, or at least modified to allow drivers to see far enough ahead to prevent potential collisions with objects on the line.



Response from LUL:

Many thanks for bringing this report to our attention. The Central line fleet management carried out a thorough investigation and inspection of the headlights on the Central line 1992 Tube Stock fleet and found that nearly half of the headlights had developed minor internal defects, however none were found to be as severe as alleged. As a result, an order for the necessary replacement components has been placed to enable all headlight housings across the fleet to be replaced. Central line fleet maintainers are committing to replace all these components over an eight week period and are also reviewing their Maintenance Quality Plans for headlights to improve their processes.

It should be noted that on a high density, short station interval metro system, such as the London underground, the primary function of the 'on train headlights' is not to enable forward vision. Instead it is to enable staff working trackside to see, a point that is made clear during driver and track safety training. Headlights on underground trains are designed to shine a flat beam of light down at the track to give sufficient illumination of the area immediately ahead of the train. The stopping distances are substantial so that even with a more powerful headlight it would still be unlikely to stop the train in time. In addition London Underground operates a 'line clear' access system that severely restricts the work that may be carried out trackside in traffic hours.

Guidelines for operating MRLs

An explanation is sought on guidelines for machine roomless lift (MRL) staff cover. These lifts – which generally travel from the ticket hall to the platform – are mainly used by mobility impaired customers. They are set to be installed all over the underground network. The reporter is concerned that, without clear guidelines for staff cover, there is a risk that help for someone trapped in a lift may take longer than necessary. Only station supervisors are trained on the use of these lifts. The advice issued previously was that supervisors who left the

station would have to take the lifts out of service but now supervisors are told to ensure the lifts are in operation when they leave. This situation will often leave no-one trained on MRL operation at the station.

Customer service advisors can talk to anyone stuck in the lift, but are unable to manually open doors in an emergency or change the source of power. Could LU please clarify who is able to cover the MRLs and what training is required?

Response from LUL:

Many thanks for sending in this report. Lifts have been recently introduced at a number of stations to provide 'access for all' on the network. These are typically MRLs, a recently developed lift technology, as opposed to the traditional LU larger lift with a machine room above the shaft. Should a passenger sound the lift car alarm a bell rings at the lift landing and the phone rings at the supervisor's office.

The lift industry standard recommends that customers trapped in lifts in public buildings are responded to within 60 minutes. The procedure will ensure any trapped passengers will be released within

“the procedure will ensure any trapped passengers will be released within this time”

this time. Guidance notes were distributed to the group station managers of the sites where MRLs have been installed.

If the supervisor cannot respond to the alarm, the emergency alarm call diverts to either the BTP control room or the LU Network Operations Centre. If the supervisor cannot deal with the alarm, local management or stations either side will be called. If the supervisor leaves the station for any reason the service manager and the duty station manager must be informed.

We have also checked the failure and delay register at all sites and confirmed there have been no lift entrapments with the MRLs since entering service.



Image: Chris McKenna

Fold here and moisten inside to seal

**Postage
Paid**

FREEPOST CIRAS