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CIRAS provides an
impartial service for rail
industry staff to report
health and safety
concerns in confidence.

**CIRAS reports
prompt action**

Over the last six months on average, there has been:

- A health and safety investigation nearly every week
- A new monitoring process introduced every week
- A briefing made to staff every two weeks
- A risk assessment carried out every month
- An infrastructure problem attended to every month
- A rule or procedure amended every month

Other reports have led to more training, equipment being provided, rosters amended and company audits of procedures.

Highlights from 2011

Can you believe it is that time of the year again? The festivities are behind us and we are all back at work, slightly more bloated perhaps, but looking forward to seeing what 2012 will bring us.

It is also a good time to reflect on some of our achievements over the last year. During 2011, CIRAS facilitated the resolution of a significant number of health and safety concerns.

All these issues were brought to our attention by you – so thank you for making the effort! We hope you will agree it was worthwhile. The reports you sent triggered many changes across the industry.

Drivers, Track Workers, Signallers, Station Staff and many others have all experienced change as a result of reporting to CIRAS.

"The reports you sent triggered many changes across the industry."

Some of the safety improvements affect the lives of many individuals working across the whole industry. Everyone benefits from improved safety. The following examples demonstrate the positive effects of your reporting.

- After the risk of electric shock from overhead line equipment on the Tilbury Line was reported to CIRAS, Network Rail completed an inspection of the entire line. They



said: "As a result of this report important safety improvements have been made."

- The reporting of passenger congestion at Edinburgh Waverley station helped Network Rail and the train operating companies work together to improve the situation.
- A CIRAS report led to better planning and the rewriting of the *Lift Planning Procedure for Road Rail Vehicles* at a major sub-contractor's work site.
- Following a CIRAS report, a staff briefing was held and an improved evacuation plan was implemented at Hull Paragon station.
- Steps were taken to improve lighting, signage, platform paving and access paths at Kidwelly station as a result of a CIRAS report.
- A wall posed a slip, trip and fall hazard at Twyford High

Street. Network Rail erected a fence after receiving a photograph from CIRAS.

- An overflowing skip was removed from Taunton station, eliminating a potential hazard.
- The risk of injury to Drivers was reduced after a CIRAS report led to the change in positioning of some water hoses at a depot.

"Network Rail erected a fence after receiving a photograph from CIRAS"

We hope CIRAS can help facilitate the resolution of as many issues this year as it did last year. As always, think of using your own internal reporting channels first. However consider CIRAS if there's no resolution, or, if for whatever reason you feel the issue is too sensitive.

Stay positive about health and safety - keep reporting!

IN BRIEF

Slip, trip, fall hazard at signal MP314 in Ardwick, Manchester

All debris around the Drivers' walkway was removed. Cables will be re-routed during the ongoing commissioning works. Network Rail said ten out of ten for usefulness!



Subcontractor working hours

London Underground provided clarification on the standard in place regarding the hours worked by safety critical workers on its Capital Programme. Direct monitoring of subcontractors is not routinely undertaken; however, suppliers are required by contract to monitor the hours worked by their own workforce and their own suppliers and comply with the limits set.

London Underground said they could improve the consistency with which they monitor suppliers' compliance - they also said ten out of ten for usefulness!

CIRAS EVENTS

Two CIRAS Main Reps events were organised before Christmas, one in London, the second in York. Attendance was excellent with 80 companies being represented. For the first time, an interactive question and answer session was introduced using statistical information provided by the new CIRAS database.

Also, half-day meetings are organised on a regular basis designed to introduce new Reps to CIRAS.

If you would like more information about these events, visit our new website on www.ciras.org.uk.

Twyford slip, trip and fall risk



The overbridge at Twyford High Street

A reporter is concerned about a low, 40cm high wall masking a 20 foot drop onto the line at Twyford High Street, Berkshire.

The reporter feels this is a safety risk because a child playing in the parking area could potentially fall over the low wall onto the line below. There are no gates to block access to the public and no signage to point out the danger.

"... a child playing in the parking area could potentially fall over the low wall"

- The reporter suggests putting up a wire fence to stop children from falling - is this possible?
- Could the safety risk be mitigated by the use of a sign?

Response from Network Rail:

Network Rail would again like to thank the reporter for raising their concerns.

We would like to confirm that the fence has now been erected, completing the outstanding work.



Additional trackside reports

Please visit our website www.ciras.org.uk/resources to read further trackside reports of interest.

'Unsafe' working practices on a contractor site

Concerns have been raised about unsafe working practices at a contractor, who are currently carrying out surveying work for Network Rail in the Lincoln area.

The reporter comments that the company appear to ignore safety rules and regulations. It is felt that unsafe practices are endorsed by management in order to get work completed on time.

Examples include:

- protection details specified in the paperwork being ignored, which means that the correct protection is not set up. As a result staff work on open lines without Lookouts or any other form of protection;
- staff remaining on work sites and engaging in work without the presence of a Controller of Site Safety (COSS); and

- staff not receiving any paperwork prior to working on site.

Could Network Rail:

- Review safety practices at this contractor?
- Work with the company to help improve safety practices and compliance with engineering work plans?



Contractors at work

Response from Network Rail:

Network Rail would like to thank the reporter for bringing their concerns to our attention.

Following the receipt of this CIRAS report it was felt that there was sufficient merit in the concerns to review this contractor and its work with NR.

"... it was felt there was sufficient merit in the concerns to review this contractor"

Therefore the Head of Health, Safety, Environment and Assurance (HSQE) – Fixed Telecoms Network/Global System for Mobile Communications (FTN/GSM-R) has put together a review plan which is currently being carried out.

The review of the contractor

regarding their general safety performance and the concerns raised in this CIRAS report particularly working on or about the infrastructure includes the following:

- A review of the company and their contractor includes their end to end process regarding planning of site work and the communication of information through to the completion stage.
- Announced visits of their sites of work which include their contractor's staff.
- Unannounced visits of sites – this will occur over the next month.
- A further review with the contractor's management by the Head of HSQE – FTN/GSM-R and the project management

which will involve assessing any issues arising and discussing any improvement required.

"Unannounced visits of sites will occur over the next month."

- Feedback to the contractor and internally to interested NR Programmes of any findings and actions, where we will seek to understand any cultural / behavioural / managerial factors involved.

NR takes seriously any such reports which affect its staff and contractors safety. The process outlined above demonstrates that NR will assist contractors to achieve higher levels of safety and management of the staff if needed.

Problems viewing monitors due to dirty windows



Are dirty cab windows impacting on visibility?

Drivers are prevented from having a clear view of Driver Only Operated (DOO) dispatch monitors due to dirty side cab windows, according to three separate reporters. This is believed to be an issue across the whole Southeastern network, resulting from the lack of a thorough cab window cleaning programme.

First Capital Connect provide buckets of water and a broom to clean the side cab windows at some stations, though facilities are not always available. The majority of Southeastern stations are believed to have no facilities at all. Most Drivers would be willing to clean the side windows themselves if facilities were available.

Dirty cab windows compound visibility problems with the monitors which are also affected by reflections, dark images and bright lighting.

"Dirty cab windows compound visibility problems ..."

The reporters would like Southeastern and First Capital Connect to:

- review the current cab window cleaning programme;
- comment on current washing facilities at their stations; and
- provide more cleaning equipment for Drivers to use when needed.

Response from Southeastern:

Southeastern would like to thank the reporter for their comments, this is the first indication we have received that there is a problem with the visibility through the side windows due to cleanliness.

We would like to encourage Drivers to report instances of poor visibility to Kent Integrated Control Centre as this could be passed to engineering to ensure the windows are cleaned at the next suitable location.

The engineering department are responsible for train presentation and has provided the following response:

Southeastern has a cleaning programme for units that includes a

thorough wash of cab fronts every 14 days. Southeastern has never placed washing facilities on platforms.

The stations where there is a broom, bucket and water in situ were inherited by Southeastern and as such it is one person's responsibility for replenishment or upkeep.

"We would like to encourage Drivers to report instances of poor visibility ..."

However, the engineering department will investigate the possibilities of placing equipment at the end of some platforms but this creates a concern in that it can be abused and requires someone to take responsibility for the equipment such as a Station Manager.

Plus the responsibility of more cleaning equipment for Drivers to use when required.

Southeastern at present do not have a plan to provide cleaning equipment for the use of Drivers. Train presentation quality checks has shown that units have been in a better condition this year than previous years due to the focus and cleaning initiatives employed by Southeastern, especially with the current exterior polishing regime that is in operation on all fleets.

In direct response to this report Southeastern Operation Standards Manager has asked that all Driver Managers check the cleanliness of driving cab windows whilst carrying out unobtrusive monitoring.

Response from First Capital Connect:

Currently the Driver's side windows are cleaned by the carriage washing machines on First Capital Connect infrastructure.

Following a review of options available, the current cleaning regime has been changed to allow the cleaning of Driver's side windows along with the cab front that is accessible by brush and detergent when the units arrive at a cleaning location.

A risk assessment has been undertaken and local working procedures are being amended to reflect this.

This will enable the Driver's side windows to be cleaned in this manner along with the cab windscreens.

The current train plan allows for each unit to cycle through cleaning locations every two to three days.



A risk assesment has been undertaken

Potential hose pipe hazard at Grove Park depot

Long hose pipes hanging from the gantries on the walkways between roads 4 and 12 in the sheds at Grove Park depot are a concern for one reporter.

The hose pipes, used for washing the trains, hang down from the gantries at about head height, which has resulted in several members of staff hitting their heads.

The hoses are also at eye level when alighting from the driving cab which could cause further injury.

"The hose pipes ... hang down from gantries at about head height."

The reporter is concerned that the new levers on the end of the hoses, which enable staff to turn the water on and off, could also cause injury. The reporter would like Southeastern to look into the possibility of:

- putting the hose pipes on a pulley system on the gantries, so that they can be pulled down and retracted as required; or
- lowering the hoses to waist height.

Additional train operation reports

Please visit our website www.ciras.org.uk/resources to read further train operation reports of interest.



Grove Park depot sheds can contain unforeseen hazards

Response from Southeastern:

Southeastern would like to thank the reporter for bringing their concerns about the water drops/hoses at Grove Park to our attention.

"... the water drops/hoses are to be lowered to waist height"

Following a period of discussion at Grove Park, the local management

team have decided on the second suggestion made by the reporter, and the water drops/hoses are to be lowered to waist height but ensuring that they do not create any further problems.

It is hoped that the work to lower the water drops/hoses will take place within the next two months.



The height of hose pipes is considered dangerous by the reporter

'Inadequate' rostering of breaks for freight Drivers

Driver's at DB Schenker are concerned about the way in which Personal Needs Breaks (PNBs) are being rostered.

Instead of rostering PNBs in the middle of a shift, they are often placed at the beginning or end and in noisy cab environments. It is believed that this form of rostering defeats the object of taking a break and can make Drivers even more fatigued.

One example given is where the first 20 minute break is taken as soon as a Driver arrives at their depot and the last 20 minute break scheduled for the end of an eight-hour shift.

"It is believed that this form of rostering defeats the object of taking a break ..."

Another example is where a break was scheduled at the end of a six-hour shift, onboard a passenger train, whilst travelling back to the depot.

Although rostering breaks this way is compliant with rules, it seems rather nonsensical to Drivers.

Despite mess rooms being available at depots and along routes, breaks are often rostered onboard very



Long shifts can cause fatigue

noisy cab environments. This does not allow Drivers to rest or make use of facilities for washing, eating, using the toilet and refreshing themselves.

Could DB Schenker:

- Explain the rationale behind rostering PNBs at the beginning or end of shifts?
- Say whether such shifts have been risk assessed for fatigue?
- Consider making arrangements for mess rooms (at DB Schenker facilities or at other companies) to be made available for Drivers to use along the routes?

Response from DB Schenker:

Firstly DB Schenker Rail UK would like to thank the reporter for raising their concerns.

DB Schenker acknowledges that there have been times when PNBs have been rostered at the beginning or the end of a shift. We have ensured that this process has been safety validated prior to implementation.

Our diagramming continues to focus on average turn length through productive diagramming. As a result of this process we will be able to ensure that all PNBs are spread evenly throughout the Driver's shift giving an even balance of work and rest. Where possible we will always look to roster a PNB during the shift rather than at the beginning.

"... we will be able to ensure that all PNBs are spread evenly throughout the Driver's shift"

DB Schenker can confirm that as a company we are committed to ensuring that all of our Drivers' links are processed using the fatigue index tools as guided by the industry standard.

Where possible DB Schenker will arrange for a PNB to be taken at a facility where there is either a DB Schenker mess room or our customer has a facility available for our staff to use. The ability to have a PNB on a passenger service is an agreement we have available to us, however if any individual has a problem acquiring a seat during this journey then they should escalate this through their local management.

Additional freight reports

Please visit our website www.ciras.org.uk/resources to read further freight reports of interest.



Drivers need to stop and take a break in a suitable environment

Slipping hazard when locking Class 66 locomotives

The potential for Drivers to slip and fall whilst trying to lock or unlock the cab doors on the Class 66 locomotive is a concern for one reporter.

Due to the height of the lock on the cab doors, Drivers have to climb the steps and hold onto the handrail whilst trying to lock or unlock the door. This is even more difficult at night when carrying a hand lamp. The reporter feels there is a great risk of someone slipping and falling whilst trying to carry out this task.

"This is even more difficult at night when carrying a hand lamp"

The reporter comments that in the past Drivers were not required to lock the cab but a directive was issued recently stating that the doors must now be locked when the locomotive is unattended.

The reporter understands the need for this practice at remote locations or where trains are being stabled overnight but does not feel this is necessary at secure, staffed locations.

The reporter would like to know:

- The reasons behind the issuing of this directive?
- If the risk of theft of the locomotive has been risk assessed against the risk of Drivers slipping or falling when carrying out the task?



Slipping can cause serious injuries



Locking the cab on a Class 66 can be a tricky manoeuvre

Response from DB Schenker:

DB Schenker would like to thank the reporter for raising their concerns, our Operations Standards Manager was asked to respond to the questions raised.

The instruction for locking cabs has been in place for all trains for nearly ten years and was set up following the terrorist attacks in the US. The rail industry including EWS (as it was then) responded by increasing the security of locations and traction units.

It isn't the theft of a locomotive that is the main issue, it is the general safety of Drivers. In the past we have had cases of trespassers entering the rear cab of a locomotive via an unlocked door and making their way to the lead cab resulting in shock to the Driver. Locking cabs also reduces the possibility of vandalism and theft of equipment. It is important to remember that rear

cab doors should always be locked when a traction unit is in service.

Whilst locking locos may seem excessive at 'secure' locations, persons intent on trespass and vandalism are getting even bolder and are undeterred by the presence of staff or security measures. Metal theft is an ever increasing problem on the railway so we must reduce the opportunity.

"... persons intent on trespass and vandalism are getting even bolder"

The action of locking or unlocking doors more often than not has to be undertaken on the lower step, this does require due care and attention. However, it is felt that overall risk is being reduced by the locking of cab doors.

Contractors not signing in at Stamford Brook station

Concerns have been raised about Cleshar staff not signing in at Stamford Brook station when carrying out work on the track at night.

The reporter comments that Cleshar staff refuse to sign in or only sign in part of the work group. However, LUL *Rule Book 10* Station access clearly states that:

“All staff or visitors working at, or visiting a station other than their normal place of work must sign in as such with the Station Supervisor on arrival and sign out on departure.”

“...staff place themselves at risk from not doing so if an emergency situation were to arise”

It is felt that the importance of signing in to the station is not fully understood and staff place themselves at risk from not doing so if an emergency situation were to arise.

Checks also need to be carried out on the competencies of those undertaking the work in order to protect the travelling public.



Contractors must sign in before starting work

The reporter asks:

- Could LUL and Cleshar work together to ensure that all contractors are fully aware of their obligations to sign in to the station and the process in place to do this?

track maintenance contract to remind staff of the procedures for signing in and out from stations, including the forms to be completed.

Cleshar has a programme of training and competency, based on LUL safety and track skills training. This includes track hand back and protection personnel. To further support this there is a programme of track based Level 2 and Level 3 NVQ's being carried out. To date over 100 people have achieved the NVQ and there is an ongoing programme for a further 200.

Full version available at www.ciras.org.uk

Response from London Underground:

London Underground can confirm that Cleshar have reviewed this matter and responded separately. The Cleshar response details that no concerns have been reported regarding signing in at this station.

Further to this a Cleshar Safety Adviser has visited Stamford Brook station and following a discussion with Station Supervisors has been informed that there have been no issues with Cleshar staff signing in at the station.

“Cleshar have undertaken tool box talks to remind their staff about the procedures to follow”

As a precaution Cleshar have undertaken tool box talks to remind their staff about the procedures to follow.

It should also be noted that Cleshar have a programme of LUL safety and skills training and competency assessment for their staff, relevant details of which are checked each time staff sign in at a station.

The Group Station Manager states that staff have been working with the project teams to ensure all contracting staff follow the procedures laid down for signing in at stations.

Station staff have been asked, via internal briefings, that if they suspect or find contractors working within the station who have not signed in, they remind the contracting management of this requirement.

We have also asked the Supervisors to inform the Duty Manager so we can feed back to LUL's project teams when and where there are shortfalls. The project team will then follow this up with the contracting company.

Response from Cleshar:

Before this report was received we have had no concerns formally raised to us from London Underground. This includes during regular progress meetings where health and safety is on the agenda.

Following receipt of the report one of our Night Operations Safety Advisors visited the station and talked to Station Supervision. They were informed that our Operatives had been signing in as required and there had not been issues with this.

However as a reminder to our Supervisors to ensure that the correct procedures are followed we have issued a tool box talk on our

Assistance for passengers with disabilities 'reduced'

A reporter is concerned that passengers with disabilities are now receiving less staff assistance when travelling on the Underground.

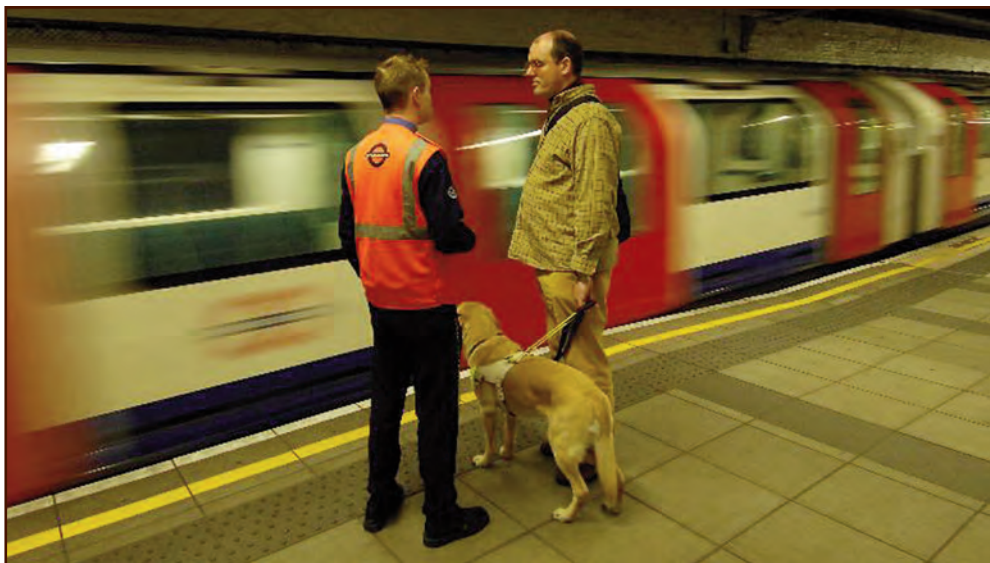
Due to a lack of available staff, there have been incidents in recent weeks where disabled passengers have been told to 'make their own way'.

This is an issue where disabled passengers require assistance to ensure their journeys can be made safely, but then find no assistance is on offer.

Visually impaired persons are said to be particularly at risk if, for example, they must use the escalators without any assistance.

"Visually impaired persons are said to be particularly at risk"

The reporter comments that disabled passengers may need to make alternative travelling arrangements if no assistance is available.



Are staff shortages impacting on passengers with disabilities?

The reporter would like to know:

- What is London Underground's policy on assisting disabled passengers?
- What should happen if staff are not available to assist a disabled person?
- Are there any alternative arrangements that could help provide better assistance?

Additional LUL reports



Please visit our website www.ciras.org.uk/resources to access further London Underground reports.

Response from London Underground:

Thank you for your enquiry. LUL staff will provide assistance to disabled passengers where they are able to and where it is safe to do so, as outlined in TfL's *Conditions of Carriage*.

The service does not require pre-booking however, ongoing assistance at interchange/destination stations can be arranged at the start of the journey if required.

"LUL operates a 'turn up and go' service"

In the unlikely circumstance that staff are unavailable to assist a disabled person at a given time (for example during an incident or service disruption, etc...) staff should liaise with the person concerned to

determine when assistance will be possible.

LUL are proud of the assistance we provide to disabled customers and regularly receive positive feedback for the assistance LUL staff provide to visually impaired customers. Therefore an alternative has not been considered.

LUL operates a 'turn up and go' service, where disabled customers can get assistance for a journey without having to pre-book it unlike on other services where assistance does have to be pre-booked. Therefore disabled customers can travel quickly and flexibly and can access London Underground on the same terms as non-disabled customers.



Some passengers may require assistance

New CIRAS website

We are pleased to announce that the new CIRAS website is now up and running.

Built to a high specification it has an easy to use search engine that will help you to access either the Sector Reports or any of the CIRAS publications for the information you seek.

Whether it is for highlights on a health and safety concern or to just browse through location specific reports make sure you check us out on www.ciras.org.uk

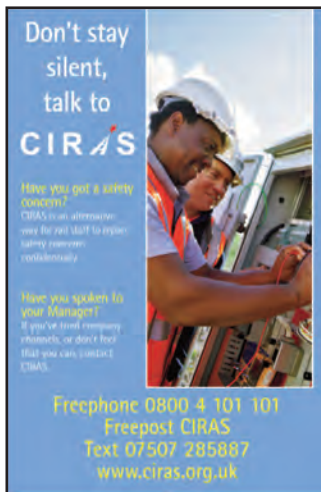


CIRAS poster

CIRAS posters aim to encourage you to raise a health and safety concern.

Last year we asked your companies to replace your A4 poster with the bigger A3 version. We are soon releasing the new 2012 posters and would like to make the same request.

Please help us by renewing the old poster with the new one to be sent to your CIRAS Rep shortly.



EDITORIAL

If you have any comments or suggestions
Please contact Bobby Wright, Editor
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020 3142 5361.

General Enquiries

Email 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 this publication, *The Reporter*, email us at newsletterrequests@ciras.org.uk.

Website

For more reports and responses please visit our website www.ciras.org.uk.

Have you got a safety concern?

Contact CIRAS by one of the following:

- Using the Freepost form on page 11.
- Calling us on Freephone 0800 4 101 101.
- Texting your contact details to 07507 285887.
- Going to our website www.ciras.org.uk and completing the online contact form.
- Completing the Freepost contact form in the CIRAS leaflets.

Our team will call you

At a time that is convenient for you, a member of the CIRAS team will get in touch and discuss your health and safety concerns. It is very easy and very simple.

We will write a report

Your CIRAS contact will then prepare a written report on your behalf. There is no report writing required by you. We will make sure the report does not contain ANY information that can identify YOU.

The report is sent to the company

We then send the written report to the relevant company for response.

The company investigate

On receiving a CIRAS report the company will investigate the matter. They will then prepare a suitable response for CIRAS to explain their findings, and any actions they intend to take to address the concern you have identified.

We send you feedback

Once we receive the company response we will then provide you with a copy. Also we will ask you for your feedback. If you are satisfied with the company response then no further action is taken. However, if not, you can contact CIRAS again and we will continue to pursue the matter on your behalf.

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