

SafetyFirst

Welcome to the Summer Edition of our newsletter, Safety First.

The summer season is well upon us, and I am sure many of you have been on your summer holidays or are looking forward to that well-deserved rest and enjoyment with friends and family. Although the good old British summer is very unpredictable, the warmer climate still bring risks to our health and wellbeing. These include dehydration and skin exposure to the stronger UV levels of the sun, which can be a threat to everyone. Precautions must be taken against these elements. There is notably a constant rise in melanoma (skin cancer) cases, so please take measures to protect yourself and limit your exposure to the stronger ultraviolet light from the sun where possible.

Staff Assault

The safety, health and wellbeing of everyone at work are paramount, and the risks from hazards in this industry and environment are very high. The industry constantly implements measures to protect everyone whilst carrying out their duties, and it is extremely disappointing to hear about staff and the workforce receiving verbal abuse and being threatened by members of the public. Unfortunately, this is another risk to everyone. If you are approached by an irate member of the public, please be mindful of your personal safety. Try to reason with the person and avoid any conflict. Walk away from the situation and call the BTP if you feel unsafe or concerned about the safety of the individual.

Sentinel Card – Ongoing Competence

We would like to remind you to check your Sentinel Card and profile regularly. One of the main requirements is to ensure your competencies are up to date and to check when any recertification or assessments are due.



Safety First

Although it is your Primary Sponsor's responsibility to manage ongoing competency, you should also check just in case things get overlooked. Remember, if a competency expires or an interim assessment is missed, you would have to go back to initial training, which would include any learning support and mentoring periods. It is unthinkable that any individual should lose their COSS competence this way and would have to go back to initial learning. My message is: keep checking your Sentinel Card.

Safety Moments

It was great to see so many of you at our Safety Moment events, which were very well attended. Our theme around 'speaking up' was promoted and well received by all. It was enhanced by Network Rail's Head of Health, Safety, Quality and Environment for the Kent Route, Obhiye Uduebor, who gave a very inspiring speech on taking pride in our work and encouraged everyone to challenge and speak up. CIRAS Stakeholder Manager, Katie Johnston, gave a presentation on alternative ways of voicing any safety, health, and wellbeing concerns that you might want to raise confidentially. Thanks to everyone who took the time out to attend these events.

We are reinvigorating the importance of the Network Rail Life Saving Rules and how they should be followed by everyone when carrying out their duties. Please remind and refresh yourselves with the Life Saving Rules inside the newsletter and through the briefing sent out to you all.

I hope you enjoy reading the articles in our newsletter, and remember, if you have any ideas or topics you would like included, just let us know, as these would be welcome.

As always, take care, enjoy your summer holidays, and remember: Safety First, Safety Always.



Gary Lobue

Head of HSEQ

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Life Saving Rules



Working responsibly



Always be sure the required plans and permits are in place, before you start a job or go on or near the line.



Always use the equipment that is fit for its intended purpose



Never undertake any job unless you have been trained and assessed as competent.



Never work or drive while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Working with Electricity



Always test before applying earths or straps.



Never assume equipment is isolated – always test before touch.

Driving



Never use a hand-held or hands-free phone, or programme any other mobile device, while driving.



Always obey the speed limit and wear a seat belt.

Working at height



Always use a safety harness when working at height, unless other protection is in place.

Working with moving equipment



Never enter the agreed exclusion zone, unless directed to by the person in charge.



Operative carrying out LXA Duties but not holding the competence

While carrying out a possession audit/inspection, a Network Rail Safety Coach reported that an individual performing Level Crossing Attendant duties did not hold the AOD LXA competence. The sponsoring company and the individual allowed the competence to lapse without arranging a recertification course. Other failings were highlighted that could have prevented the person from being appointed to a duty for which he did not hold the necessary competence. There was no resulting accident or incident from this lapse, and the individual did understand the LXA duties, as he had previously held the competence.

Lessons Learnt

The sponsoring company should have arranged an LXA recertification for the individual before the competence expired, using an internal competence management system that would flag such events through Sentinel. The individual in question should regularly check his Sentinel card to ensure that qualifications and competencies are up to date and to remind the sponsor of any training or assessments that need renewal.

Controller of Site Safety Not Signing In with the Correct Engineering Supervisor

Line Blockage Irregularity

A Controller of Site Safety (COSS) signed into a possession worksite with an Engineering Supervisor (ES) at London Bridge. However, this was not the correct ES for the planned mileages where the work was to take place. The planned mileages were in an additional worksite within the same possession, under a different ES. Although the COSS accessed and carried out his work at the planned mileage, he had not signed in with the ES for the actual planned site. This issue only came to light towards the end of the shift when another COSS, signing out of the site, informed the ES that there was still a group working. Although there was no incident or accident, the situation could have led to a more serious outcome. Therefore, an investigation is being carried out.

Lessons Learnt

The ES who signed in the COSS should have checked that the mileages were within his worksite limits when briefing and signing him into the worksite. The COSS should have verified that he was with the correctly named ES when confirming the worksite number and mileages. There was a complete communication breakdown between both parties, with no confirmation of the information given. Correct protocols and introductions were not carried out, and safe work packs/possession packs were not followed correctly.

Sentinel Card



The use of your Sentinel Card and online Sentinel Account

Due to the misuse of Sentinel Cards, we would like to draw your attention to the following important points regarding the use of your Sentinel Card:

- If you have a Sentinel Card, you may only access or be near the line if you have your card with you and it is valid.
- Your card must include a photo that accurately reflects your current appearance. If your appearance changes—such as by starting to wear glasses—you will need to provide a new photo. Additionally, the photo must be updated every ten years.
- Following the receipt of a new qualification, your online Sentinel account will be automatically updated. You can use your online Sentinel account to check the status of your card.
- If your Sentinel Card is lost or stolen, inform your Primary Sponsor immediately so it can be cancelled and replaced.
- In certain situations, your card may be withdrawn or individual qualifications suspended. This could occur if you fail a drugs and alcohol test, if your actions contribute to an incident, or if you misuse your card—for example, by attempting to use it as a credit card or travel pass.

For Your Sentinel Card to Be Valid:

- You must have an in-date PTS, a valid medical, and a valid drugs and alcohol screening.
- You must have a primary sponsor and be working for them.

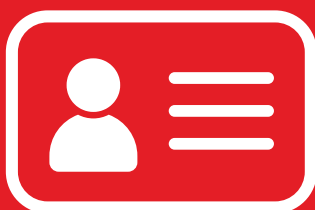
You Must Always:

- Comply with Network Rail's and your sponsor's alcohol and drugs policies.
- Wear the required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Work safely and comply with track safety rules.
- Only undertake tasks you are competent in and, where necessary, qualified to do.
- Report any accidents, incidents, or safety concerns immediately.
- Co-operate with anyone conducting an investigation, spot-check, or audit.
- Attend medicals, training, and assessments as required, and inform your sponsor of all your working hours.



Never:

- Work excessive hours or back-to-back shifts (double shifting).
- Attempt to use your Sentinel Card as a credit card or travel pass.



If you don't comply with these rules your Sentinel card could be withdrawn.

Remember, no card no work – You must always carry your Sentinel card when on managed infrastructure.

Road Vehicles



Using Road Vehicles Near the Line

There are occasions when authorised road vehicles need to access the site, and sometimes regular access is permitted, allowing these vehicles to travel along the track lineside. When this occurs, it is crucial to follow the process outlined below:

A person qualified as a Controller of Site Safety (COSS) or Person in Charge (PIC) must be present and give permission before a road vehicle is allowed to enter the area referred to as 'on or near the line'.

Road vehicles can pose a danger to trains if used near the line without proper care.

If you're the driver:

- Do not allow any part of the vehicle to come within 2 metres (6 feet 6 inches) of any line on which a train might approach.
- Switch on the hazard warning lights and, in darkness or poor visibility, use dipped headlights.
- Only turn the vehicle at a suitable turning point and keep the rear of the vehicle furthest from the line.
- Ensure all red lights are off when the vehicle is parked.

If you are the COSS/PIC please ensure that drivers of vehicles gaining access to the track fully understand what is required of them when driving on the site.



Spotlight on Safety

We would like to extend our thanks and congratulations to Jamie Hurst, who has been nominated for a safety award by Network Rail Kent. Jamie was the ES at London Bridge and was scanning in the strapping team's Sentinel cards when he suspected that one of the individual's cards did not belong to them, as the picture on the phone did not match the person standing in front of him.

Jamie questioned the individual, who said they had forgotten their hard copy card. Jamie then tried to carry out a check of the 'forgotten' card with the individual's date of birth, but the person could not provide a correct answer. These individuals have had their competencies taken down and are under investigation.

Well done, Jamie, for challenging this false ID.

Andrew Thomas was waiting to catch a train to work when he spotted a young lad sitting on the edge of the platform with his legs dangling into the four-foot. Andrew immediately shouted for him to get back, which he did, but he was staggering close to the platform edge. Andrew immediately contacted South Wales Police and asked for the British Transport Police (BTP) to attend. BTP and the Network Rail Mobile Operations Manager attended, and trains were placed on caution. The boy was safely removed from the platform.

Thank you, Andrew, for taking the time to make the calls and ensure the young person was kept safe.



Nathan Bussey, Resource Manager and Jamie Hurst, Engineering Supervisor

Some excellent feedback has been received from a client about one of Louise Clapham's teams working on the Trueeast Project over the last three years.

"The integration and support from your team have been instrumental in the success of the teams on site. I would like to name two guys in particular who have been with us throughout: Adam Thompson and Mark Cole. Their support, professionalism, and dedication with our team have been superb."

This is a significant milestone for the Alliance and has been subject to significant corporate and client focus. The successful completion is the perfect springboard to the next phase of the project and demonstrates your attitude and delivery excellence."

Well done to **Louise, Mark, Adam**, and the rest of the team. Excellent work.



Louise Clapham, Sales & Operations Manager

Fatigue Awareness



On 25th June, Gary Lobue, Head of HSEQ, and Suzanne Thorpe, HSE Manager, attended the Infrastructure Safety Leadership Group's (ISLG) Fatigue Workshop at RSSB. There were representatives from Train Operating Companies, Freight Operating Companies, TFL, Contracting Organisations, and Network Rail. The various ISLG groups presented work that they had been undertaking in relation to fatigue. One of the projects undertaken by RSSB was a workshop with shift workers from an agency.

The outputs from this workshop included the effects of shift work on social and family life, typical sleep patterns, and the effects of planning and coping strategies.

Some of the interesting outcomes from the day were:

Sleep patterns

Most people averaged about 5 hours of sleep in a 24-hour period, which was likely to be in more than one slot and was also likely to be broken.

Most adults need 7-9 hours of sleep in a 24-hour period. Less than 6 hours of sleep can be linked with impaired performance.

Shift Patterns

The worst pattern for fatigue was shifts starting or ending at 01:00/02:00, and when rest periods are split into single days off, forcing workers to stay on the 'night' schedule. Participants reported they preferred a 5 shifts on, 2 shifts off pattern.

Effects of Planning

There was a lack of trust in the schedule given at the start of the week due to a high chance of cancellation. Another issue was working when they should be resting, e.g. verifying packs/calling planners in the late afternoon.



Coping Strategies

Participants reported things they did themselves to help manage their fatigue and working shifts:

- Using activity trackers/smartwatches to track sleep and get more where they haven't had enough
- Exercise
- Avoiding alcohol
- Blackout blinds to help daytime sleep
- Hot bath, medication to relax

Fatigue Awareness

Some of the feedback provided by participants raised concerns:

- Breaks may not be possible due to having to stand down the whole site, and welfare facilities can be limited.
- Fear of reporting fatigue due to fear of not being offered future work.
- Nutrition – very hard to make healthy choices when working shifts, both at work and at home. Participants also reported that taking their own food to the site was seen as 'unusual'.
- One area that received a generally positive response was the availability of hotels when working longer shifts. When a hotel has been booked for you, it is to avoid you exceeding the working hour limits and to enable you to get enough rest. Please ensure you always use hotels when they are booked for you.

This workshop involved a small sample of participants, and it is likely that RSSB will undertake further research in this area. We have offered Ganymede's support to them.

For information on fatigue, visit our website and select the **Safety and Wellbeing Hub**. There are a number of articles containing useful information. If you are concerned about fatigue or any of the issues raised above, please remember you can Speak Up.

#SpeakUp

Work Safe Procedure



Speak Up and raise a close call if asked to carry out unsafe acts that invoke the work safe procedure

Wear Correct PPE



Ask your team leader and **Speak Up** if you're unsure about the correct PPE required

Take Time Out



Risk assess your environment and tasks before, during and after the work. **Speak Up** if you're concerned

Fit For Duty



If you feel unwell or unfit whilst carrying out tasks, **Speak Up** and let someone know

It's OK Not To Be OK



Speak Up if you are feeling low, Ganymede has mental health first-aiders available, or contact Samaritans 24/7 on 116 123

Don't Always Follow



Don't always follow the leader **Speak Up** if you think it is not right. A good leader will always listen to you

Close Call It

**DON'T IGNORE IT,
CLOSE CALL IT!**

If you come across any unsafe acts or conditions, **Speak Up** and close call it.

Don't Drive Tired



Stop and **Speak Up** if you start feeling the effects of fatigue when driving.

Ganymede App

Since its launch last year, the Ganymede App has been gaining momentum. We have added a number of additional features.

If you haven't already downloaded the app, please scan the QR code or click the link below.

Click here or scan the QR code to download the app.



Close Calls

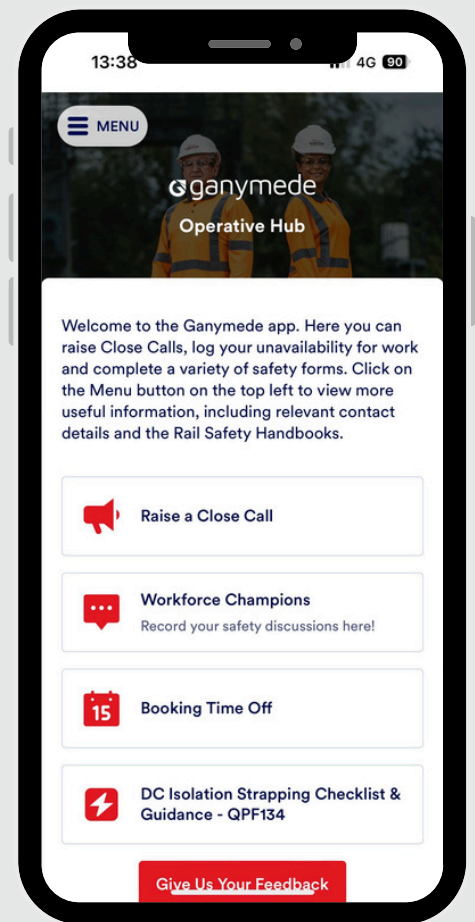


As more people have downloaded the app, we have seen an increase in the number of close calls we are receiving. It is really quick and easy to raise a close call on the app, and remember, all close calls raised go into our quarterly prize draw, where you have the opportunity to win a shopping voucher (if you provide your contact details). We also donate £1 to Cancer Research for every close call raised.

We currently have the following forms available on the app:

- **DC Isolation Strapping Checklist & Guidance – This form must be completed by anyone carrying out DC Isolation and Strapping duties.**
- **Workforce Champions Record of Safety Discussions**

There are more forms under development that will be added, so look out for communications from your local office.



Other Things the App Offers:

- The option to book time off and notify your local office when you aren't available for work.
- Quick access to Rail Safety Handbooks and Safety Briefings. For those working in the Southern Region, there is access to the track diagrams.
- Contact details and Google Maps for all of our offices.
- A link to the Safety and Wellbeing Hub, which has details of our mental health first aiders, links to useful websites, and lots of other content.

Health and Wellbeing



Dehydration

As we are getting set for summer, to make sure you are fit for work make sure you are aware of the signs of dehydration.

Feeling thirsty

- Dark yellow and strong-smelling pee (straw coloured urine is good)
- Peeing little, and fewer than 4 times a day
- Headaches
- Feeling dizzy or lightheaded
- A dry mouth, lips and eyes
- Tiredness

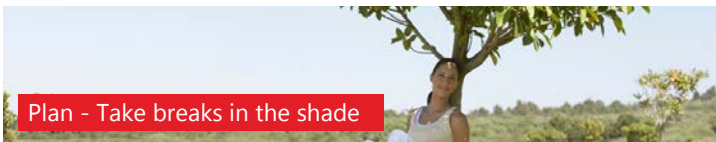
Keeping hydrated will help you concentrate on the tasks you have to do and help you get better rest between shifts.

If you have diabetes, you are more susceptible to dehydration, other causes include:

- Drinking too much alcohol
- Being in the sun to long
- Sweating a lot after physical activity/exercise
- Having a high temperature
- If you take certain medications that make you pee more often (diuretics)
- If you have been sick or have diarrhoea

Tips for staying hydrated.

- Keep a water bottle handy.
- Lower fat milk, sugar free drinking and tea and coffee all count towards the NHS recommended 6-8 cups a day.
- Aim to make half your plate vegetables or fruit at meals. All those vegetables and fruit servings will supply water as well as vitamins, minerals and fibre.
- Sip more during meals. Sipping water with meals will help you eat more slowly; pace eating and stay hydrated.



Plan - Take breaks in the shade



Food - How you can keep it cool



Allergies - Take your tablets



Dress - Wear appropriate PPE



Hydrate - Drink plenty of water



Protect - Wear Suncream

Health and Wellbeing

Fasting

Fasting has been a part of various religions for centuries. It involves abstinence from food or drink, or both, for varying lengths of time. In recent years, intermittent fasting has become a popular health choice, with reports suggesting it helps with weight loss, fights inflammation, and improves heart health, among other claims.

If you are following a programme of intermittent fasting, you need to be aware of its effects on your body and your ability to carry out your role. It can cause your blood pressure to lower, leading to dizziness, headaches, and fatigue. Fasting can also affect sleep patterns, meaning you might not be well-rested to undertake your role.

If you are taking medication, you should certainly discuss fasting with a healthcare professional before you start. Remember – make sure you are fit to work when you report for duty.

Blood Pressure

Your blood pressure refers to the force of your blood being pumped around your body and the pressure it exerts on your blood vessels and heart. If your blood pressure is too high, it strains your blood vessels and heart, potentially increasing the risk of a heart attack or stroke.

High blood pressure is an incredibly common condition, affecting around one in four middle-aged people and approximately 50 per cent of those over 65.

If your blood pressure is elevated, even a slight reduction can lower the risk of a heart attack or stroke. The encouraging news is that controlling blood pressure can be achieved through small lifestyle changes, either on their own or in combination with certain medications.

High blood pressure often has no symptoms and is known as the "silent killer." The best way to determine if you are at risk is to have your blood pressure checked by a doctor or another healthcare professional.



Health and Wellbeing

A healthy blood pressure reading is around 120/80. The top figure, known as systolic pressure, measures the pressure in the blood vessels when the heart beats and pumps blood around the body. The bottom figure, known as diastolic pressure, measures the pressure in the blood vessels when the heart rests between beats.

If you have a systolic reading of more than 140 or a diastolic reading over 90, you may have high blood pressure. However, blood pressure fluctuates due to factors like physical activity and caffeine, so it's best to take several measurements, ideally in a fully rested state (first thing in the morning is best), before making a diagnosis.

If you've been diagnosed with high blood pressure, or if you're looking to prevent it, the good news is that small and simple lifestyle changes can have a significant impact.



- Cutting down on salt
- Eating more fruit and vegetables
- Doing regular aerobic exercise
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Cut back on alcohol
- Relaxation
- Reduce your caffeine intake
- Drink enough water
- Quit smoking

Disposable Vapes

Vapes, or e-cigarettes, were originally produced to help people quit smoking—and they still serve that important purpose. However, single-use disposable vapes are growing increasingly popular and have become one of the defining symbols of our throwaway culture.

Both the English and Scottish governments have published draft legislation to ban the sale and supply of disposable vapes, and Wales has also confirmed its intention to follow suit.

Disposable vapes have a very short lifespan and, in addition to encouraging youth vaping, they are harmful to the environment. The concern is not only that precious resources are wasted in their manufacture and disposal, but also that far too many are carelessly discarded, potentially polluting soil and water.



Health and Wellbeing



Whether or not you vape yourself, the environmental issues with throwaway vapes are evident:

- They are made from plastic.
- They generate a huge amount of waste (the number of disposable vapes discarded each year could fill 22 football pitches).
- They are almost impossible to recycle.
- They waste valuable resources.
- The materials and chemicals used in vapes are potentially hazardous and pollute the environment.

Thankfully, there is a solution: reusable, rechargeable vapes are a good alternative. By banning disposable vapes, we can shift from a throwaway culture to one of reuse, making better use of valuable resources and preventing toxic waste from contaminating the environment.

Mental Health First Aiders

Ganymede has a group of Mental Health First Aiders. While they aren't counsellors and can't solve everyone's problems for them, they are here to listen, let you know that you aren't alone, and try to help signpost you to the most appropriate support network.

If you want to contact one of our Mental Health First Aiders, their details are provided below. You can also find information about the HSEQ Team, who are also Mental Health First Aiders, on the next page and on the [Health and Safety Hub](#) under 'Mental Health,' accessible through our app.



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Meet your HSEQ Team



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Gary Lobue - Head of HSEQ - 07827 962 485

Oversees the HSEQ management of Ganymede's internal and external requirements including the safety, health and wellbeing of our internal staff and external workforce.

Suzanne Thorpe – HSE Manager - 07928 620 609

Oversees and project manages our safety, health and wellbeing initiatives and also co-ordinates our environmental sustainability requirements

Chris Paddock – Safety and Competence Manager - 07773 208 421

Oversees the competence of our safety critical workforce, analyses our health & safety performance including close calls and carries out site safety visits to engage with the workforce

GANYMEDE CLOSE CALL SYSTEM

To report a close call please head to our Ganymede app.



Have your say!

If you want to give us any feedback on the Safety First newsletter, scan the QR code on the right or click [here](#). All feedback is recorded anonymously and reviewed regularly by our HSEQ and Marketing teams.