

Thameslink Programme

Health & Safety – Good Practice 029

Improving Excavation Safety

Overview/Description

Throughout 2016, the London Bridge team had a number of events which highlighted that there were issues with digging around live services.

An excavation workshop was set up in January 2017 involving Costain and Network Rail to review the events and key findings from investigations.

As a result of the workshop, there were a number of additional actions implemented which included -

- Improved communications around permit to dig latest drawings (weekly email to all permit approvers with links to drawings).
- Permit to Dig review by the process owner.
- New CAT Scan (Easicat) which tracks skills fade and visibility of usage.
- Visual guidance for excavations and BROKK process attached to permit.
- Use of vacuum technology.

The team had a two further cable strikes in Jan / Feb 2017 which led to the project forming a working group to develop a more in depth improvement plan.

Both cable strikes were a result of process not being followed correctly.

Key Elements of Improvement

Collaborative knowledge was used increase excavation safety by identifying improvements:

- One single authorised person appointed – effectively a project controlling mind for excavations.
- Implementation and maintenance of a site based Digging Control Room, to brief the excavation teams.



Control / Briefing Room

- Dedicated resource responsible for carrying out all project excavation works.
- Review of permits at a Weekly Permit Clinic and on site surveillance carried out by the NR Utilities Construction Manager as an independent check for the project team.

Benefits

- Clear processes implemented.
- Better information available for teams carrying out the works.
- Clear accountability for implementation on site.
- Independent checker that adds value and provides assurance that the process is followed.