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Issued By: Thameslink Programme, HSEA Team, James Forbes House, 27 Great Suffolk Street, London SE1 0NS

Issue Number: TLP 028

Title: London Bridge – Angle Grinder Foot Injury (5th December 2014)

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Overview of Event:

As part of the conservation and restoration of the Grade 2 listed wall on St Thomas Street façade an operative (restorer) was cutting a horizontal joint in the brickwork with a 5” angle grinder. Whilst doing so the grinder jumped / snagged out of the restorers hand and landed on his foot. The grinding disc cut through the boot and into the operatives foot. The injured party damaged a tendon in his foot and required surgery.

Diagram/Photo of event:

Area where wall was being cut



Grinder On / Off Switch



Cut to IP’s Boot



Injury to Foot



Underlying Causes:

- Where equipment is supplied by the Principal Contractor they are normally fitted with anti-kick back clutch devices, however this is not mandated on equipment used by sub-contractors
- The grinder used was not fitted with any mechanical / electrical protection to automatically stop the blade when snagging occurred (anti-kick back)
- The task briefing could have been more descriptive with regards the risks

Actions Taken As a Result of Investigation:

- The sub-contractor involved is now utilising anti-kick back type grinders
- The site teams have been briefed on the accident
- Discussion of the accident will take place at the the next sub-contractors meeting including the use of anti-kick type equipment
- Future pre-start meetings with sub-contractors will include types of equipment required
- Awareness training will be given to the site team on how to recognise the anti-kick back type equipment
- Safety inspections will include checking equipment being used on site
- Costain and Network Rail (Thameslink) will be developing a common standard for equipment of this type and issuing in due course

General Key Messages:

- Operatives must be trained and competent in the equipment they are required to use as part of the job role / task
- Only use equipment that is suitable for the task in hand
- Make sure suitable positioning of the body in relation to the equipment / tools being used is maintained at all times