

Shared Learning

The Thameslink Programme Issue Date: 9th February 2017 For Further Info Contact mike.netherton@networkrail.co.uk

Issue Number: TLP 069 Title: Contact of Metal Tape With Energised Conductor Rail

Overview of Event:

At approximately 3.00am on 2nd December 2016, after completing their programmed signal surveys at Blackheath, a COSS and Survey Team made their way by road to Maze Hill to carry out further surveys.

As they entered the station they noticed other workers in the vicinity and went ahead and carried out a number of measurements on the track. The last measurement was across the 6 foot. Whilst taking this measurement, using a steel tape measure, it came into contact with the conductor rail creating a spark and partly disintegrating.

They cleared the track and checked their 'Safe System of Work Pack' and realised they were outside the possession and their Conductor Rail permit did not extend to this section of track.

Underlying Causes:

- The COSS did not check his 'Safe System Work Pack' when the group moved to a new area.
- The COSS did not use a Live Line Tester to check the conductor rail was isolated (Life Saving Rule).
- The survey team did not challenge the COSS on the safe system of work at the new site.
- The survey was missed from an earlier blockade so the opportunity was taken by the survey team to add to the existing planned work for the night.
- The surveyor was using a metallic tape measure.
- The survey team met the COSS on site at Blackheath, as they were not aware of the dedicated signing on point where they would have received detail of the limits of the Conductor Rail Permit.

Actions Taken As a Result of the Investigation:

- The COSS has been suspended pending re-training and will carry out a period of mentoring before returning to full COSS duties.
- Going forward Work Package Plans and Task Briefing Sheets are to be revised to reinforce requirements to use insulated tools.
- Improved discipline in following the process for on-boarding suppliers, in terms of understanding planning and safety management requirements.

Photo of the Damaged Tape Measure



General Key Messages:

- When moving to a different worksite always check SSWOP, Permits, Work Package Plans, Task Briefing Sheets remain valid.
- All COSS's are required to hold and use Live Line Testers as part of their role.
- Insulated measuring equipment should be used on the railway infrastructure.