

Safety Bulletin

A serious incident has taken place



Advanced lookout struck by a train

Issued to: All Network Rail line managers, safety professionals and RISQS registered contractors
Ref: NRB 17/18
Date of issue: 24/08/2017
Location: Raynes Park, Wessex Route
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Overview

At approximately 12:05 on the 22 August, an advanced lookout was struck by a South Western Railways passenger train. The lookout sustained cuts and bruises to his elbow, which required stitches.

The advanced lookout was part of a three man track patrolling team and was providing advanced warning from the down cess to the patroller who was inspecting the up fast and up slow line, accompanied by his site lookout.

The advanced lookout was ahead of his colleagues, positioned in the down cess on a curve, in order to provide the required warning time to the team. He was standing on the raised ballast shoulder.

One train was passing on the down fast line when a second train approached the advanced lookout on the down slow line at approximately 45mph. That train struck the advanced lookout's right elbow. He was facing the other way as it approached.

When trains passed on either of the down lines, the lookout's view of any trains on the Up lines was compromised.

A lookout was fatally injured in similar circumstances at [Leeds](#) in 2009.

Discussion Points

While we are investigating the incident please discuss the following with your team.

- How do you maintain awareness of all trains, particularly when focusing on a specific task like looking out in one direction?
- How does the lookout make sure they are in a position of safety while performing their duties?
- How can site conditions such as vegetation impact upon or change the safe system of work in practice?
- How should planners, responsible managers and trackworkers assess whether an area is suitable for working under lookout protection?

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