Wessex Route
Safety Advice.

Wessex Route

Title: Use of insulated Vortok speed board equipment in 3rd Rail areas.

Overview

Following the recent NR Safety Advice issued on 20/07/2018 NRA 18/13 *Prohibition of rail connected speed boards in 3rd and 4th rail areas*, a review of Network Rail standards and instructions applicable to the activity of erecting an insulated Vortok Speed Board, and a work activity risk assessment has taken place.

Both NR/L3/MTC/EP0152 'Working on or adjacent to the Conductor Rail' and Task Risk Control Sheet (TRCS) GA20 'Working adjacent to DC Electrificed Rails Risk Level 1-3' refer. The fitting of the Vortok system requires adherence to the risk controls identified in either Risk Level 2 or 3 depending on the proximity to the conductor rail.

If the erection of the Vortok speed board requires the insulated GRP crossrail part of the equipment to be placed under and within 300mm of the conductor rail Risk Control Level 2 will apply.

Figure 1. Fitting under the running rail and adjacent conductor rail.

Action to be taken

The re-introduction of the use of insulated Vortok speed board equipment on 3rd rail DC traction areas can re-commence subject to the following;

- The contents of TRCS GA20 'Working adjacent to the DC Electrified Rail Risk Level 1-3' must be available to all track staff who hold the TK01 and TR11 competence.
- The Person in Charge must have a SWP (or an IRP depending on the circumstances) where the (GA20) Risk Level has been recorded.
- Only staff who are trained and competent in PTS(DC) and the work activity to fit the speed board.
- Sufficient numbers of conductor rail shields must be in place to protect staff and equipment for the duration of the activity; this must also include any adjacent live conductor rails.
- Use only insulated tools are to be used.
- Ballast must be dug-out from the track bed under the rails to a depth of approx. 8" or 200mm to allow ease of movement of the GRP insulated crossbar under the rail.

Head of Maintenance. Wessex Route
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