

**IMDM INNER – Effingham MPV sheds****Title: Manual handling accident****Injury: Back Strain****Incident**

On the 10th of September 2019, an Operative from the Off-Track Team suffered a painful back strain when he was prying up a timber bearer using a heel bar.

The team had been tasked with manually removing rotten timber bearers and the inlays, which sit alongside the running rails, throughout the 4 lines within the sheds that had been identified for renewal.

The site had been visited on numerous occasions by Network Rail Engineers, Managers, Supervisors and Balfour Beatty contract staff. The scope of the required works had been raised a number of times, however the decision was made to carry out these works manually, as opposed to through mechanical means.

Due to the safety risks of the sheds themselves and the threat of performance related issues (because of the seasonal work that the MPV's provide), the Off Track Team attempted to carry out any necessary remedial work by hand.

This work was strenuous and repetitive.



An inlay and a heel bar within the MPV sheds

**Items for discussion**

- **Are we using the right tools? Manually carrying out work maybe the easier option, but it might not be the right one.**
- **Do we protect our people? Have we given them every chance to succeed, without putting them at risk?**
- **Are we taking the repetitive nature of our manual handling into account? A one off lift may place incredible strain on our bodies, but it is short lived. Work of the type identified in this incident may not be so straining in the short term, but by the nature of its repetitiveness may cause longer lasting effects.**