STOP Think! Moment – Clamp fell onto live 3rd rail

Clamp being used

Damage to the running rail

What happened?

At St Denys Station, work was being undertaken to drill into the station canopy steelwork as part of canopy replacement works.

Access to the canopy was via a GRP mobile scaffold tower. The drilling template was being held onto the steelwork by 2 Rack Clamps. The drilling was being completed using a mag-drill. The mag-drill snagged during the drilling causing the drill to spin round and impact the handle of the clamp. This caused the clamp to come off the canopy steelwork and be propelled onto the track below. The clamp landed in contact with the live 3rd rail and the running rail just beyond a 12 metre run of conductor rail shrouds. No one was injured.

Impacts

- The short circuit caused damage to the 3rd rail and the running rail which required replacement of a section of running rail and repair to the 3rd rail.
- There was potential for injury to personnel if they had been hit by the clamp or been near to the rails at the point of impact.
- There was disruption to the rail service while repairs were undertaken.

Whilst this incident is under investigation, please consider the following points when undertaking similar operations…

- ✓ When working at height, ensure that all items of equipment in use are tethered to the individual or to the structure, whichever is appropriate.
- ✓ Ensure that an appropriate exclusion zone is in place below work at height.
- ✓ 'Mag-drills' are known to snag and spin, has this been accounted for in the safe system of work. Is it the safest tool for the job?
- ✓ Is the 3rd rail sufficiently protected?
- ✓ If unsure of how to proceed, stop, think and consult your supervisor or SHE Advisor for guidance.

STOP Think!
Have a conversation!
Make the right choice the SAFE choice.