

Safety Bulletin

A serious incident has taken place

Railway worker involved in dangerous activity on motorway

Issued to: All Network Rail line managers, safety professionals and Achilles registered contractors

Ref: NRB 15/08

Date of issue: 15/04/2015

Location: M40 Oxfordshire

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Overview

At approximately 13.00 on 2 April a railway worker was photographed by a member of the public hanging outside of the side door of a vehicle travelling at speed on the M40.

It is reported that this incident was repeated more than once. The individual has accepted responsibility for the action. Another passenger in the vehicle requested that he return to the vehicle but this was ignored.

Once he eventually returned to the vehicle, the driver did not stop the vehicle and the incident was not reported to his employer or Network Rail.

Following investigation the individual and the driver have been dismissed by the contractor.

Additionally, the vehicle had set-off from Wigan at approx 10.00 for the commencement of a 14.00 shift of 10 hours in west London. Although a local hotel had been booked for their use following the shift, they would have exceeded the 14 hour maximum door-to-door policy.

Discussion Points

Please discuss the following with your teams:

- Can you recognise when it is necessary to take personally intervene to help prevent a potentially serious incident?
- Does your team appreciate the need to report not only accidents but also unsafe acts and events as well?
- Do you feel confident to report any safety concerns to your manager or confidentially through CIRAS or Close Call?
- Road travel is the single most dangerous activity in the rail industry with eight injuries each month from road traffic accidents. Five rail workers died in road accidents in the past year.
- Do you adequately consider travel risks when placing contracts or rostering people to work?
- When planning or making long journeys what arrangements do you have in place such as taking breaks at least every 2 hours.