Safe working arrangements for pantograph access

Issued to: All Network Rail line managers, safety professionals and RISQS registered contractors
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Location: OLE equipped routes
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Overview

The National Health, Safety and Welfare Committee have been informed that staff in Overhead Line Equipment (OLE) response teams are being asked to remove pantographs from the top of traction units that are damaged or entangled in the OLE.

The concern is that staff have not been trained by our train / freight operating colleagues on how to access the train roof area, nor how to work safely in the vicinity of the train's electrical equipment in that area.

The risks to staff are:
1. The potential to fall from the roof.
2. The electric shock risk from the train's electrical systems.
3. The potential for being pulled off the train if entangled in the pantograph when it is being cleared from the vehicle.

Immediate action required

- OLE staff must not access train pantograph zones unless they have had specific training from the TOC/FOC on how to access and work safely on each class of traction unit.
- Line managers should check with the relevant train / freight operators if they want Network Rail staff to assist in this task and if so how this can be undertaken safely.
- The associated Task Risk Control Sheet is being withdrawn and will be updated to incorporate specific instructions on accessing pantograph zones.

Copies of Safety Advice are available on Safety Central.

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