

## Close call involving conductor rail short-circuit

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

**Ref:** NRA 17/06

**Date of issue:** 25/08/2017

**Location:** Ascot Station, Wessex Route

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## Overview

A close call was raised recently when a member of staff was applying a Vortok conductor rail shield sideways, the shield disturbed the ballast and in doing so forced a stray piece of otherwise hidden wire buried in the ballast into contact with the live conductor rail, resulting in some arcing.

The correct method to apply a conductor rail shield is to fit it from above. However the close call highlighted that staff have been fitting shields from the side. The horizontal application was included as an option in the PTS DCCR training material.

The PTS DCCR training is to be amended to make it clear that fitment of the shield is only from above as this removes the issue of potentially pushing stray metal onto the live rail.

## Immediate action required

- Staff using conductor rail shields should only ever fit the yellow Vortok conductor rail shield from above the rail.
- All staff involved in training that includes the use of conductor rail shields, including PTS DCCR, should immediately amend the training course content to remove references to horizontal application.

Copies of Safety Advice are available on [Safety Central](#).