

Safety Bulletin

A serious incident has taken place

Serious leg injury whilst lifting precast units

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

Ref: NRB 16/15

Date of issue: 19/08/2016

Location: Maerdy Bridge near Newport, Wales

Contact: [Ian Shaw](#), Head of Safety & Sustainable Development



Overview

On the morning of Monday 15 August, a slinger/signaller was working with a 48 tonne excavator to relocate L-shaped precast bridge parapet sections in a compound at Maerdy Bridge near Newport, Wales

As the slinger/signaller stood on a ladder and removed the upper lifting chains from a unit it toppled toward him.

He escaped by climbing over the falling unit but his right leg was struck above the ankle causing multiple fractures.

The slinger/signaller was assessed by paramedics and evacuated by air ambulance to Swansea where they had a number of operations on their leg.

An investigation has been launched to understand the exact causes and recommend actions.

Discussion Points

There have been previous incidents involving the stability of prefabricated components. While the investigation is ongoing please discuss the following with your team:

- What information should be provided by the designers regarding the handling, lifting and storage of precast components especially where the centre of gravity is not obvious?
- What planning is required to handle such units including preparing the ground and lifting plans?
- What other controls e.g. ballasting or propping could be employed to prevent movement?
- What communication and briefing is required prior to handling large components?

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