



Live & Learn Week 17

This week:

- The importance of applying critical safety controls
- Lineside fire reminders

Please share this with teams on site during safety moments and display on your notice board (where possible).



Live & Learn Week 17

The importance of applying critical safety controls

In recent weeks, two serious near misses occurred in the Southern Region involving track workers exposed to trains on open lines. In both cases, critical safety controls were not implemented as planned. These incidents could easily have resulted in fatalities.

Mill Hill – 23rd June 2026

- Two trackworkers accessed an open Up Slow line, outside their Safe Work Pack (SWP) coverage.
- SWP covered a 5-mile 'X' worksite but only referenced one access point at the far end.
- Team used an unlisted access point and started work in the four-foot.
- A train approached; the driver sounded the horn and applied emergency brakes. The Person In Charge (PIC) jumped clear 3 seconds before the train passed.

East Croydon – 2nd July 2026

- Five track workers were nearly struck by a train on the Down Fast line.
- The team worked in the four-foot despite the Safe Work Pack (SWP) specifying at least 2m 6in clearance or additional COSS +1 protection.
- No Site Warden was appointed.
- Workers entered track via an authorised access and commenced work within the blocked area, but subsequently strayed beyond the limits in the SWP.
- Train driver saw workers and sounded the horn; the work group moved out of the path of the train.

Before you start work today, ask yourself...

- Read the SWP fully before every shift and confirm ALL access and work locations. This is your **"permit to work"** and is the process that keeps you safe in a high risk environment.
- Before stepping onto track: Ask yourself, *"Am I in the right place?"*
- NEVER use unlisted or unofficial access points.
- Take the appropriate time you need to review the SWP.
- Confirm the planned Safe System of Work is suitable for the task, with adequate resource to safely implement and maintain this.
- Report unclear or generic SWPs immediately. Stop work if unsure.
- Planners, PICs and Responsible Managers all have a role in diligently reviewing SWPs for errors or omissions - don't assume the SWP pack is correct because someone else has already reviewed it.

These incidents highlight why planning, communication and discipline are vital to keep colleagues safe.

A single shortcut can cost lives. Stay alert. Stay safe.

Lineside fires reminder

Following an incident at a major site this weekend, we are reissuing important reminders to help prevent lineside fires.

Prolonged hot, dry weather has significantly increased the risk of lineside fires across the railway. Recent incidents on the infrastructure have shown how quickly routine work can ignite dry vegetation, disrupting services and putting our people, passengers and neighbouring communities at risk.

Although, these incidents were contained quickly, they demonstrate how rapidly conditions can change when fire critical controls are overlooked.

Before you start work today, ask yourself...

- Is this activity essential today?
- Have weather conditions changed since the work was planned?
- Is there dry vegetation within the work area?
- Have all ignition sources (grinding, cutting, vehicles, plant or smoking) been controlled?
- Are suitable fire controls (fire screens, extinguishers, water supply, fire watch) immediately available?
- Does everyone understand the emergency arrangements?
- If smoking is permitted, is it restricted to designated area?



Key takeaways:

- **Challenge** whether hot work is necessary.
- **Review** fire risks whenever conditions change.
- **Ensure** firefighting equipment is immediately available.
- **Stop** work if controls are no longer effective.
- **Report** and **share** learning quickly across the Enterprise.

Discussion

- What are the fire risks on our site today, and what will we do to prevent it?
- Do smokers know where there are designated zones?
- Is the site tidy and are flammable materials being properly stored?

Small spark. Major consequence. Preventable every time

Remember:

- Heat + dry vegetation + uncontrolled ignition source = Major railway incident.
- Don't rely on yesterday's controls. Reassess today's conditions before you start work.