

Event details

Date of incident: 16/07/2026

Time of incident: 01:00

Location of incident: Shakespeare Tunnel, Dover

Route: Kent

Discipline: Track

Event description:

A strapping team accessed track at the incorrect location. They were provided with an access assessment form which detailed the incorrect Engineers Line Reference (ELR) and access point.

The strapping team accessed the Up and Down Chatham Lines at Bunkers Hill Road, near Buckland Junction, on ELR FDM (Faversham to Dover Marine). This location was outside the possession. The work should have been carried out on the Down and Up Main lines on ELR XTD (London Charing Cross to Dover Priory), which was the intended worksite within the possession.

The strapping team had been tasked with installing intermediary straps. Following the information provided in the access assessment form, the operatives entered the railway and began preparations to undertake the work. However, during the 'Test Before Touch' process, it was identified that they were at the wrong location.

Although this is a two-line railway, there are three ELR changes within the area, which may have contributed to the confusion. The access assessment form incorrectly identified ELR FDM instead of ELR XTD, resulting in the team accessing open railway outside the possession.

Initial causes identified:

- The access assessment paperwork stated the correct mileage but the incorrect ELR and detailed the incorrect access point.

Key issues for the investigation to consider:

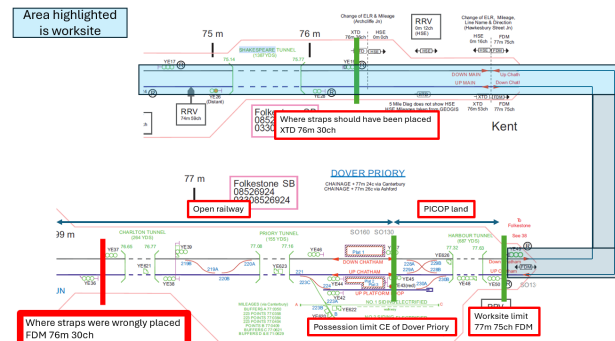
- Application of Safety of our people on or near the line process
- Complexity of locations – multiple changes of ELR references
- On call management

Don't Wait – Act Now!

Whilst the investigation is ongoing, we do not need to wait to act.

Some simple reminders:

- Is the paperwork correct?
- Check your task is within the safe working limits.
- Have you allowed yourself enough time to review your documentation?
- Always test before touch.



Immediate actions taken:

- Works stood down
- Drugs and alcohol testing undertaken
- Statements and documentation taken

Could this happen in another location: Yes

DCP: Stuart Webster-Spriggs

Level of investigation: Proposed Level 2