

Event details

Date of incident: Thursday 11th June 2026

Location of incident: Grateley Station : BAE1 72m 55ch

Discipline: Works Delivery (Civils)

Event description:

An operative undertaking vegetation management activities sustained a facial injury following a chainsaw kickback incident.

During the cutting operation, the chainsaw experienced a kickback event, causing the guide bar and chain to strike the operative's face after penetrating the visor of the safety helmet. Although the PPE absorbed a significant portion of the impact, the operative sustained a facial laceration and damage to the helmet and visor assembly.

First Aid was administered on site and the work group waited for an ambulance, but due to significant waiting times for the ambulance, the team took the injured person to the local hospital where the wound was cleaned and stitches applied.

Any injuries and updates on persons involved: Laceration to face and stitches, now discharged.

Time of incident: 09:00

Route: Wessex

Don't Wait – Act Now!

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

Some simple reminders:

- Reinforce chainsaw safety training, particularly: Awareness and avoidance of kickback zones. Correct cutting techniques and body positioning.
- Review task planning and dynamic risk assessments for vegetation work, especially in constrained environments.



Initial causes identified:

Chainsaw kickback during cutting activity causing loss of control and contact with the operative's face.

Key issues for the investigation to consider:

- Establish the immediate cause of the chainsaw kickback and the circumstances leading up to the event.
- Review the cutting technique, work positioning, and whether the operative was working within the approved Safe System of Work.
- Examine the condition of the chainsaw, including maintenance records and the functionality of safety features.
- Assess the operative's competence, training, and experience in relation to the task being undertaken.
- Evaluate the effectiveness and condition of the PPE worn, noting that the helmet and visor appear to have mitigated the severity of the injury.
- Identify any environmental or task-specific factors that may have contributed to the incident.

Immediate actions taken

- Incident reported and recorded in accordance with company procedures
- Post incident D&A undertaken on remaining team while IP and has attended A&E.
- Investigation initiated
- PC Management attended site to commence evidence gathering
- Initial statement taken from remaining team members

Could this happen in another location: Yes

DCP: Aaron Scudder

Level of investigation: Level 1