

SAFE WORKING PROCEDURE

Working On or Near the Railway

CORPORATE HEALTH & SAFETY | VERSION 4.00 | JANUARY 2024

STATEMENT:

In order to comply with legislation and fulfil statutory responsibility, the Council must make sure that:

- All forms of transport in and around the workplace (not on the public highway) is organised to ensure vehicles and people can move and operate safely.
- Risk assessments are carried out to reduce workplace transport risks.

SCOPE:

This Safe Working Procedure applies to:

- All managers including headteachers.
- All employees of Southampton City Council.
- All contractors, agency staff and volunteers working on behalf of the Council.

Version Control

This Safe Working Procedure is issued and managed by Corporate Health and Safety Service.

Version Number	Date	Amendments
Version 1.00	Mar 2003	
Version 2.00	Jul 2003	
Version 3.00	Jun 2010	
Version 3.01	Dec 2015	New Format
Version 3.02	Jan 2020	General review
Version 3.03	Jan 2022	General Review- Minor amendments
Version 4.00	Jan 2024	Periodic Review
Review Conducted	Next Review Date	
	Dec 2011	
Dec 2015	Dec 2017	
Jan 2020	Jan 2022	
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Jan 2024	Jan 2026	

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1. Responsibilities

Level 1 Managers/Head Teachers are responsible for ensuring:

- 1.1. Tasks where employees are expected to work on or near the railway are subject to Risk Assessment as per SWP Risk Assessment.
- 1.2. Safe Systems of Work are in place for employees working on or near the railway.

Managers are responsible for ensuring compliance with the SWP and must:

- 1.3. Carry out task based risk assessments for employees working on or near the railway.
- 1.4. Develop safe systems of work for employees working on or near the railway in consultation with the Rail administrator.
- 1.5. Ensure employees are competent to work on or near the railway and are in possession of a Personal Tracked Safety (PTS) card.
- 1.6. Provide employees with the correct Personal Protection Equipment for working on or beside the railway.
- 1.7. Work on or near the railway is properly planned and subject to risk assessment
- 1.8. Appropriate safe systems of work have been developed

Employees must not enter on or beside the railway track unless:

- 1.9. They have the approval of the Railway Administration to do so.
- 1.10. They are under the direct control of a responsible person who has the appropriate training and experience. Or they have been specifically trained in safe working on or beside the track and are the holder of a current certificate or equivalent (these will require periodic renewal).
- 1.11. They are wearing the correct Personal Protection Equipment for working on or beside the railway.

2. Procedures

2.1. Introduction

Each railway site is different. Each piece of railway line has particular hazards which may not be present elsewhere. Variables include speed and sighting distance of trains, visibility and audibility of approaching trains in prevalent conditions, proximity and ease of access to safe locations in which to stand aside and the presence of live electric conductors, amongst others.

Note: The Office of Rail and Road (ORR) took over responsibility for regulating health and safety on the railway from the [Health and Safety Executive](#) (HSE) on 1 April 2006. This was one of the changes set out in [The Railways Act 2005](#) that required amendments to the legislation.

2.2. Risk Assessment

- 2.2.1. The risk assessment required by SWP Managing Health and Safety must cover the relevant hazards, including electricity (from High voltage 3rd rail, underground services and overhead power lines); dazzling light (to train drivers); impact with trains (either employees or their equipment); undermining of railway land; vibration; falling objects; effects of wind suction; effects of smoke; public access; loose materials; vandalism.
- 2.2.2. Network Rail has developed a health and safety website called '[Safety Central](#)' which has a section on [Risk Management](#). This site can be useful towards the risk assessment process. Click on the links to access the site.
- 2.2.3. [Randstad](#), have created a generic railway risk assessment, which you may find useful when creating your own risk assessment. Note, this is only to be used for guidance towards creating a specific risk assessment for the task to be completed.

2.3. Competency

As well as employees requiring the appropriate competency for performing their duties, they will require additional competences to access and work on Railway land. For an individual to enter onto Network Rail land (e.g. to look at, or survey adjacent SCC land/buildings/property, let alone organise works), they must have successfully completed the requirements of Personal Track Safety (PTS) Training. **Those who do not have PTS training will not be granted access.**

2.4. Planning

- 2.4.1. The manager should obtain, and employees will be required to follow, the rules applied by each Railway Administration together with any other written safety guidance booklet available.
- 2.4.2. The manager should establish if access to the railway line is subject to a 'Possession of the Line'. This is where the engineers have taken over control of the line. If this is the case, hazards associated with movement of trains and high voltage conductors may be reduced or eliminated during this period.
- 2.4.3. The manager should establish the need for and availability of 'Railway Lookout' (a person appointed to give warning of an approaching train) and other protection personnel where appropriate, as failure to confirm this resource is likely to result in disruption or cancellation of planned work. Employees will not normally be permitted to be on or beside the railway track alone.
- 2.4.4. The manager should establish by liaison with the Railway Administration what specialist equipment he/she may require which will include:
 - 2.4.4.1. High Visibility Jackets (approved railway type as other types usually will not be acceptable).
 - 2.4.4.2. Linen Tapes, non-metallic level staffs and theodolite / level tripod legs (which will not conduct traction rail & track circuit current).
- 2.4.5. The manager should advise, and employees should note, the requirements for appropriate clothing for working on the track with particular reference to:
 - 2.4.5.1. Safety footwear
 - 2.4.5.2. Clothing which will not inhibit easy movement
 - 2.4.5.3. Not wearing loose or long clothing which may be caught by a moving vehicle or upon fixed objects in passing, or come into contact with an electric conductor rail.
 - 2.4.5.4. Clothing not bright red
 - 2.4.5.5. Not wearing sunglasses or any other item which may inhibit their full ability to see and hear.

2.5. On site

When working on or beside the railway track, employees will normally be required to stay together as a group under the close direction of a Railway Administration representative. It is essential that employees adhere promptly to instructions given by the Railway Administration representative.

- 2.5.1. Excessive level of background noise
- 2.5.2. Deteriorating weather conditions generally
- 2.5.3. Poor visibility
- 2.5.4. Poor light
- 2.5.5. High or gusting wind
- 2.5.6. Freezing/slippery surfaces

2.6. Completion

It is useful to have a checklist for actions on completion of the work. It should include the following items:

- 2.6.1. Check that all members of the party are present.
- 2.6.2. Check that all protective clothing and equipment have been collected.
- 2.6.3. Check that everything disturbed has been reinstated.

- 2.6.4. Report completion to Railway Administration representative.
- 2.6.5. Clean protective clothing and equipment and check for damage/defects.
- 2.6.6. Hand in protective clothing and equipment and report any damage/defects.
- 2.6.7. Report to the Project Manager including any suggestions for improvement of the arrangements in force.

3. Safe Working Procedures Relevant to This Document

- 3.1 Risk Assessment
- 3.2 Personal Protection Equipment
- 3.3 Safety in Excavations
- 3.4 Control of Contractors- Construction and Building Maintenance
- 3.5 Control of Contractors- Service Providers and Suppliers of Goods

Note: Other safe working procedures may apply and the assessor should consult the SWPs. An A-Z is available on the Council's [Health and Safety Intranet](#).

4. Main Legislation Relevant to This Document

- 4.1 [Health and Safety at Work etc Act](#)
- 4.2 [The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations](#)

5. Contact Address's and Guidance Links

- 5.1 Health and Safety Executive
www.hse.gov.uk
 - 5.1.1. [Risk Assessment \(INDG163\)](#)
- 5.2 Network Rail
<http://www.safety.networkrail.co.uk/>
- 5.3 Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents
www.rospa.com/
- 5.4 Institute of Occupational Safety and Health
www.iosh.co.uk/
- 5.5 Corporate Health and Safety Service
[Health and Safety Intranet](#)
- 5.6 [Office of Rail and Road \(ORR\)](#)

For full contact address visit the health and safety intranet [Useful Contacts](#).