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for Safety

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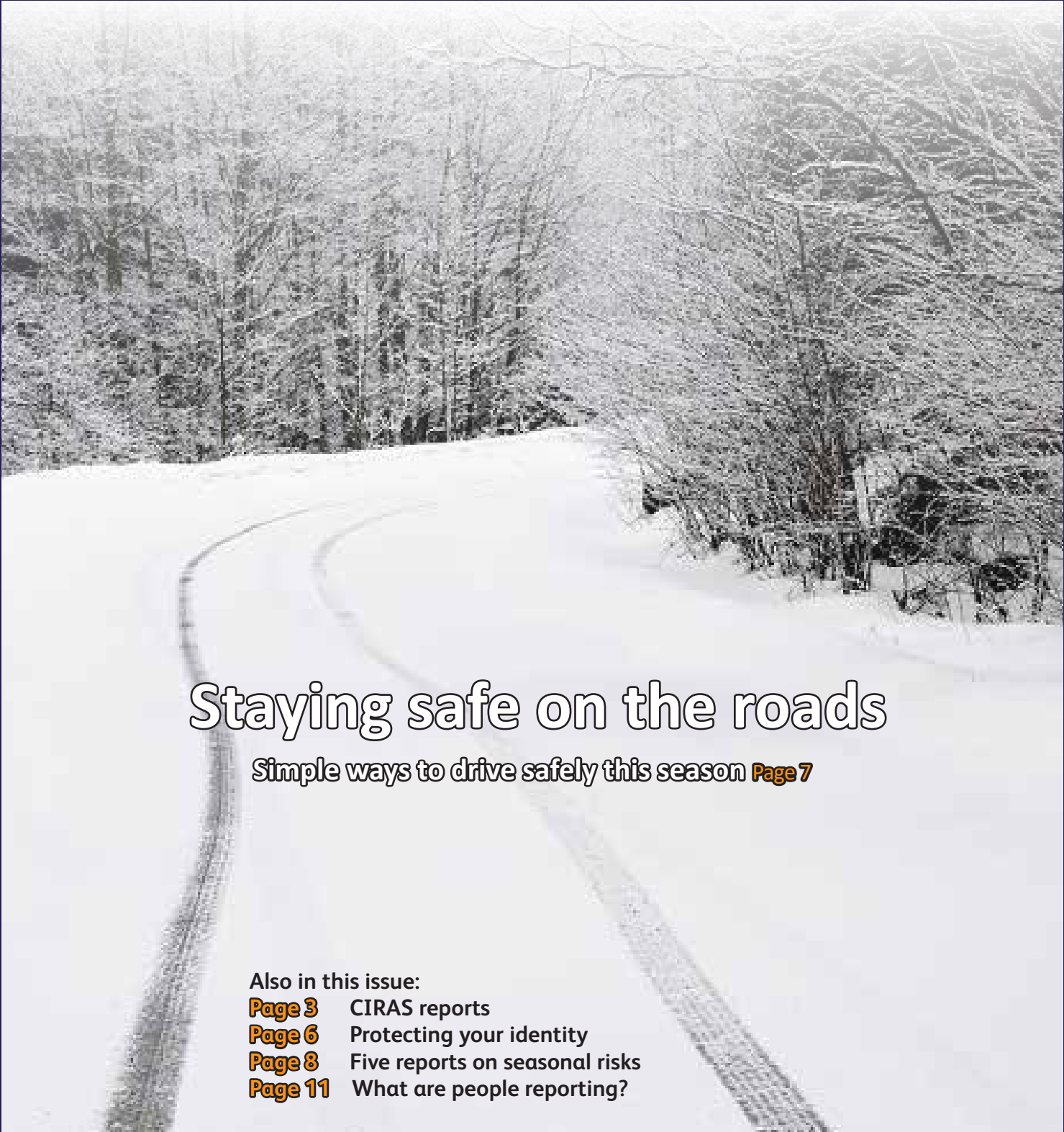
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Frontline *Matters*

ISSUE 12 Dec 2020



Staying safe on the roads

Simple ways to drive safely this season **Page 7**

Also in this issue:

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Speaking up for health, wellbeing and safety

Editor's note

Welcome to your last issue of *Frontline Matters* in 2020.

What a year it has been, showing the importance of our health and wellbeing. It has made people stop and consider if they are ok, and how they can help themselves or others.

Take a step back from all the noise, including sometimes confusing rules about what we can or can't do – tiers, the rule of six, and the rest – and focus on yourself, family, friends and colleagues. How are you doing?

Stress can show up as physical feelings in the body, such as pain, and behavioural changes, as well as with negative thinking. Anxiety, sadness, anger and numbness are all understandable responses to 2020, but could also mean it is time to ask for help. Ask friends

and family, your manager or colleagues, or someone unconnected to you.

You could call Samaritans, Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM) or, if you work in infrastructure, the Construction Industry Helpline. Our Frontline offers advice online for frontline workers. There are many other sources of help. If you have money worries, debt charity Step Change may be helpful.

If your worries are about health and safety, you can call CIRAS. We are still here, listening to your concerns. This issue includes four new reports, as well as seasonal CIRAS case studies on page 8.

Check you're ready for driving on the roads whatever the

weather with our article on page 7.

Turn to page 11 for the big picture of what people reported in 2019/20. From the top themes to a deep-dive into the sort of concerns people raise about equipment and health and wellbeing issues: it's all there.

On page 6, we consider ways you can help guarantee your confidentiality when you contact CIRAS.

Wherever you are and whatever you are doing over the festive period, at home or working to keep the country moving, stay safe and speak up.

Here's to 2021!

The CIRAS team

editor@ciras.org.uk

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Inadequate planning for engineering work addressed

Permits for responsive work were being used for planned work on the railway



© Network Rail. Railway engineering work – this image is not from works referred to in the report.

Concern

Incident Response Permits (IRP) were being used for planned engineering work such as on-track maintenance, according to a reporter.

“...track workers were not receiving these safe work packs because IRPs were being used...”

IRPs are to be used on maintenance work needing action in 72 hours or less, and not for work planned months in advance. The reporter was concerned that using IRPs for planned engineering work could result in a fatality.

They added that planned engineering works should follow the 019 standard, which states that track workers should receive safe work packs. But track workers were not receiving

these safe work packs because IRPs were being used.

The reporter believed the reason to be the east coast region not mitigating planners' sick leave and annual leave.

They asked Network Rail to:

- ensure IRPs are only used for engineering works that require action in 72 hours or less
- review the process for planning engineering works to identify if mitigation is needed for when planners are not available.

Network Rail's response

We investigated the use of IRPs for planned maintenance work and found that this practice was unfortunately taking place in small pockets of the route where there was a shortage of planning resource.

We already had an idea from local union reps where they had fed back previously. There was an openness and honesty that meant we understood where the issues were.

We have addressed this with the relevant local teams, rebriefing them about how and when an IRP should be used, and the practice has now stopped.

“There was an openness and honesty that meant we understood where the issues were.”

With regards to planning resource, Network Rail uses additional floating planners, secondments for longer term absences and support from adjacent sections. We have reinforced the message that using IRPs for planned work is not an option.

Locked doors trialled for social distancing on trams

Second on-board segregated area with dividing screen created for conductors



© Blackpool Transport Services. 'Sorry Tram Full' message displayed on front of tram.

Concern

Someone contacted us to report that reduced staffing levels were making it harder to socially distance on the Blackpool Tramway.

They explained that the trams were running with only one guard on Monday to Thursday since resuming service, after suspension due to Covid-19, not two guards as before.

“...staff could face verbal abuse when reminding passengers of the maximum capacity rule...”

Managing passenger numbers had become difficult as a result. When the trams stopped to let people off, more people were getting on despite the sign saying ‘Sorry Tram Full’.

Social distancing was often not possible on board, said

the reporter, and this posed a health risk to staff and passengers.

They added that staff could face verbal abuse when reminding passengers of the maximum capacity rule or the need to socially distance.

While acknowledging that Blackpool Transport Services had done a lot to mitigate the risk of Covid-19 spreading, the reporter asked for:

- either a return to pre-Covid-19 staffing levels, so that on all services Monday through Sunday there is one guard for each double door who can control the flow of passengers, or
- closing one set of double doors on trams with only one guard, so that passengers are less likely to crowd onto the tram.

Blackpool Transport Services' response

We are monitoring customer numbers daily and we are carrying less than 50 % of our normal footfall. Therefore, having a three-person crew at all times is not viable.

“We trialled locking the second set of double doors over four days on three different trams...”

We have implemented a three-person crew roster at busy periods: Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

To further support our tram crews, we have employed Palladium Associates to manage our busy tram platforms.

This includes controlling the number of people on the platform and communicating

with the conductors to decide how many people to allow on to the tram.

We have given serious consideration to both of the recommendations given in this report.

Although we cannot put into place point one, we trialled locking the second set of double doors over four days on three different trams in early October.

“...we have reduced any Covid-19 risk to as low as is reasonably practicable.

Following the trial, we have received feedback from 17 members of staff.

The main points from the feedback were:

1. Having only one set of doors in operation reduced wheelchair space capacity.
2. Boarding and alighting took longer.
3. Customers were reluctant to move along the tram, causing congestion.
4. Conductors were having to work harder to get through the tram.

Therefore, and after consultation with the trade union, we decided not to go ahead with locking the second set of double doors.

However, since the report Blackpool has moved into tier three and our passenger footfall has dropped significantly.

We believe that by following government guidance, sharing best practice with our light rail colleagues and listening to our employees, we have reduced any Covid-19 risk to as low as is reasonably practicable.



© Blackpool Transport Services. 'Sorry Tram Full' message displayed on side of tram.

Our operational support team, employed to help control Covid-19, sanitise all trams before service and throughout the rest of the day.

Customers must wear a face covering, unless exempt.

This control measure has allowed us to reduce the two-metre social distancing guidance to one metre.

The one-metre social distancing guidance can be reduced further if the customers are from the same household.

When a tram reaches maximum capacity, drivers display the 'tram full' sign and report this to control.

It is the tram crew that makes this decision.

Conductors have a segregated area behind the driver's cab and with a dividing screen, which they can use at any time.

“ Our operational support team... sanitise all trams before service...

We have also now installed a second segregated area on our trams, so there is one at either end of the tram.

We understand that managing the number of customers is challenging and we do not expect our conductors to strictly enforce customer numbers.

We do ask that conductors use tact and diplomacy to educate the customer so that they can travel safely.

Protecting your identity

You can do your bit to help keep your concern confidential. Here's how

CIRAS has never breached confidentiality. We will never release details that could identify anyone raising a concern with us.

When our analysts receive your concern, one of them will arrange to speak to you over the phone at a time that suits you. That means you can talk to them when you know you feel safe and can't be overheard.

The CIRAS analyst will listen to your concern and ask about what you do at work.

They will write up your concern to pass on to the company, leaving out details that might identify you. We never include job titles, and we will only mention locations if enough staff work there.

If the analyst concludes from your discussion with them

that we could not protect your identity if we passed on your concern, they'll let you know that we won't be able to take your concern further but will suggest other ways you can speak up.

We will protect your identity in every way – it's what we do – but these simple tips will guarantee your confidentiality for good.

Lips are sealed

Don't tell anyone that you have spoken to CIRAS or that you are planning to raise a concern with us. If you tell others, we can't guarantee your confidentiality.

Even though you may not mind others knowing that you have come to CIRAS, it's important not to say anything.

Why? If people see that you have made a report and that others know it was from you, they may feel less confident about using CIRAS themselves. It could make them decide not to speak up. If people don't speak up, workplaces are less safe.

Language matters

If you've reported internally first, we ask how you have said things in that report so that we don't repeat your wording.



Image conscious

Want to include photos or videos with your concern? Make sure no one is visible in shot.

Try not to be seen if taking a photo or video, and always stay in a place of safety.

Sometimes we may need to forward images you've sent us to the company mentioned in your concern. Rest assured, we will send screen shots of your photos or videos – not originals – and name the files so that the company cannot trace where they came from.

It is a good idea to delete photos or videos from your phone, or whichever device you used to take them, once you have sent them to CIRAS.

Staying safe on the roads

Be extra careful in winter weather to protect yourself and other road users – on site or on the highways

Take note of these simple tips for winter driving. There's plenty to look out for with moving vehicles.



Plan your route and check traffic information before setting off.

Share the driving to reduce fatigue on long journeys.

In rain, strong winds and ice, leave extra space between your vehicle and others.

Make time for regular breaks.

Watch out for low winter sun: remember your sunglasses.

Check your tyre pressure, tread depth, wipers, fluids and lights.

Give yourself five minutes to clear your windows in icy weather.

Find more driving tips at:
[ciras.org.uk/articles/2020/road-safety-week-ideas-and-resources-for-safer-driving/](https://www.ciras.org.uk/articles/2020/road-safety-week-ideas-and-resources-for-safer-driving/)

Watch:
20-point vehicle check video at [drivingforbetterbusiness.com/drivers](https://www.drivingforbetterbusiness.com/drivers)

Case study

Concern

A reporter to CIRAS believed that rosters were not taking into account the amount of time that maintenance staff were taking to drive between sites. They were concerned that this could lead to increased fatigue and also potentially a road traffic accident.

Response

The company began monitoring times using a combination of trackers on vans and a time sheet system so that managers could intervene if the combined total of travel and work time came to more than 14 hours.

Speed
contributes to one in five fatal crashes in the UK.
1mph can mean life or death.

Five reports on seasonal risks

These short case studies show that it is worth speaking up to get things done

Slips, trips and falls caused by wet or icy surfaces. Road risks in snow and ice. Personal protective equipment (PPE) that doesn't do the job. Fatigue from rosters that don't consider driving conditions. Seasonal weather brings all sorts of hazards. Here's what happened after people contacted CIRAS with these winter-themed concerns.

Five in focus

1 Seasonal PPE

CIRAS sent a report to MECX Contracting about concerns that employees didn't have access to suitable seasonal PPE. The reporter was concerned that staff could develop health issues without seasonal PPE such as lightweight t-shirts in summer and wet-weather all-in-ones for winter.

MECX responded by reviewing its PPE supplies – including with visual checks – and surveying its employees across all work sites about the performance of their PPE. The survey found that staff were, in general, satisfied with their PPE and a few small improvements were introduced while ensuring that PPE remained appropriate for the duties being carried out. MECX also reviewed its PPE against the Network Rail Standard and found it was compliant.



© Network Rail. A contractor wears PPE while clearing vegetation.

2 Wet-weather bus driving

A reporter said that issues with their equipment were leading to reduced visibility during wet weather. They said that wheel arch brushes were not being re-fitted to tyres after they were changed, and that windscreen wipers didn't work on the high-speed setting in some buses. Wheel arch brushes reduce spray from the roads on mirrors in wet weather. The reporter wanted the faults fixed and the brushes re-fitted.

Stagecoach said that although the wheel arch brushes were not a standard fit and were not mandated, they would look into new options to better secure the wheel arch brushes. This could be a problem because they were retrofitted.

After investigating the windscreen wiper on a specific vehicle mentioned in the concern, Stagecoach said that the wiper fault had been reported and inspected earlier but no fault was identified at that time. They reviewed their records, which didn't show a trend of windscreen wiper faults on the high-speed setting. Any reported items had been fixed.

3 Mud cleared at railway yard

A reporter said machines were churning up mud at Appleford Railway Yard, making the ground unstable. They were concerned that machines could topple over in the wet mud. They also said that tank containers were being placed in the wet mud then loaded on to a wagon without being washed down, meaning they could slide off the wagon at higher speeds.

They were also concerned about the possibility of slips, trips and falls: they did not have any PPE for the mud, such as wellies, and shunters had to climb over overgrown vegetation and a fallen lamp post to walk around the train. The reporter wanted conditions improved.

DB Cargo acknowledged that underfoot conditions could degrade at Appleford without a robust maintenance regime but reassured the reporter that the ground structure is stable. They arranged a meeting with all companies operating at Appleford (including Forterra and Hanson) to identify hazards and evaluate risks.

The group agreed that the local DB Cargo safety assurance manager would carry out additional site safety checks every week in winter. DB Cargo gave all their staff suitable footwear and removed vegetation and the lamp post from the walking route. Forterra arranged for a 360 excavator to remove all mud and slurry from the yard. Hanson approved its use throughout winter to prevent slurry building up and arranged for a new walking route to be built.



Windscreen wipers on a bus – this image is not from the vehicle referred to in the case study.

4 Slippery walkway

A new walkway to Mill Hill signal box was built within three to four months after a reporter raised a concern with Network Rail using CIRAS. The reporter said the existing walkway route at the time was uneven and non-gripped, making it slippery to walk on, especially in winter weather conditions. They were concerned that staff could fall onto the track.

5 Bad CCTV visibility at crossing

A reporter was concerned about the image quality on CCTV cameras overlooking East Tilbury level crossing. It was acceptable on a dry, cloudy day but not in other conditions such as at night time, in rain or sun. They said that this made it difficult for staff to confirm if the crossing was clear and safe for trains, and someone could be struck by a train as a result. After the CIRAS report, Network Rail adjusted the CCTV cameras to provide better visibility of the crossing.



© Network Rail. New walking route at Mill Hill signal box.

Safety barriers installed to protect bus passengers from traffic

Signage also reviewed as a temporary measure before new bus station is built



© Stagecoach. Various new signs and chain barriers are now in place.

Concern

A reporter raised a concern about passenger safety at the Stagecoach South West bus station in Matford.

When a bus cannot pull up over the curb edge in the bus station loading bays, passengers must get off the bus close to an area where there is moving traffic.

There was no form of safety barrier in the loading bays to prevent passengers from walking into this area, so the reporter was worried that this could lead to a passenger being hit by a vehicle and injured.

At other bus stations, gated safety barriers had been installed to reduce this risk.

Therefore, the reporter asked Stagecoach South West to fit gated safety barriers in the Matford station loading bays for passengers getting on/off buses that cannot pull up over the curb edge.

Stagecoach's response

We have investigated the concern and, as a short-term solution, have installed moveable chain barriers between the bays to discourage customers from walking between the barriers.

We have also briefed our supervisors at the bus station

to be aware of customers who may still walk between the barriers and to proactively approach them.

We reviewed the signage and put in place more signs, including messages of discouragement on the floor where pedestrians make the choice to walk across, as well as re-spraying existing floor signs due to wear and tear.

In the longer term, Matford bus station is expected to close in around one year's time, with a new station opened on the adjacent site.

What are people reporting?

Here's what people told us about in 2019/2020. Are these issues on your mind?

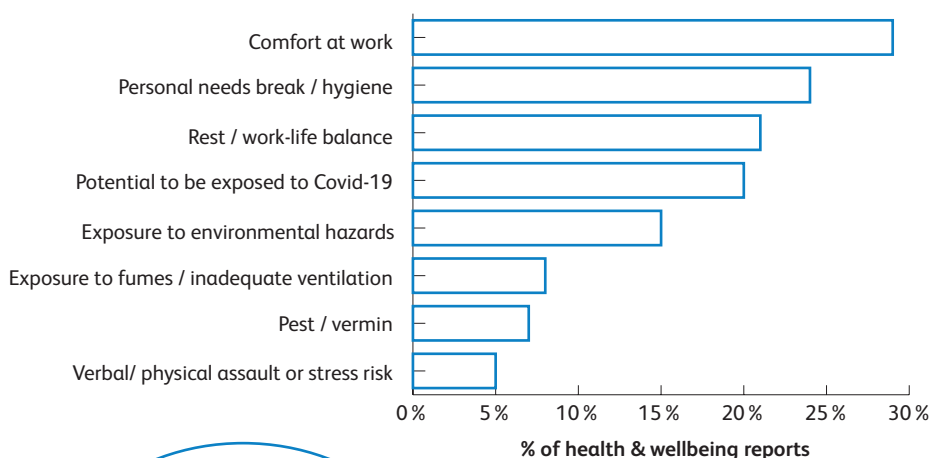
From spring 2020 we've noticed an increase in reports about health and wellbeing issues, for reasons to do with Covid-19.

But don't forget the other health, safety and wellbeing issues at work.

The data on this page is from April 2019 to April 2020 and shows that many reporters to CIRAS focused on health and wellbeing issues even before Covid-19, while equipment concerns topped the table overall.

These graphs highlight the sort of concerns included in these themes, and what else people were reporting.

Health & wellbeing topics



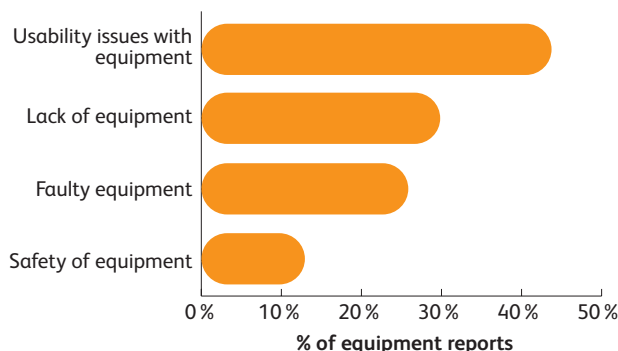
How many confidential reports?

250

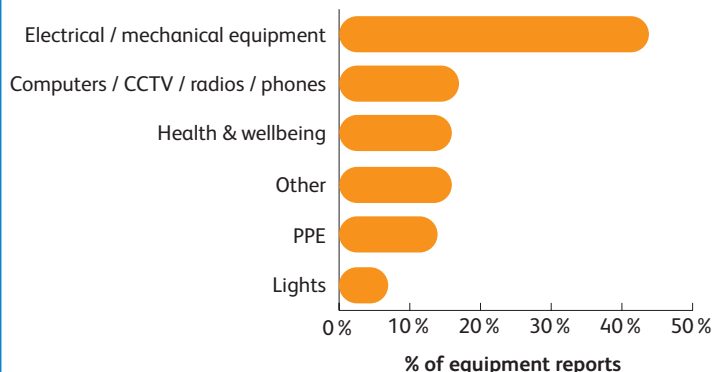
Top five themes



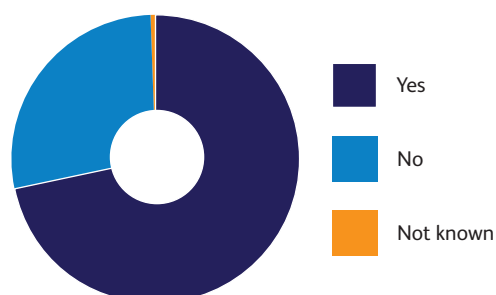
Nature of equipment issue



Equipment topics



Had the caller reported the issue internally first?

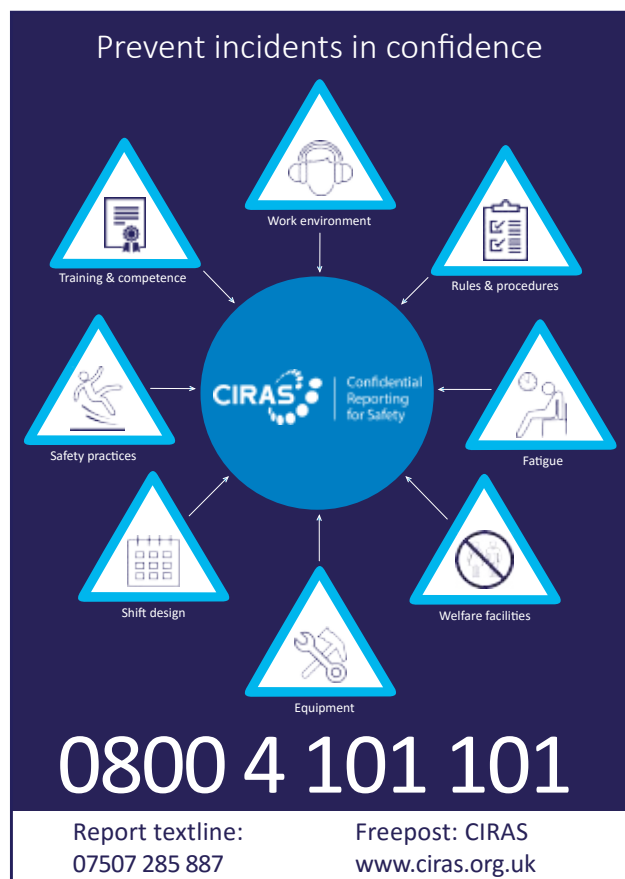


Take five

Take a break and give your brain a workout with these puzzles

Spot the difference

There are 10 differences for you to find.



Riddles

Answers at the bottom of page 13.

1. The more you take, the more you leave behind. What am I?
2. What is always in front of you but can't be seen?
3. What eight letter word can have a letter taken away and it still makes a word. Take another letter away and it still makes a word. Keep on doing that until you have one letter left. What is the word?
4. What has one eye, but can't see?
5. What can travel all around the world without leaving its corner?
6. Jason's dad has three sons: Snap, Crackle and _____?
7. What comes once in a minute, twice in a moment, but never in a thousand years?
8. What has many keys but can't open any doors?
9. What has 13 hearts, but no other organs?
10. I am full of holes but I can still hold water. What am I?

Winter safety wordsearch

Know a thing or two about winter safety? Search for the relevant words from the list in the grid.



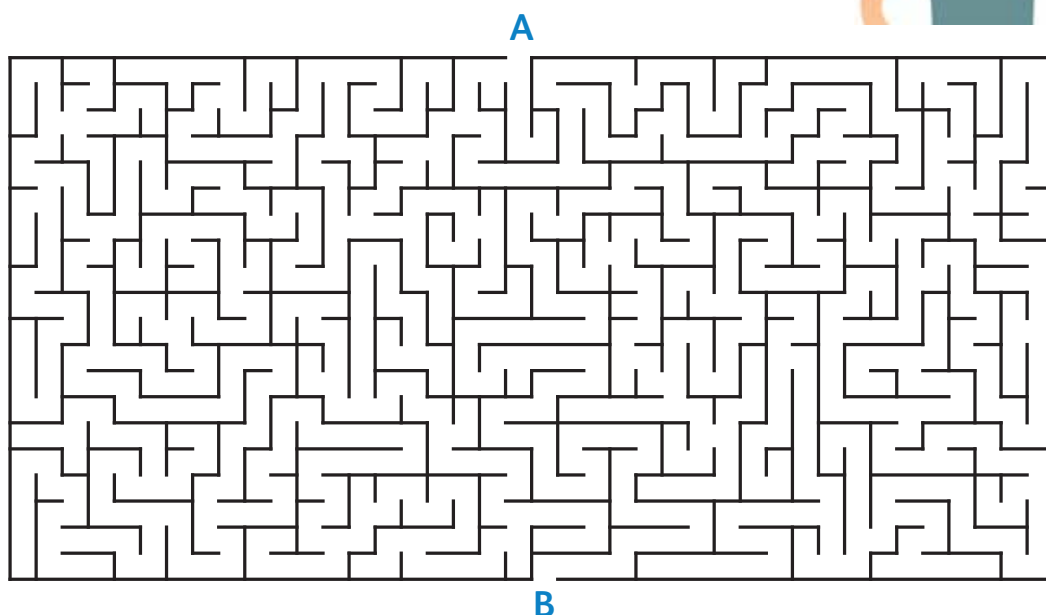
G	I	Y	I	G	F	Y	T	Y	G	N	R	T	T
U	Y	E	N	I	P	S	Y	I	I	A	G	I	G
G	I	V	I	S	E	N	R	I	L	L	N	S	W
H	N	Y	G	P	G	L	E	N	G	O	Y	E	W
G	S	I	P	O	T	E	S	P	H	N	G	F	I
E	G	E	T	Y	S	U	C	O	F	E	R	A	N
S	E	N	N	H	R	P	N	L	T	L	E	T	T
I	Y	A	T	L	G	D	F	N	W	I	N	I	E
O	S	O	G	I	A	I	I	H	T	N	E	G	R
G	N	I	V	I	R	D	L	V	T	E	Y	U	W
V	H	H	Y	D	R	A	T	E	S	S	V	E	P
A	Y	T	E	F	A	S	B	S	V	S	E	S	S
Y	T	I	L	I	B	I	S	I	V	W	G	E	F
A	L	F	G	V	L	S	H	O	V	E	L	O	O

FOCUS
TYRES
LIGHTING
VISIBILITY
LONELINESS
FATIGUE
ENERGY
WINTER
SAFETY
PPE
HYDRATE
SHOVEL
DRIVING



Can you find your way out of this maze?

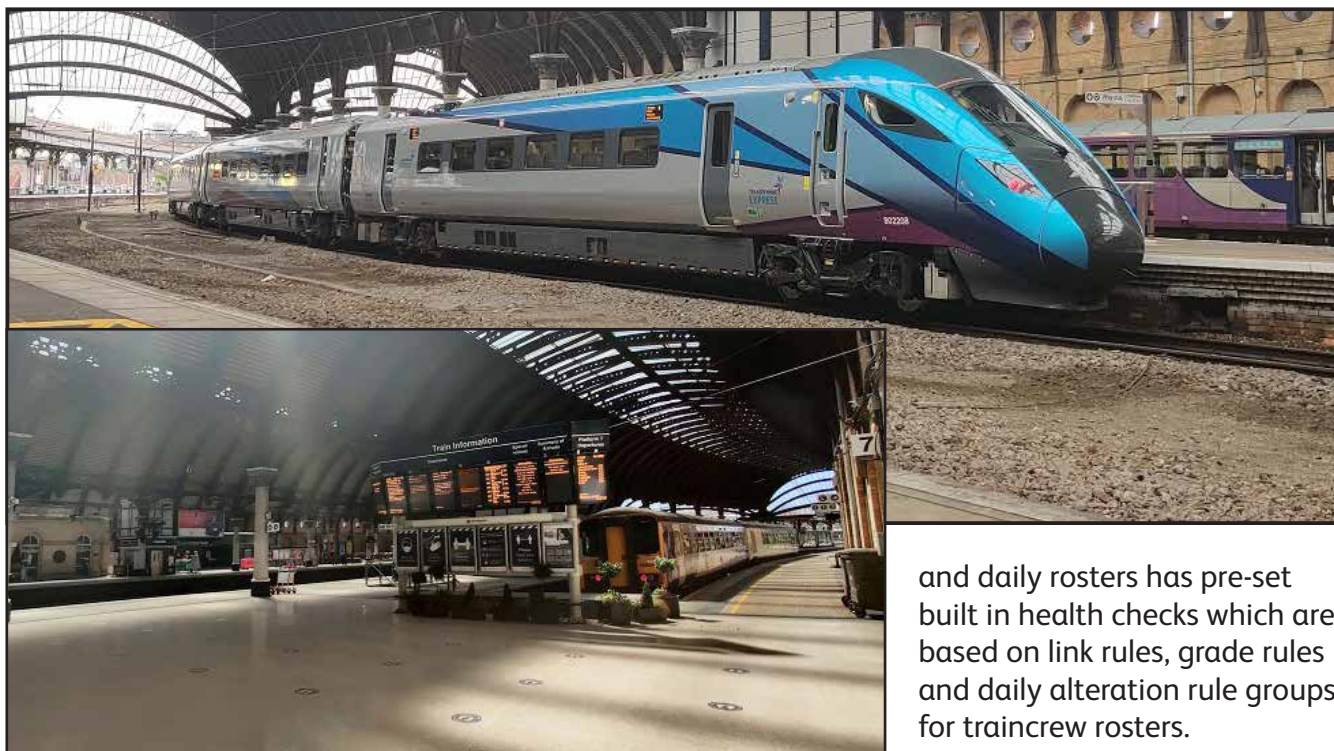
Prove your sense of direction by getting from A to B in the fastest time.



Answers to riddles on page 12:
1. Footsteps. 2. The future. 3. The word is starting! starting, string, sting, sin, in, I.
4. A needle. 5. A stamp. 6. Jason. 7. The letter 'm'. 8. A keyboard. 9. A deck of cards. 10. A sponge.

Fatigue concerns about new roster at York depot reviewed

Further changes being considered to reduce risks from fatigue



© TransPennine Express. York Station.

Concern

A reporter expressed concern that the new roster at York depot doesn't provide enough time to rest between ending a shift and starting another.

“...roster timings mean staff are struggling to have an acceptable work/life balance...”

This concern relates to rostering for the usual train service, not the Covid-19 rostering.

In some cases, shifts can finish into the early hours of Sunday (classed as a rest day) and so in practice, full rest days are not possible.

The reporter states that staff therefore feel fatigued and that roster timings mean staff

are struggling to have an acceptable work/life balance, in particular those on early shifts.

The reporter would like TransPennine Express (TPE) to:

- review the start/end times of the shifts so that there is a longer rest period and the hours are less unsociable
- consider reducing the hours of the very early or very late shifts, or redesigning the roster so that the start of early shifts could be incorporated into a night one.

TransPennine Express' response

TPE has an internal procedure for managing working hours.

The roster software that is used to compile the traincrew weekly

and daily rosters has pre-set built in health checks which are based on link rules, grade rules and daily alteration rule groups for traincrew rosters.

All shifts within the roster have been suitably risk assessed and meet procedural requirements.

“individual colleagues... preferred the very early shift to the night shifts.”

In relation to the start and end times of the shifts stated above, the alternative option would be to change the very early shifts to night shifts.

The traincrew management team at York held one-to-one meetings with individual colleagues at York depot, and found that overall they preferred the current very early shift to the night shifts.

However, as a result of this report we are currently liaising with the service planning and roster department to establish if further reductions in fatigue risks are feasible.

Do you have any concerns about health, safety or wellbeing?

Have you tried internal reporting channels, or don't feel that you can?

*Please contact us via our hotline, webform or textphone. We can still receive freepost reports but there may be some delay in us accessing our post.

Any information you provide will be treated as confidential.

We ask you to provide your name and contact details so we can get in touch to discuss your concerns. Once your report is processed, your report form will be destroyed.

Name:

Job title:

Employer:

Phone:

Mobile:

Describe your concern:

Convenient time to call:

What happens next?

- We will contact you to discuss your health and safety concerns
- We will write a report on your behalf
- We remove any information that might identify you
- We send the report to the company for a response
- Once we receive the response we will then provide you with a copy

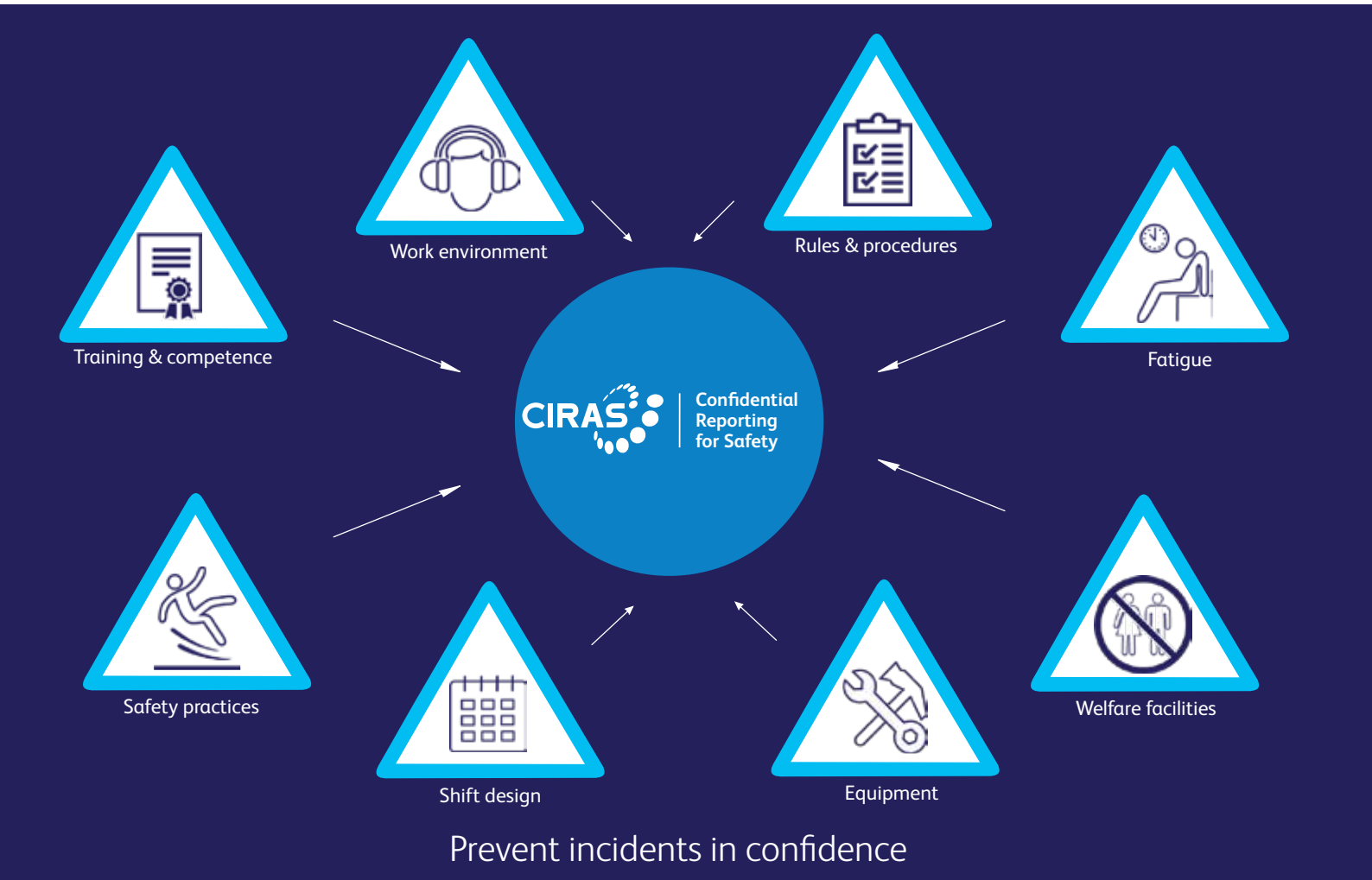


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