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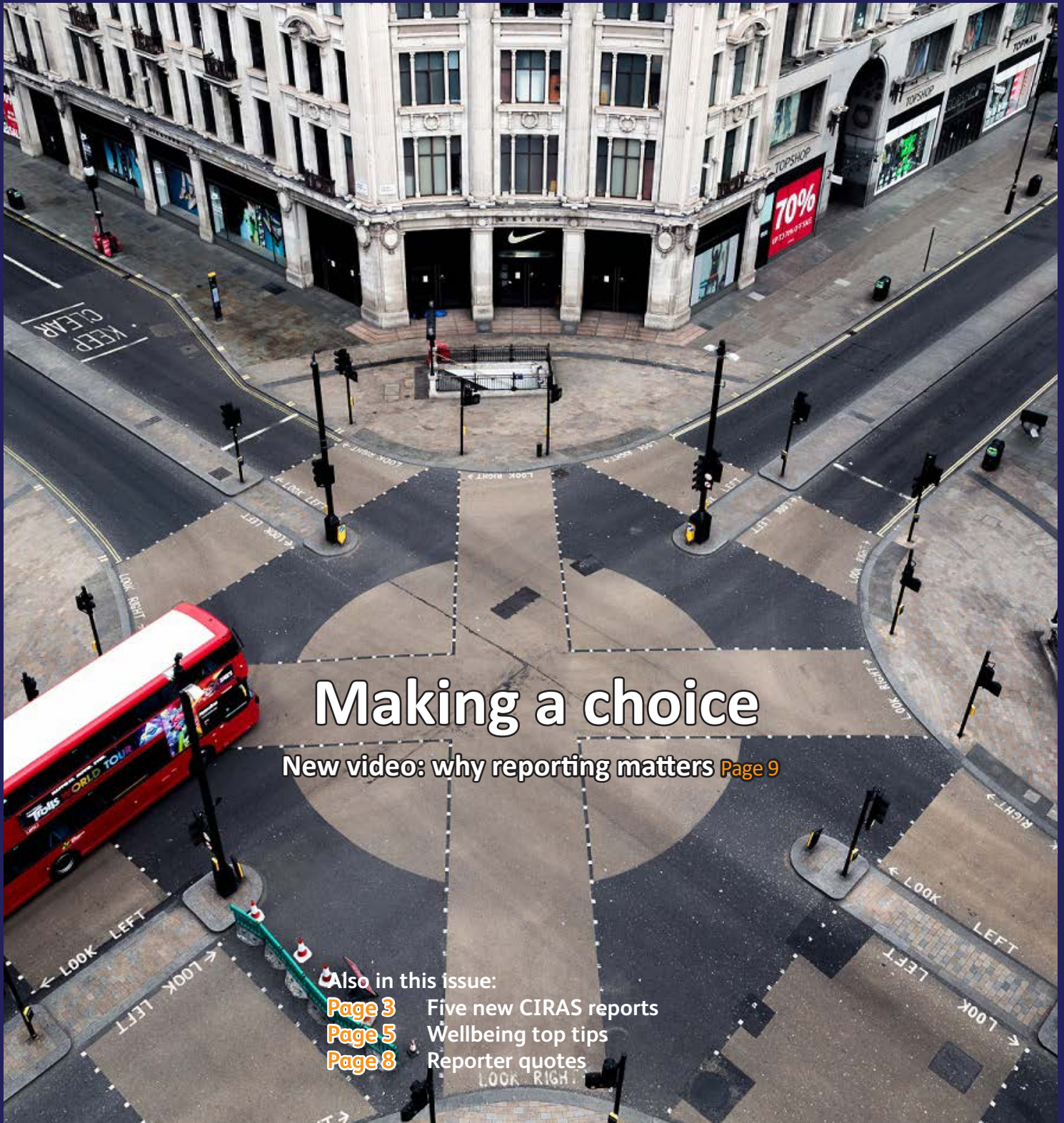
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Frontline *Matters*

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Making a choice

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Speaking up for health, wellbeing and safety

Editor's note

Welcome to the first Frontline Matters of 2021. We hope the new year sees you safe and well.

It is 20 years since the Great Heck train crash on 28 February 2001, near Selby in North Yorkshire, when a passenger train was derailed into the path of a freight train. Ten people died, including both train drivers, and 82 were seriously injured. It is the worst UK rail disaster of the 21st century.

The root cause of the crash was fatigue. When its driver fell asleep at the wheel, a Land Rover fell on to the East Coast mainline from the motorway.

Since 2001 there have been big improvements in railway safety in the UK. But sadly, transport workers still lose their lives at work. Health and safety is as important as ever – there's no room to be complacent.

So, on the anniversary of Great Heck, maybe it's worth pausing and reflecting on the risks that can be involved with working in transport and infrastructure, and how serious the impact of a single incident can be.

If you work in a company with a good safety culture, that can make all the difference – by having the right measures in place to prevent incidents in the first place and by learning from them when they happen.

But what matters most is that those working in the industry – that's you – speak up when you see something that's not safe.

What might seem a small issue could lead to a chain reaction of events if unquestioned or unresolved. But you can take action by speaking up. This is the focus of our new video – see page nine.

In this issue we feature five new CIRAS reports, looking at issues such as trespass, anti-social behaviour, competencies, and signalling communications.

It's also been just over a year since a group of transport and infrastructure companies decided to set up A.D.V.I.C.E. to pool their resources and expertise and create useful, credible wellbeing briefings. Pages 5 and 6 share highlights from the briefings.

Remember that you can follow us on Twitter @CIRAS_UK and on LinkedIn to stay in touch between issues of Frontline Matters, including extra case studies, blogs and to find out about our webinars.

The CIRAS team

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Trackworker competency reviewed

Monitoring of certifications and the resourcing process highlighted in response

Concern

A reporter believed trackworkers at four Vital Human Resources sites didn't have adequate competencies to carry out manual tasks or operate machines, such as controlling cranes.

The reporter said operatives had been incorrectly assigned, and that competencies were not adequately monitored when assigning shifts. They felt that some operatives didn't have valid PTS (personal track safety) training and that track inductions were not happening.

They asked Vital Human Resources Ltd to:

- ensure operatives at these sites have the relevant competencies
- investigate to ensure all competencies and PTS are valid.

Morson/Vital Human Resources' response

All operatives working on the railway infrastructure have the relevant PTS certification and track inductions where required. The resourcing teams try to ensure a mix of small tools certifications within the assigned teams.

Sometimes a client does not specify the full requirements for the work but asks for a Controller of Site Safety (COSS) and six 'trackworkers'. We encourage clients to order 'skilled trackworkers' if needed, as they hold more track tools and equipment competencies,



© Vital Human Resources/Morson Group. A PTS training course taking place pre-Covid-19.

and to specify the tasks and equipment to be used so that we can match qualified people to the task.

We gathered details of operatives who had visited each site over three months. Only one of these sites had Vital crane controllers: seven over two weekends, all with the correct and current competencies.

“ We continue visiting these sites and checking Sentinel cards.

The others had operatives from COSS to trackworkers, level crossing attendants, track chargemen and an engineering supervisor, all with correct competencies.

During a full PTS training course, operatives gain competence from being trained to use five track tools, but these are not specified. Other small tools competency sits outside the Sentinel scheme and relies on people carrying certification

from an employer outlining which tools they have been trained on.

Operatives are issued with a card proving they have the competence to operate small tools. The client's on-site representative should inspect this before tasking an operative to use equipment for a small tool duty. This prevents anyone who is not deemed competent undertaking a task they should not be doing.

We continue visiting these sites and checking Sentinel cards. We have now held toolbox talks about always carrying valid certification on site.

Longer term, we recommend that the Sentinel scheme includes small tools and other equipment competencies currently excluded. Being able to access an individual's skill set in one location would mean their competencies could be confirmed easily and accurately, which would make for a safer work site.

Buses checked after rainwater leaks into drivers' cabs

Concern raised that the water could distract drivers and cause a road accident



© Stagecoach Bus Western

Concern

A reporter said that rain had been leaking into the driver's cab of several Scania buses at Kilmarnock depot, making the dashboard and steering wheel wet. They said that it was worse in heavy rain.

The reporter was concerned that the rainwater could distract drivers, make the steering wheel slippery or get into the driver's eyes, which they believe could cause a road traffic accident.

They asked Stagecoach Bus Western to identify all buses experiencing these leaks and fix them.

Stagecoach Bus Western's response

This issue seems to be a specific vehicle model issue, which we have experienced in our other operating companies. We will

now carry out a full check on each of the affected vehicles to determine why water is getting in and address the problem.

We will check defect cards in order to identify the worst affected vehicles and prioritise these first, but our aim is to work through the whole affected fleet during the 28-day maintenance process.

When a bus is in the depot for its periodic inspection, it will undergo a thorough check of the window and panel sealing around the affected area. Each vehicle will be checked on a case-by-case basis, as it is not necessarily the same issue affecting all vehicles.

Each vehicle will be inspected visually to determine where water is getting in, possibly involving diagnostic tools and equipment such as a smoke-pro machine, used to identify leaks in various operating systems.

The short-term solution will be to pack out the area where water is getting in with an absorbent to soak up any fluid and prevent a leak into the cab until we attend to the vehicle properly and resolve the issue permanently.

Long-term steps will be:

- to remove all windows around the affected area and reseal them correctly, and reposition window gaskets if required
- to inspect all panelling sealing and security, and reseal if necessary
- to fill any noticeable holes and cracks caused by damage or wear and tear that could allow water through
- to replace any missing tree guards.

We will then put the bus through the bus wash to see if the repairs are successful.

Little gems

Take inspiration from these words shared by A.D.V.I.C.E members in 2020

A.D.V.I.C.E. was set up to share wellbeing information. Its members are CIRAS, Amey, Colas Rail UK, Dyer & Butler, Ganymede Solutions, McGinley Support Services, Midland Metro Alliance, Network Rail, Redstone Rail, Reflex Vehicle Hire, RSS Infrastructure, Transport for Wales, Van-Elle and Vital Human Resources.

Mental health

If 24-hour news and social media updates are making you worried, limit the time you spend watching, reading or listening to pandemic coverage to once or twice a day, or less. Only get information from a credible source you can trust – such as Gov.uk or Nhs.uk – and fact-check information from newsfeeds, social media or other people.

Read more at [ciras.org.uk/articles/2020/advice-topic-mental-health-covid-19](https://www.ciras.org.uk/articles/2020/advice-topic-mental-health-covid-19)

Debt

You don't need to struggle on alone with debt worries. There are many ways to clear debts. What is best for you depends on your circumstances. A free debt adviser can help you make the right decisions. Priority debts, such as rent, council tax and utility charges, can cause particularly serious problems if you don't do anything about them, so if you are in too much debt deal with priority debts first.

Find a full list of these and more at www.ciras.org.uk/articles/2020/help-with-debt



Domestic abuse

Anyone forced to change their behaviour because they are frightened of their partner or ex-partner's reaction is experiencing abuse. If you're worried a friend is being abused, let them know you've noticed something is wrong. They might not be ready to talk but try to find quiet times when they can talk if they choose to.

Read more at [ciras.org.uk/articles/2020/advice-topic-domestic-abuse](https://www.ciras.org.uk/articles/2020/advice-topic-domestic-abuse)

Gambling

If you think you are spending too much time or money gambling, online or in a gambling premises, you can ask to be self-excluded. This is when you ask the gambling company to stop you gambling with them for a set time, lasting at least six months.

It is up to you to stick to a self-exclusion agreement, but the company should make reasonable efforts to stop you. When you make this agreement, the company must close your account and return any money in it.

Read more at ciras.org.uk/articles/2020/advice-topic-gambling

Relationships

It is important to be mindful of how we speak to others. No matter how someone looks or acts, you truly never know what's happening in their lives.

Use these top tips for nurturing healthy relationships:

- **Give time** – Put more time aside to connect with friends and family.
- **Be present** – Pay attention to the people in your life. Try not to be distracted by your phone, work or other interests.
- **Listen** – Really listen to what others are saying. Try to understand it and focus on their needs in that moment.
- **Let yourself be listened to** – Honestly share how you are feeling. Allow yourself to be heard and supported by others.
- **Recognise unhealthy relationships** – Harmful relationships can make us unhappy. Recognising this can help us to move forward and find solutions.

Read more at ganymedesolutions.co.uk/blog/2020/12/advice-topic-8-relationships



Alcohol

To keep health risks from alcohol low, the UK Chief Medical Officer's guidelines for men and women say it is safest not to drink more than 14 units a week on a regular basis. If you regularly drink as much as 14 units per week, it's best to spread your drinking evenly over three or more days. If you want to cut down the amount you drink, a good way to achieve this is to have several drink-free days each week.

It takes about one hour for each unit of alcohol to leave our bloodstream, plus an extra hour for the first drink. So, if you have three units of alcohol it takes at least four hours before the alcohol has left your bloodstream.

More information and strategies for drinking less at tracksafetyalliance.co.uk/latest-news/advice-topic-4-alcohol-covid19/bp141

Initiatives help to prevent anti-social behaviour

Disruptive behaviour at stations and on trains targeted in broad approach

Concern

Staff at stations between Woodhall and Gourock/Wemyss Bay are feeling emotionally stressed because of anti-social behaviour (ASB), said a reporter.

They described groups of young adults being threatening towards staff, with increasing severity.

The reporter added that the behaviour – including running alongside trains and pretending to push one another off platforms – was distracting train drivers.

They were also aware of a recent increase in passenger assaults, and train equipment including fire extinguishers and emergency exit handles being damaged.

The reporter was concerned that staff had no means of protecting themselves, and that there was a lack of supervision and crowd control.

Concerned at the impact on staff and passenger safety, they asked Abellio ScotRail to:

- liaise with the British Transport Police (BTP) to implement measures to stop disruptive behaviour
- consider temporary security for worst-affected stations
- review the alcohol policy
- consider letting train drivers to skip stations if they felt that anti-social groups could put others at risk.



Wemyss Bay, Scotland

Abellio ScotRail's response

ScotRail has continued to engage with staff, local authorities, BTP and Police Scotland on the line or route mentioned and continues to look for additional mitigations and actions to drive forward a positive reduction in ASB incidents.

“ This is being backed up with support from representatives from across the business... and stakeholders... ”

Our security and emergency planning manager supports the local station management teams in carrying out ASB initiatives together with BTP, Police Scotland and Inverclyde warden services. Our trade

union colleagues have assisted in supporting colleagues when there has been an increase in ASB incidents, participating in planned initiatives to support colleagues on this line of route.

“ We have provided and made available personal body cameras at key locations... ”

Station managers and BTP officers visit the stations in the area at least twice per week. The local area manager and sergeant from BTP liaise regularly about ASB, and review station logs, control logs and CCTV images to assist in identifying developing trends and the development of mitigations, actions and support exercising.

We have provided and made available personal body

cameras at key locations on this line of route including Port Glasgow, Gourrock and Wemyss Bay.

These have proved to be a useful deterrent in the battle against ASB and we'll continue to promote the advantages of using these to staff.

“ We are continually reviewing the effectiveness of our measures and mitigations.

No staff physical assaults have been reported at these stations in the last three years, but there have been reports of verbal abuse and ASB.

We are continually reviewing the effectiveness of our measures and mitigations.

A new ASB procedure has been shared with staff in this area to promote supervision and crowd control at stations. Staff are advised to report large groups to our CCTV control room. This supplements procedures such as texting and phoning the BTP.

Members of the public were dealt with under Railway Byelaws for Public Order offences in 2018, 2019 and 2020 and we will continue to pursue offenders in this way.

“ Skipping stops on a route would import further risks to our passengers, staff and contractors...

From 16 November 2020 we have extended our existing

alcohol ban on trains, as part of additional measures under Covid-19 arrangements to support the requirement of wearing face coverings on trains and in stations and to assist in reducing ASB where alcohol may be a contributory factor.

This is being backed up with support from representatives from across the business including staff, managers, trade union colleagues and stakeholders (BTP, Transport Scotland).

Skipping stops on a route would import further risks to our passengers, staff and contractors and therefore we cannot currently consider this as an option to combat ASB issues.

Quote me on that

Here's some of the feedback you shared with us in the past year after you've heard what action a company has taken in response to your concern. We're happy to help.

“ It's a good service for raising stuff that you don't want to talk about.

“ They're keeping on it and I know it will be completed soon.

“ Things in the depot have begun to change. Better and stricter social distancing measures have been put in place.

“ I was very happy with how you guys dealt with the concern and presented the report to the company.

“ I couldn't have asked for anything more. We have been waiting for ages. Can't thank CIRAS enough for sorting this out so quick.

Thank you – really appreciate it.

Anti-trespass actions at bridge

Fencing updates, patrols and community engagement aim to prevent trespass

Concern

Trespassers were regularly accessing the trackside abutment of a bridge in Jordanhill, Glasgow, said a reporter, with the bridge a target of graffiti for years. The reporter suspected it was accessed through the palisade fence or via the station platform. Considering the dangers of trespassing on the railway, they asked Network Rail to review trespass prevention measures at this location and ensure that members of the public cannot access the running line.

Network Rail's response

Our Performance Improvement team carried out a full review of the trackside bridge area with the British Transport Police in response to this report. We have fixed the boundary fencing, and the British Transport Police will increase their patrols.

We have recommended that the local Off-Track team fit anti-climb devices to the access gates closest to the graffiti.

We have also submitted a request for the bottom of the

fence to be extended to block an area of the ground that appears to be dug out, and to install a fence beneath the billboard to block access.

Longer term, we will be working with the local community and speaking with graffiti artists to build relationships to prevent graffiti in this area. We will encourage the community to keep graffiti to pre-determined, safe locations.

Our anti-trespass campaign, You vs Train (youvstrain.co.uk), is ongoing through various media channels, mainly social media and the radio.

New video

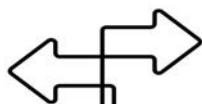
Why speaking up matters

When you see something that isn't safe, you have a choice: you can do something, or you can do nothing.

Our new video looks at why the choice you make matters, whether you speak up or not. It also shows you different ways to get your voice heard.



Different steps of the CIRAS process



- Do something
- Do nothing

Doing nothing is a choice.

WATCH THE VIDEO

Go to youtube.com/watch?v=7ICwPvOdcno or search on YouTube for 'CIRAS Why speaking up matters'

Trial aims to resolve possession communication issues

Concern that lack of consistency could cause misunderstandings between signallers and PICOPs and could even lead to a fatality

Concern

A reporter raised a concern about how the Person in Charge of Possession (PICOP) communicates with signallers in signal boxes.

According to the reporter, T3 possessions are not being carried out as per the Rule Book (module T3, sections 2.1 and 2.3), as PICOPs are using an older method of work that required them to contact all signal boxes along the line about where the blocking points are.

The reporter said this method of work contradicts the Rule Book, which states that PICOPs will contact the signaller who controls the signal leading to the section of line that is to be taken under possession. Once this contact has been made, it is this signaller's responsibility to contact the other signal boxes and establish which other signals need to be put at danger along the line thus granting the possession. Therefore, the PICOP does not need to contact all signallers.

The reporter expressed concern that PICOPs are arranging T3 possessions both the historic way and as per the Rule Book, which could cause misunderstandings between signallers and the PICOPs and potentially result in a fatality. For this reason, the reporter asked Network Rail to ensure



Totley Tunnel East signal box

that all PICOPs are following the Rule Book when arranging a T3 possession.

Network Rail's response

Similar to the reporter's concerns, the Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB) published a report into a trackworker near miss at Camden Junction South in London on February 2017.

The report, which is on the RAIB website, included a recommendation:

'Review the content, timing and structure of verbal communications between the PICOP and signallers at different workstations, taking into account the need for all parties to be fully aware of the relevant information at the appropriate time (including, for example whether a PICOP needs to contact all signallers

affected by the possession, and what level of detail should be included in the various conversations between signaller and PICOP).'

To address this, Network Rail is proposing a trial to the relevant stakeholders (custodians of the Rule Book) of an alternative wording to define who takes the lead responsibility when arranging a possession. North West & Central (NW&C) region has volunteered to be part of the trial, planned for February 2021 Chinley to Totley then extending every two weeks.

In the interim, NW&C signalling staff will be sent a reminder of the current instructions within Rule Book module T3, through an operational alert process.

The actions in this report have been shared with the NW&C planning team to share with internal functions and third-party suppliers of PICOPs.

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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