

Frontline *Matters*

ISSUE 4

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Editor's note

Welcome to Frontline Matters!

We seem to have been catapulted into a much darker, colder climate in the last few weeks.

This has an impact on our wellbeing, as well as affecting our safety in lots of different ways.

'Leaves on the line' is understandably a popular topic at the moment, but there are other areas of risk we need to focus on too.

One overlooked area is driving, which gets that much more challenging in these conditions.

We could all improve our driving skills - that's why we have chosen to make it our lead article this time round.

We need to go far beyond the winter checks on our vehicles and focus on how we can improve levels of alertness and reduce the safety risks.

Mental health continues to feature in this edition with a short quiz on page 9, and then some accompanying commentary on page 12.

It's heartening to see the issue discussed in the media, but I'm not entirely convinced this always translates into dialogue in the workplace - there's a long way to go still.

To underline the point, one of our reports illustrates the challenges in ensuring that everyone gets the support they need.

Remember, the most isolated individuals are probably the ones least likely to talk about their struggles.

Organisations are beginning to make the special effort required to engage on this front.

If you feel your organisation could do better in this respect, we are at the



Chris Langer
Communications & Scheme
Intelligence Manager

other end of the phone and ready to listen.

We're not the Samaritans, but we can certainly reflect back to organisations possible areas for improvement.

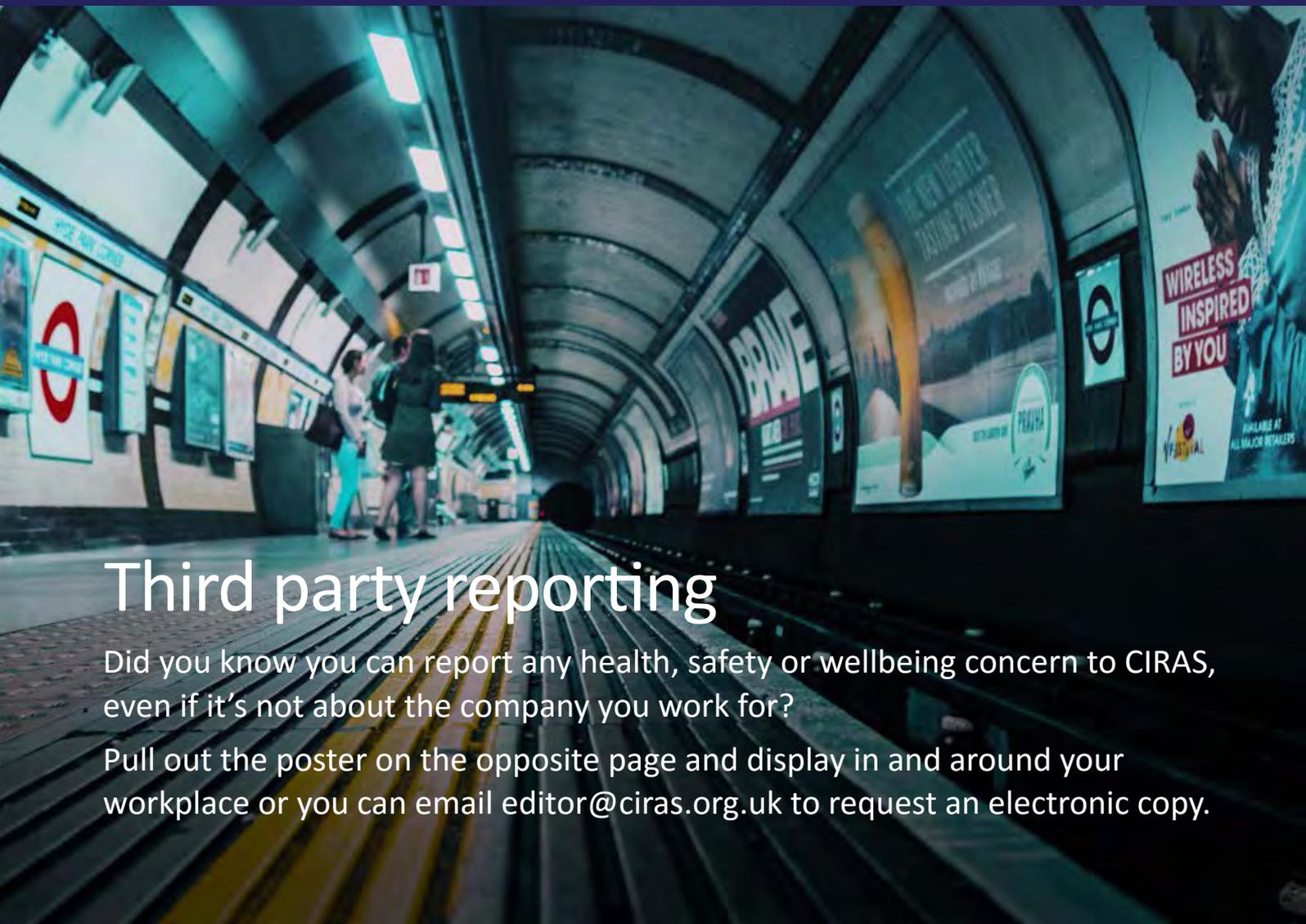
Keep reporting your concerns because it makes a real difference!

If you have any thoughts, comments or suggestions, please email: editor@ciras.org.uk

Third party reporting

Did you know you can report any health, safety or wellbeing concern to CIRAS, even if it's not about the company you work for?

Pull out the poster on the opposite page and display in and around your workplace or you can email editor@ciras.org.uk to request an electronic copy.



ciras

CONFIDENTIAL REPORTING FOR SAFETY

I have some health and safety concerns I need to raise, I'm not sure who to report to.

It's not about my employer but it could still be a danger to others...

We may be able to help you. A third of CIRAS reports are not about the person's company, but a different one.



Here are some of the reporting themes we take:



Work environment



Fatigue



Equipment



Safety practices



Rules & procedures



Welfare facilities



Shift design



Training & competence

Report hotline:
0800 4 101 101

Report textline:
07507 285 887

Freepost: **CIRAS**
www.ciras.org.uk

How good is your driving?

We may all like to think we're better drivers than the average, but how mindful are we of the safety risks on the road?

As the days get shorter and the daylight falters, there are seasonal hazards to be aware of for driving during autumn and winter months.

The glare from the sun can impact on our ability to observe the road ahead – summer may be a distant memory, but you may still need your sunglasses.

“ Driving for work is one of the most dangerous activities you can undertake.

Our vision of the road ahead may also be improved by ensuring windscreens are clean.

Be particularly aware of the hazy film that can build up, almost gradually, on the inside of the glass.

Old wiper blades, too, can affect our ability to observe hazards if they're worn or damaged.

More dangerous than a coalmine

Why do we need to be mindful of the risks on the roads?

Driving for work is one of the most dangerous activities you can undertake.

In fact, you are more likely to be killed driving for business than if you were employed as a coal miner or deep-sea diver.

In 2016, there were 1792 deaths on UK roads - 42 per cent of these involved people driving for work, business, or commuting to or from work.

In terms of road deaths per million, we are still one of the safest places in the European Union to drive, with 28 deaths per million.

Norway and Switzerland are statistically the safest, with a slightly lower figure of 26 deaths per million.

There is always room for improvement, and it involves more than the practical vehicle checks we can do to ensure our health and safety on the roads.



Organisations can work together with their employees to mitigate all the known risks.

Fatigue, stress and ill-health

Reducing the risk of fatigue, stress and work-related ill health on the roads is important if we wish to improve.

According to research, for example, fatigue contributes to around 20 per cent of accidents on major European roads.

On long, monotonous stretches of roads, such as motorways, or where the over familiarity of well-travelled routes may be a factor, we particularly need to avoid succumbing to fatigue.

“ ...we are still one of the safest places in the European Union to drive...

Staggeringly, more than 50 per cent of long-distance drivers have admitted to falling asleep at the wheel.

It is estimated that around 5 per cent of the population may be suffering from undiagnosed sleep apnoea, a condition that can trigger severe daytime sleepiness.

Is your organisation helping raise awareness of the risks?

Promoting wellbeing for safer driving

We mustn't overlook emotional wellbeing either.

If we want to prevent accidents, ensuring the wellbeing of drivers is critical.

Stress has been linked with risk taking on the roads – 71 per cent of drivers admit to losing their concentration after getting annoyed.

“ ...fatigue contributes to around 20 per cent of accidents on major European roads.

CIRAS have already run a full eight-week mindfulness training course with Abellio buses with the aim of reducing stress behind the wheel.

You can read the article on: www.ciras.org.uk/articles/2018/mindfulness-based-stress-reduction-for-safety-critical-workers.

Every single driver who participated on the course reported that they were driving more safely as a result.

If we can learn to look after ourselves better, we can remain calm and focused whilst driving.



Pay more attention : Driving tips



Take longer to look

It's a very common cause of road accidents, but failing to look properly is a relatively easy fix.

Taking an extra moment to have a proper look before pulling out, changing lanes or opening your car door whilst stationary, could prevent many accidents.

Try the 'Dutch Reach': Open the car door with the hand furthest from the handle so you turn your head to look behind you.

This is a tip that is easy to implement and turn into a habit.



Keep your energy levels up

There's a clear relationship between the food and drink you consume and your energy levels.

Staying hydrated, eating nutritious food and sticking to a balanced diet, can keep your mind focused on the road, whilst preventing those dangerous lapses in concentration.

Look around the staff canteen – what is on offer?

Is it going to boost your energy levels or leave you feeling sluggish?



Anticipate other road users

The highway code says: "Wait until there is a safe gap between you and any oncoming vehicle".

To do this, you need to judge the path and speed of other vehicles.

Failing in this respect causes around a fifth of all UK road accidents.

Many accidents occur when a gap is misjudged when merging onto a motorway, pulling onto a roundabout or thinking that another road user will accommodate your risky manoeuvre.



Don't get distracted

Distractions inside, as well as outside the car can creep up and threaten to use your mental head space.

Using your mobile phone (even if it's hands free) is known to be a factor in many accidents.

Reading or tapping out texts, can be lethal.

Resist the urge to respond to an incoming message - it's just not worth the risk.

Bring your mind back to the road instead of attempting to multi-task.

On-site safety addressed in Birmingham City Centre

Staff briefings and more robust traffic management helps to reduce risk

Concern

In early 2018, a reporter raised concern about the work the Midland Metro Alliance is undertaking whilst extending the tram system in Birmingham city centre.

According to the reporter, there were multiple safety breaches in the work procedures carried out.

For example, the reporter reported employees not wearing the correct Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

“...the safety breaches had been going on for two months.

The reporter also said there was no banksman present for the traffic management process.

The reporter also stated, on many occasions, the public were seen crossing a site, putting themselves at risk of being hit by delivery vehicles.

The reporter said there was restricted access for wheel chair users.

The reporter also said that the safety breaches had been going on for two months.

It is believed that they were happening because of the lack of supervision on site.

The reporter asked if the Midland Metro Alliance could:

- Investigate the current procedures followed in the city centre?
- Coordinate all activities mentioned above in a safe manner?

Midland Metro Alliance's response

We would like to thank the reporter for bringing this to our attention. We already have robust health and safety processes and procedures in place across all our Midland Metro Alliance sites, as do our partners and supply



chain, but nevertheless we took this as an opportunity to undertake a full review of the operational procedures around the site access points within the city centre.

Additional signage and traffic management systems were put in place.

All staff were re-briefed regarding the vehicle movements in and out of the sites, as well as received a safety briefing and toolbox talk regarding the wearing of the correct PPE, in compliance with the alliance, partner companies and industry standards.

“Additional signage and traffic management systems were put in place.

Site observations relating to addressing the reporter's initial concern were observed over a one-week period to understand the pedestrian flows and access constraints.

Meetings with other developers within the city centre were also held in order to improve the signage and traffic management system in place around them all.

Actions taken:

- All site and management staff briefed on the reporter's concern

- Daily shift briefings on site access points and machine and plant movements
- Additional traffic management staff placed at site access points to further assist with deliveries and construction traffic movements
- Traffic management escort team increased and now in place to escort/control movements in and out, oversized or disruptive loads to and from site
- Disabled access routes reviewed and further temporary ramps installed where applicable
- All Midland Metro Alliance staff re-briefed about the full PPE standard required.

Additional measures:

- Additional briefings carried out to supplement existing site communications
- Increased inspections and monitoring
- Additional supervision and works manager appointed to oversee works as the site expands
- Increased monitoring and interface meetings with all those involved in the area to ensure successful collaboration and cooperation.

Seagull infestation at Kirkdale Depot

Site visit and staff briefings after CIRAS report

Concern

A reporter raised a concern regarding a seagull infestation at Kirkdale Depot, which was causing an unpleasant environment for staff.

According to the reporter, the seagulls were nesting on top of the old cleaning shed at the depot.

“...the reporter expressed concern about the exposure to seagull droppings...”

As there was no alternative walking route, staff were required to walk past the shed multiple times during a shift.

The reporter observed the seagulls attacking staff – recently, this had got worse as they were protecting chicks.

Additionally, the reporter expressed concern about the exposure to seagull droppings, which were present over a large portion of the depot.

The reporter was concerned that staff could potentially get injured by a seagull, or could catch a related disease.

The reporter asked if BAM could:

- Remove the seagulls?
- Clean the area to ensure there were no seagull droppings present?

BAM Nuttall's response

We were made aware of the issues earlier this year and contacted the relevant specialists.

Both BAM's Environmental team and the external specialists, agreed that it would be unlawful to move the nests.

This 'problem' is one that is faced by seaside towns throughout the country, peaking in the nesting season and when the birds are trying to protect their young.

It can be minimised by people staying away from areas with nests where



possible, not having food on display, cleaning guano off roads, paths and cars when found, and wearing appropriate (Personal Protective Equipment) PPE in the areas of concern.

Personnel have been briefed on the issues and made aware of the controls being implemented.

“A site visit was carried out and a review of the controls in place were undertaken.”

All personnel entering site, already wear standard PPE, gloves, glasses and hardhats, to prevent contact with the guano.

They were also reminded of the need for hand washing following return from site and/or contact with contaminated surfaces and control of food waste, particularly from canteens.

BAM have been and continue to use a road sweeper three times a week, to clean the roads and access paths.

This measure removes the seagull droppings at the main site access areas.

The consensus from the specialists is that the seagulls do not attack, but try to scare people away from their chicks at certain times during the breeding cycle.

The other issue is droppings on vehicles. Though this could be dealt with by continual jet washing or building a cover over the parked cars, it would be impractical to do so and cost ineffective.

An additional challenge is that all wild birds, their nests, eggs and chicks are protected by law (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981).

Even an empty unoccupied nest may not be removed within the breeding season.

In practice, this means that any measures to proof buildings or clear old nests at the end of the season must be completed in winter.

In very particular circumstances, property owners can have nests and eggs removed by a specialist contractor, under the terms of a Natural England General License.

Actions taken

- A site visit was carried out and a review of the controls in place was undertaken
- The background around seagulls and preventative measures put in place was re-briefed to all operatives on site
- The risk of seagulls will now be considered earlier on in the planning phase for future projects.

Slip, trip, fall hazard addressed at West Marina Depot

Adjustments made to boards following report



© Southeastern

Concern

A reporter raised a concern regarding the shoe gear guard boards that were installed at West Marina Depot.

According to the reporter, these new shoe gear guard boards were too high, obstructing the bottom step of the train when getting out.

The reporter said that when you place your foot on the bottom step of the train, the guard board was behind the heel – this could cause a person to lose balance.

“ ...these new shoe gear guard boards were too high, obstructing the bottom step of the train...

Moreover, the reporter stated that often, the foot rested on top of the guard board, which was thin and wobbly, increasing the risk of slips, trips and falls.

When this issue previously occurred years ago, the guard boards were adjusted accordingly.

Some adjustment would be advisable this time round too.

The reporter’s perceived risk was that people trying to access or leave the train could slip, trip, or fall injuring themselves and asks Southeastern if they could:

- Carry out a risk assessment and share the results?
- Shorten the guard boards to the same height of the ones that were fitted previously?

Southeastern’s response

Southeastern welcomes the opportunity to respond to the concerns raised.

Following receipt of this report the shoe gear guard boards were measured and a section was found to be high.

The affected section has been trimmed down to match the rest of the guard boards in the depot and is no longer above the cab step level.



What can you do to prevent slips and trips?

Some general workplace advice from the Health & Safety Executive (HSE)

- If you have an accident or a near miss, make sure you report it to your employer promptly. They can use this information to prevent future accidents.
- If you see a spillage, clean it up or make arrangements for it to be cleaned.
- Report any damaged floors or mats.
- Play your part and keep the workplace tidy.

Adapted from HSE source.

Consider reporting to CIRAS if you need to.

Word from the frontline

A selection of comments from people who have made reports to CIRAS

"Thank you for taking the time to listen to and record my concerns."

"Everyone has been thankful, great work by CIRAS and my company for coming together to sort this out.
We are all happy."

"I was satisfied with the way CIRAS summarised my report and their efforts to get the best response from the company."

"Thanks for all the help and time given to my concern.
I will let my colleagues know about CIRAS and about the help you guys provide."

"I am happy with the promises made by the company as a result of the report.

I would like to thank CIRAS and I would most certainly use them again."

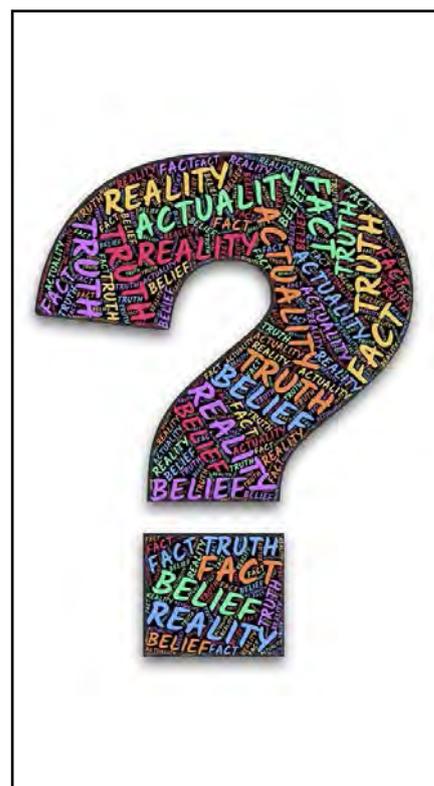
Mental health quiz - true or false?

Test your knowledge with these eight statements

Mental health is a very topical issue at the moment.

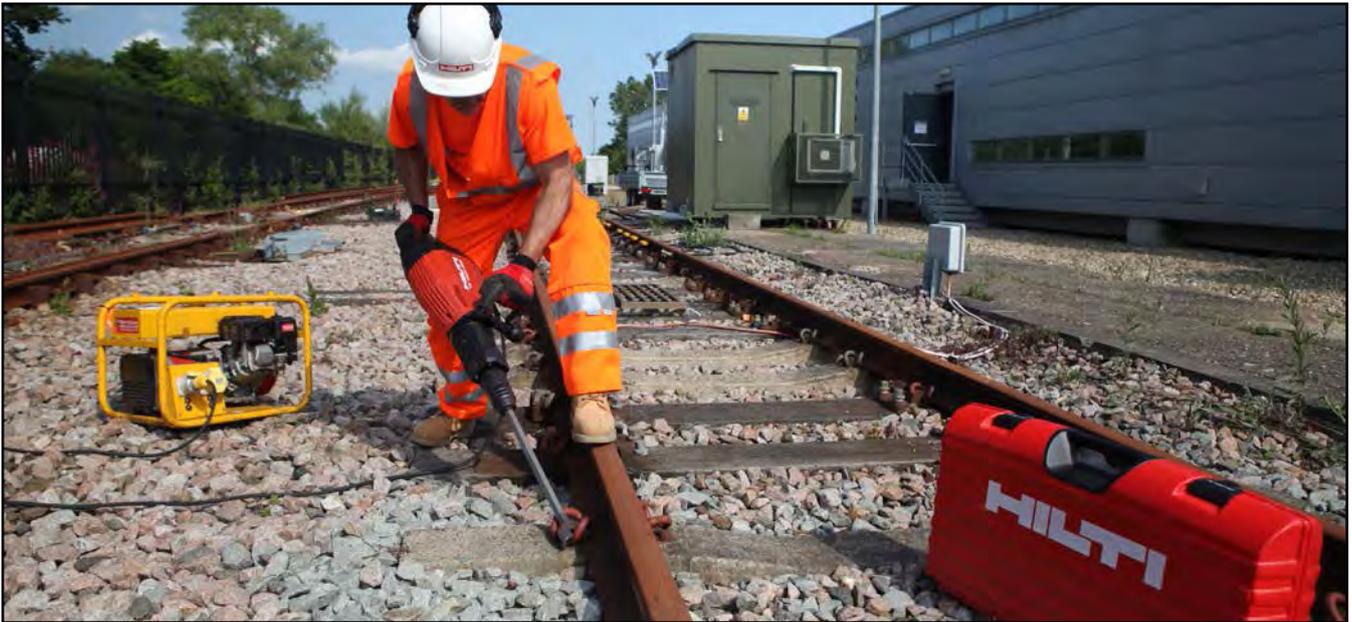
When you've completed the quiz, the answers can be found on page 12 with more information to help put it all into context.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1. One in eight people will suffer from mental health disorders in their lifetime.
True / False</p> | <p>5. The odds of being killed by a mentally ill person are 1 in 10 million.
True / False</p> |
| <p>2. Suicide is the most common cause of death for men between the ages of 20-49 in England and Wales.
True / False</p> | <p>6. 75 per cent of people with a diagnosable mental illness receive no treatment at all.
True / False</p> |
| <p>3. 50 per cent of mental ill health in England starts before the age of 18.
True / False</p> | <p>7. The total cost of mental ill health in England is estimated at £85 billion.
True / False</p> |
| <p>4. 15 per cent of the public believe people with a mental health issue are likely to be violent.
True / False</p> | <p>8. Women working full-time are twice as likely to have a mental health problem as full-time employed men.
True / False</p> |



Small plant: why maintenance is such a critical factor

Small plant plays a pivotal role in the maintenance and upgrading of infrastructure on the rail network, and a few simple steps can ensure that safety and productivity remains on the right tracks.



© Hilti.



Colin Burnikell, Hilti Strategic Key Account Manager - Rail

When you buy a car, you know that the purchase price is just the start of an ongoing sequence of regular payments for the privilege of ownership including tax, fuel, maintenance and repair.

These are all to keep the vehicle safe and operational for years to come.

Many other purchases, no matter what the initial cost, also commit the owner to ongoing financial expenditure – and tools are no exception.

The rail industry is known to invest in good equipment to ensure worker safety and maximise productivity against tight timescales.

That said, there are areas that can still be improved if businesses want to avoid work hitting the buffers.

Repair or replace

Power tool lifetimes vary from one to five years depending on the type of tool, frequency of use and the application.

Out in the field, tools tend to either be replaced when they break down, or they remain as part of the inventory and keep getting repaired because they are believed to still do the job intended.

“ The rail industry is known to invest in good equipment to ensure worker safety... ”

But is this really the most cost-and capital-effective way to manage a fleet of power tools?

Replacing tools every time they break down is a false economy – driven by selection of cheaper tools that don't last – and the fact that reactive

repairs and spare parts, when charged separately, are costly and time consuming to manage.

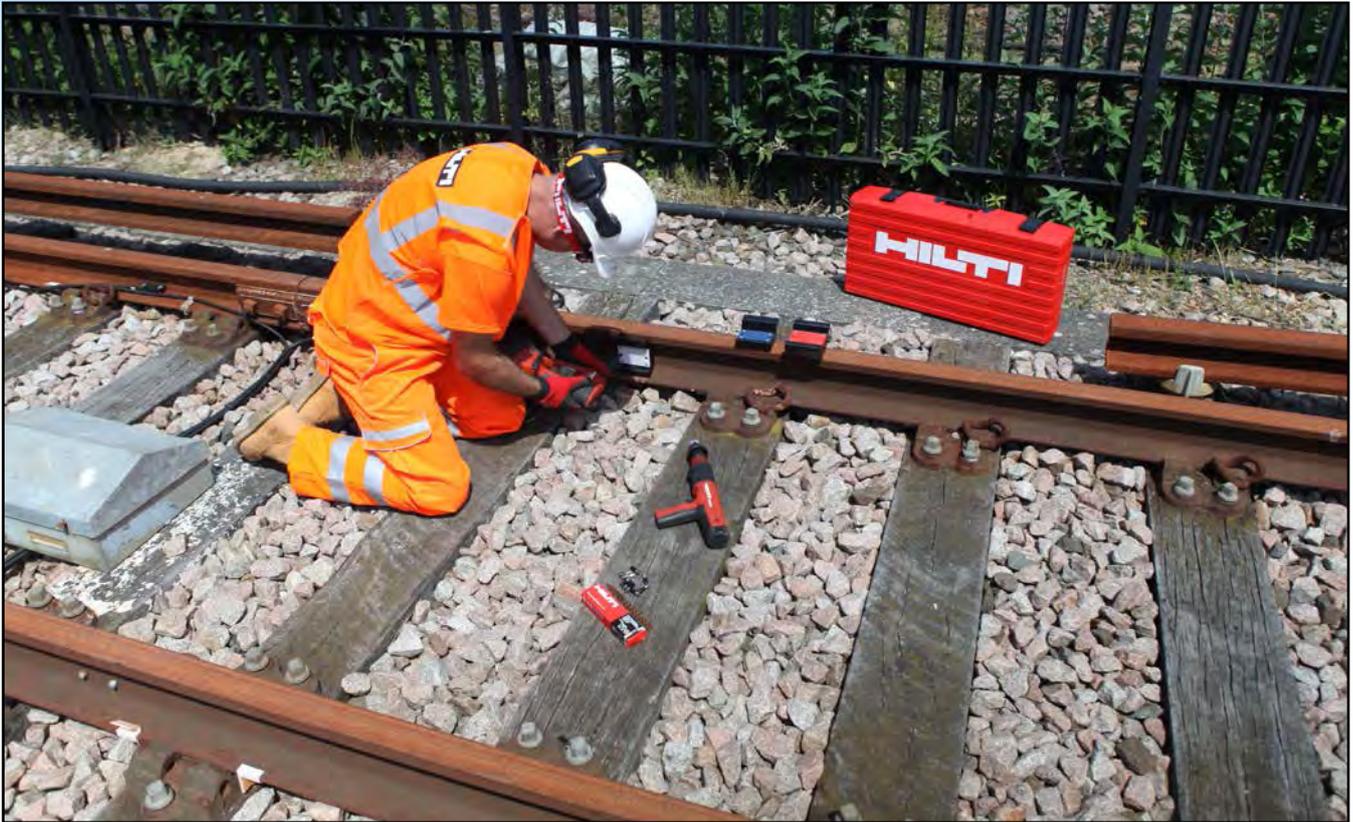
So, when it comes to discussing the issues associated with tool productivity and the costs of keeping a tool fleet at peak performance, one word stands out above many others – maintenance.

A day in the life of a tool

Tool operators know that when they collect their tools first thing in the morning – or the evening for those working nights – that a number of immediate checks can help ensure a full shift's work.

Here are six tips:

1. Check the chuck is free of dust and greased. A small amount of grease can be applied if necessary.
2. Check vents are clear and free of debris.
3. Check that grip points are clean and in good condition.
4. Check that the trigger mechanism and lock – if applicable – works correctly.



© Hilti.

5. If it's a corded tool, check the length and condition of the cable and plug.
6. If it's a cordless tool, check the correct battery is being used, the connection points are clean and undamaged and the battery is fully charged and fitted correctly.

At the end of the day, the tool should be visually inspected again, wiped down and cleaned to ensure it is ready for use next time.

Any issues should be reported immediately so the tool can be sent off for service or repair, knowing that a replacement can be sourced to minimise downtime.

On the right tracks

There are of course many other areas of small plant ownership that have to be considered – health and safety, battery technology and fleet optimisation to name but a few – but maintenance goes a long way to start down a safer and more profitable path.

We strongly believe addressing this issue will help to make the sector more profitable – making it a more sustainable business, securing and creating more jobs and generally improving the rail industry.



The Dos and Don'ts of Maintenance

The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) dedicates an entire section to machinery, plant and equipment and is very clear on what is and what isn't acceptable for maintenance*:

Do...

- ensure maintenance is carried out by a competent person (someone who has the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to carry out the work safely)
- maintain plant and equipment regularly – use the manufacturer's maintenance instructions as a guide, particularly if there are safety-critical features
- have a procedure that allows workers to report damaged or faulty equipment
- provide the proper tools for the maintenance person
- schedule maintenance to minimise the risk to other workers and the maintenance person wherever possible

Don't...

- ignore maintenance
- ignore reports of damaged or unsafe equipment
- use faulty or damaged equipment

* <http://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/machinery/plant.htm>

What the mental health quiz can reveal about attitudes

Fighting the stigma means becoming informed

How did you do on our quiz? Were there any gaps in your knowledge on a subject that rarely seems to be out of the headlines for long?

The World Health Organisation say that one in four of us will suffer from mental health disorders in their lifetime.

The exact origin of this figure is actually quite difficult to track down, but it does focus the mind on how prevalent the issue is.

“ The odds of being killed by a mentally ill person are as slim as being struck by lightning.

People you know well, at home or work, are likely to be sufferers.

Mental health is fast losing its stigma, but it is unfortunate that a significant proportion of people (15 per cent) still believe sufferers are likely to be violent.

The odds of being killed by a mentally ill person are as slim as being struck by lightning.

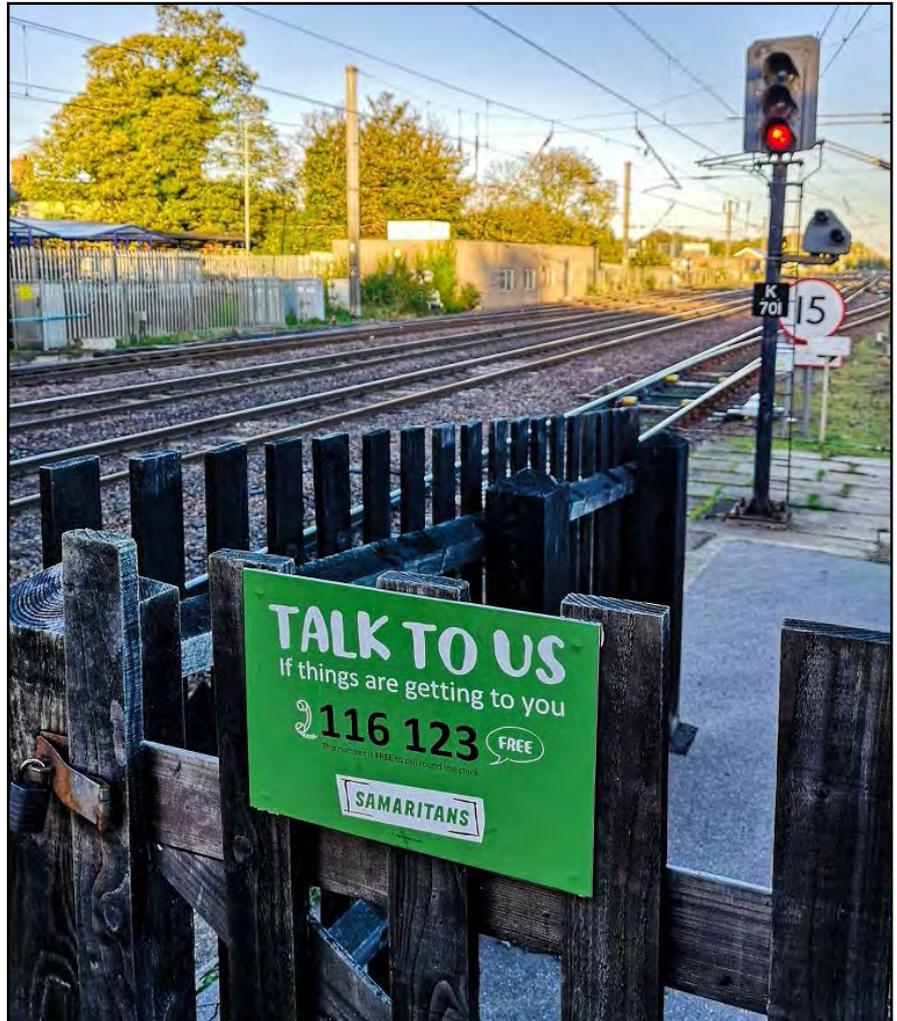
The ‘violence myth’ hides the truth that mentally ill people are more likely to be victims than perpetrators.

We must continue to question stereotypes that belong to a different age.

There are some important gender differences also worth highlighting here.

Whilst women in full-time employment are about twice as likely to have a common, diagnosable mental health problem as their male counterparts, suicide is the most common cause of death for men between the ages of 20 and 40.

It is often suggested that women are more likely to talk about their symptoms, whilst men ‘bottle things up’.



If you need support in times of crisis, the following places can help:



The Samaritans
Provide emotional support for people 24 hours a day, 24/7.
Tel: 116 123 (freephone)
Email: jo@samaritans.org
Web: www.samaritans.org



Saneline
Out of hours mental health and emotional support to anyone affected by mental ill health, including family, carers and friends.
Tel: 0300 304 7000
(local rates 6pm-11pm, 7 days a week)
Web: www.sane.org.uk

Answers to quiz on page 9: 1. False 2. True 3. False 4. False 5. True 6. True 7. False 8. True

RAIB highlight the importance of reporting recovered mistakes

Unpacking the narrative with stills from the video

Visit www.ciras.org.uk to view our video 'Lessons from Sandilands: The Role of CIRAS'. Richard Harrington from RAIB (Rail Accident Investigation Branch) explains how reporting your concerns could make all the difference.



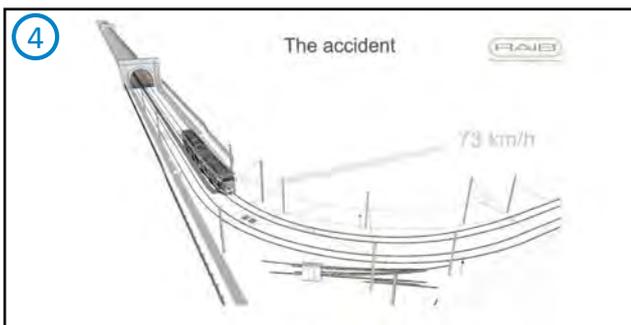
A scene on 9 November 2016. Seven people died, 19 were seriously injured.



The tram ended up on its side after speeding excessively through a curve.



Richard Harrington from Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB) explains how it happened.



The tram entered the curve at 73 km/h, but the speed limit for the curve was 20 km/h.



RAIB interviewed drivers as part of their investigation.



Drivers had previously lost concentration, using the emergency brake to recover in time.



They had not felt able to report this, thinking they might be disciplined.



CIRAS exists as an option if it doesn't feel possible to report to line management.

'Have your say' survey results

Trust in CIRAS remains high

How we performed on key measures



Thank you to everyone who completed our online survey recently – we received over 800 responses from frontline staff and managers!

Your efforts to engage will help us find better ways of promoting CIRAS.

We were pleased to see that 86 per cent of respondents had heard of CIRAS, but there is still room to improve.

The thought that within our member organisations there may still be difficult-to-reach 'dark pockets' is concerning.

Whilst it might seem very positive that 82 per cent had seen active promotion of CIRAS, 18 per cent hadn't and is something that needs addressing.

If you think that your organisation could be doing more to promote

CIRAS, please drop us a line, as we can help them do exactly that.

The most common ways of hearing about CIRAS were from meetings or briefings, posters or the newsletter.

We can always supply more posters or newsletters if you are not seeing them where you are based.

When it came to trust, 89 per cent of you trusted that CIRAS was confidential.

Rest assured, even though we have never had any confidential breaches in over two decades of operation, we will never become complacent.

Another finding from the survey was that, whilst there was a good understanding of the sorts of health and safety issues that could be reported to us, some people did not

realise that we are not set up to deal with real-time issues or personal

grievances - reports of this nature are re-directed.

Real-time concerns need to be dealt with by those in a position to take immediate action.

Personal grievances tend to identify particular individuals and these, too, would have to be re-directed.

Your responses to the survey also suggest that we are doing well when it comes to generating awareness of what we do.

In particular, it was good to see that 80 per cent understood that CIRAS could be used for issues that were about another company, and not just your own employer.

Protecting your confidentiality always comes first

1. We are here to listen and will protect your confidentiality
2. We have had no breaches in confidentiality in over 20 years
3. Our processes are robust and our staff are trained to put confidentiality first
4. When companies join CIRAS, they sign up to embracing the spirit of confidentiality, focusing on the concerns raised and not who raised them
5. You remain totally anonymous (to the company) throughout the process
6. We talk through any confidentiality concerns at every stage of the report
7. We always carry out a confidentiality risk assessment
8. Identifying information is removed from the report e.g. locations may be removed if there aren't many people working on that site
9. We will share the company's response with you

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

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

Provide your contact details in the space below. 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
- A report will be written 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

CONFIDENTIAL

POSTAGE
PAID

FREEPOST CIRAS

Fold along the dotted line and seal edges



Prevent incidents in confidence

Report hotline:
0800 4 101 101

Report textline:
07507 285 887

Freepost: CIRAS
www.ciras.org.uk