



STEM TALENT PARTNER OF CHOICE

Safety Briefing

August 2025

Monthly topics

Monthly Topic – Approach and Beyond

- Approach and Beyond incident and definitions

Driving awareness

- Fatal Road Traffic Accident in 2024
- DVSA – Vehicle Road worthiness



STEM TALENT PARTNER OF CHOICE

Know the Difference – Beyond vs Approach

At 00:40 on Wednesday 30 July 2025, the driver of a passenger train made an emergency brake application when they observed two track workers on the line ahead of them as the train neared London Bridge station. The track workers quickly climbed onto an adjacent walkway on seeing the approaching train.

The track workers involved had just placed a possession limit board in error on a section of line which remained open to trains. The train was travelling at less than 20 mph when the near miss occurred and stopped before reaching the possession limit board. There were no injuries, and no damage was caused during the incident.

Near miss with staff at London Bridge

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/near-miss-with-staff-at-london-bridge>



Key Messages

Be Ready Before You Step On Track

Use the time before the possession starts to walk through your pack, maps, and locations.
If you arrive late or unprepared, you're already increasing risk.

Know the Difference – Beyond vs Approach

Always think: Which direction is the train coming from to the reference point whether it is points or a signal. The train will always pass the APPROACH first and then BEYOND the reference point, when travelling in the planned expected direction of travel.

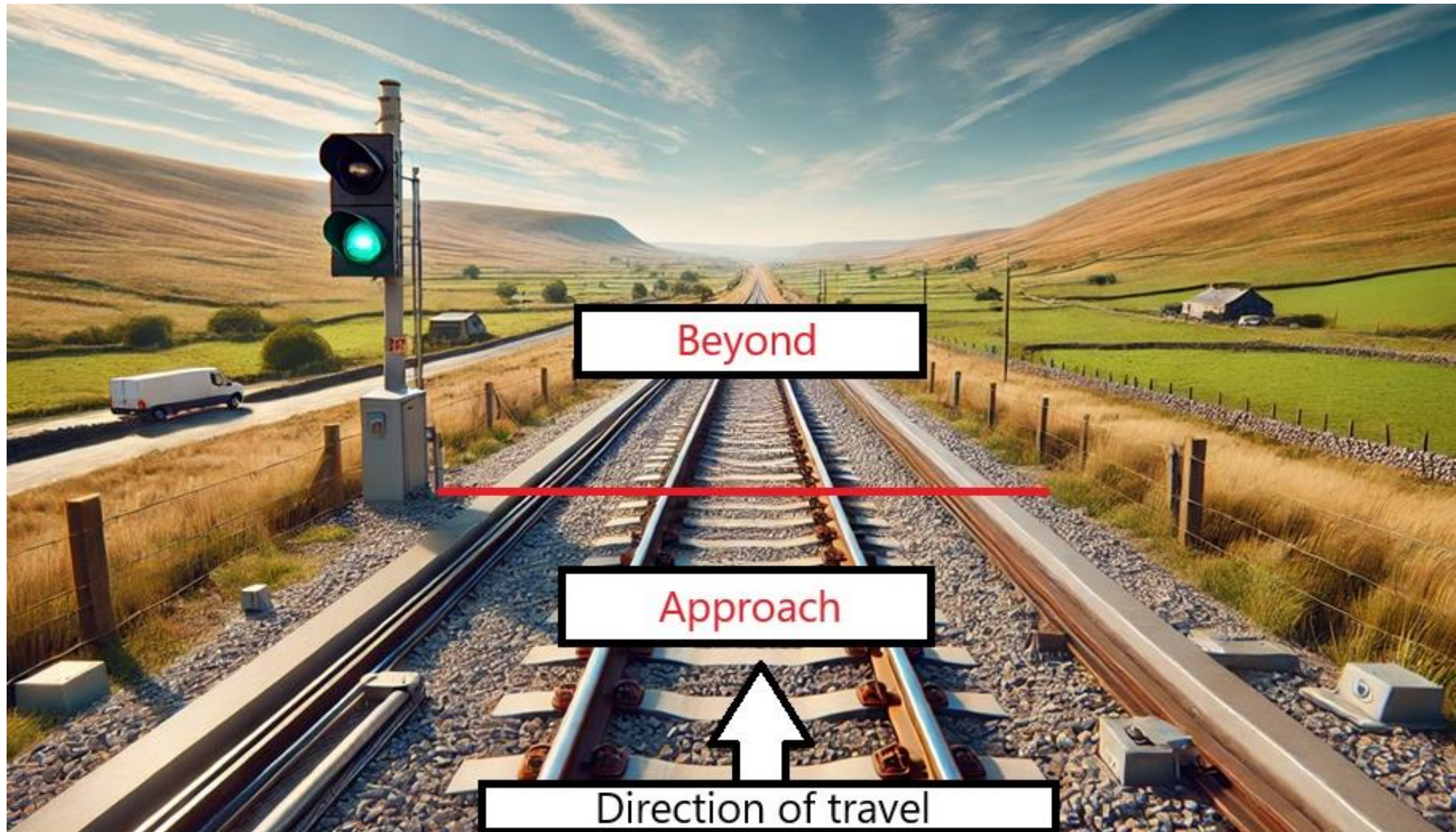
On a bi-directional line, always clarify and confirm what direction the planned train movements are going to come from. You could potentially need to walk over a set of points to the BEYOND location depending on the direction of trains.

“ON THE APPROACH”:

This refers to the **near side** of a signal, set of points, or other fixed infrastructure **when looking in the normal direction of train travel**. It's the side from which trains would typically arrive.

“BEYOND”:

This refers to the **far side** of a signal, set of points, or other infrastructure **when looking in the normal direction of train travel**. It's the side trains would pass into after passing the signal or points



Shared Learning

Key learning following a serious incident



everyone
home safe
every day

Fatal Road Traffic Collision

Issued to: All Network Rail line managers, safety professionals and accredited contractors

Ref: NRL25-04

Date of issue: 08/08/2025

Location: M40 Northbound (Junctions 12–13)

Incident Summary

At approximately 0245 on Wednesday 8 May 2024, two Vital Human Resources Limited (VHRL) employees were involved in a fatal RTC on the M40 Northbound. Returning home post-shift from Hemel Hempstead, their vehicle collided with the rear of a Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV). The driver sustained non-life-threatening injuries. Tragically, the passenger later died. Both had chosen to forgo their pre-booked hotel accommodation to return home for personal reasons. This incident underscores the critical risks posed by fatigue, policy non-adherence, and gaps in monitoring and assurance.

During the investigation, the parallel police investigation meant the driver could not be interviewed, and the hire vehicle lacked telematics to support post-incident reconstruction. However, the revised Fatigue Risk Index (FRI) score of 39.7 % indicated a high risk of microsleep. Given the early-morning timing following a night shift and being over 60 minutes into a 90-minute journey, it is reasonable to conclude that the driver's alertness was likely impaired due to fatigue, even if the exact cause - such as microsleep or loss of concentration - cannot be definitively confirmed.



What went wrong?

Planned Control	Actual Outcome
Post-shift hotel provided to mitigate fatigue	Hotel unused - both employees chose to travel home overnight
Telematics-enabled fleet vehicle required by VHRL policy	Short-term hire vehicle had no telematics or monitoring
Fatigue Risk Index (FRI) compliance monitored via PeopleSoft	PeopleSoft scores based on incorrect data; adjusted FRI score was 39.7 %
Sentinel app used for sign-in/out to support fatigue tracking	Manual sign-in used, undermining data reliability
Assurance of contractor rest periods	No mechanism to confirm if booked hotel accommodation was used

Behavioural and systematic insights

- Personal responsibilities (childcare, appointments) motivated a decision to return home rather than rest.
- Night driving following a shift increased fatigue risk, equivalent in impairment to alcohol.
- Vehicle lacked data-capturing systems, limiting post-incident reconstruction and assurance.
- Sentinel swipe protocol was bypassed, impairing fatigue and attendance data quality.
- Policy assumed rest would be taken if provided - no check was in place to verify.

Key lessons

- Fatigue must be treated as a live risk, even below FRI trigger points.
- Behavioural choices under pressure (e.g. returning home) can override planned controls.
- Short-term hire vehicles must meet baseline monitoring requirements.
- Sentinel compliance must be actively monitored, not assumed.
- Booking rest does not guarantee rest - assurance processes must verify usage.

Recommendations and Local Actions

Network Rail

- Confirm Sentinel swipe-in requirement in Scheme Rules v5 and brief accordingly.
- Explore feasibility of validating hotel room usage as part of fatigue assurance

VHRL

- Review process for inputting shift data into PeopleSoft to ensure FRI accuracy.
- Install geofencing and telematics in all fleet and hire vehicles.
- Deliver refresher driver training on fatigue, post-shift travel risk, and lifesaving rules.
- Brief all drivers on consequences of non-compliance with rest policy and Sentinel protocol.

Key Takeaway

This fatal incident was not the result of one failure, but a series of unverified assumptions. Behaviour, fatigue, monitoring gaps, and policy execution all intersected. Preventing recurrence requires not only policies but living, verifiable compliance and behavioural alignment under pressure.

Part of our group
of Safety Bulletins

Safety
Alert

Safety
Bulletin

Safety
Advice

Shared
Learning

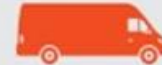
DVSA Vehicle Road worthiness

VEHICLE ROADWORTHINESS



Did you know?

MOT Tests



Half of all vans fail their MOT at the first attempt.



Enforcement

The police and DVSA have the power to carry out spot checks on vehicles and can stop a vehicle being used if a prohibition is issued.



Roadside Checks

Two thirds of vans stopped at the roadside by the DVSA have a serious mechanical defect.



You are Responsible

It is the driver's responsibility to ensure the vehicle is safe and roadworthy.



Overloading

If a vehicle is overloaded, the driver can be given an immediate prohibition notice.

Penalties for driving an unroadworthy vehicle

Fine up to

£2500

3 penalty points

XXX

A driving ban



Fines must be paid by the driver at the roadside or by phone or post after receiving penalty letter.

[Securing loads on HGVs and goods vehicles - About the code of practice - Guidance - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/about-the-code-of-practice-for-securing-loads-on-hgv-and-goods-vehicles)

Overview

The DVSA has announced that over the next year there will be more roadside checks and these will be focusing on the compliance of light goods vehicles (LGVs) and their trailers.

Underlying causes

- DVSA checks around 20,000 LGVs annually, with over 50% resulting in enforcement actions for serious defects, insecure loads, or overloads.
- LGVs have a failure rate in MOT tests about four times higher than HGVs. More significantly, road users are more likely to be seriously injured or killed by an LGV than an HGV.
- In 2023-24, there were 3,000 incidents reported involving LGVs which resulted in either a fatality or a serious injury - compared to less than 1,000 with an HGV.

Choosing not to complete a safety check can have fatal consequences

One heart-breaking example outside of the rail industry is the death of 11-year-old Harry Dennis, who was tragically killed after a scaffolding board hit the vehicle he was travelling in. The board had come loose from a vehicle transporting scaffolding. The driver had not adequately secured the load and was oblivious to it swinging out into the path of Harry's vehicle. In court, he blamed this on a lack of training. However, the judge concluded that he'd likely driven similar vehicles for the past 15 years. The driver was sentenced to 4 years in prison.

How can you help?

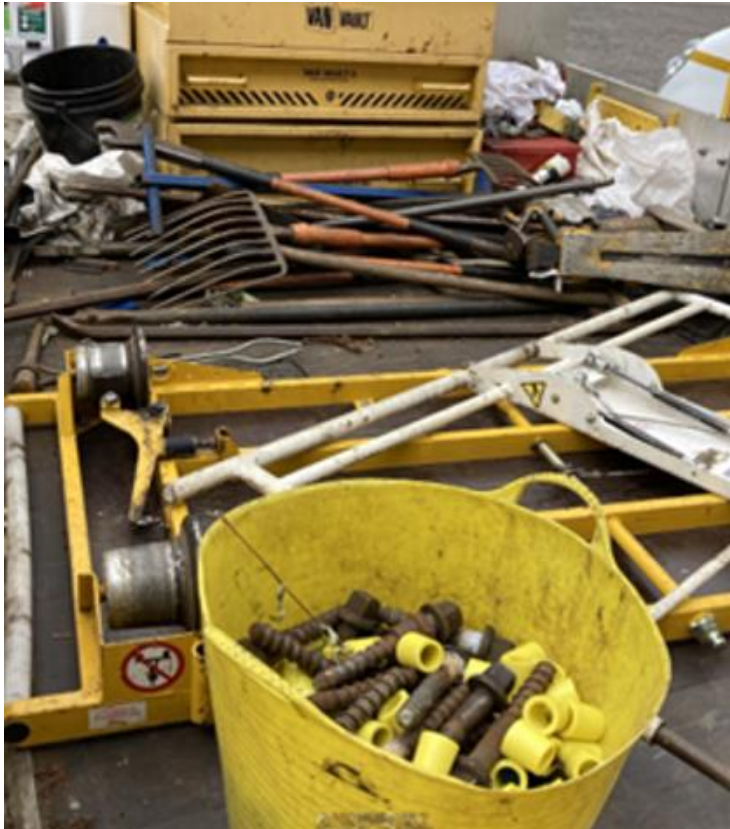
At the beginning of each shift, complete a first-use vehicle check using the CheckedSafe app and report any faults/defects. For reference, the image below illustrates a reportable defect taken at a Network Rail location, where the tyre is visibly bald on the outside. Driving with a bald tyre can lead to a fine of up to £2500 and three penalty points per tyre. Other defects which may deem the vehicle unroadworthy may also lead to a fine of £2500 and three penalty points.

Please note that all fines must be paid by the driver.



Make sure your load is secure, including the rear of box vans. The image below illustrates a 3.5-ton drop-side vehicle that was poorly loaded at a Network Rail location.

Driving with an unsecured load can result in significant fines and potential prosecution, possibly leading to imprisonment.



If something does not look safe speak to your line manager and/or raise a Close Call and/or invoke the work safe procedure.

My Sentinel

<https://mysentinel.me/Account/LogOn/?ReturnUrl=/>

Do you know that you can view all of your own Sentinel Competencies in real time?

- See the competency expiry dates and assessment due,
- look at your medical and Drugs and Alcohol test records.
- Receive emails directly from Sentinel
- Search and email Sentinel sponsors directly
- Follow the link to my sentinel above and set up your own Sentinel profile



STEM TALENT PARTNER OF CHOICE

Reminder to all Sentinel Card Holders & Checkers

Safety Central

Network Rail share updates of recent incidents, accidents and best practice advice online. Please get into the habit of checking this website for the latest news;

<https://safety.networkrail.co.uk/tools-resources/safety-bulletins/>

Southern Shield

Southern Shield is a collaborative safety forum that consists of Network Rail Southern Capital Delivery and its principal contractors. On their website they have useful articles and explain the rules of the Southern Shield charter, which are mandatory on some southern sites.

<https://www.southernshield.co.uk/>

Railway Rule book

Add this website address to your browser favourites to ensure that you always have access to the Network Rail Rulebook modules

<https://www.rssb.co.uk/standards/types-of-standards-and-how-they-work/the-rule-book>



STEM TALENT PARTNER OF CHOICE

1. Introduction

The purpose of this code

This section of the code tells you about getting access to the Network Rail standards and controls, which you will need to do before carrying out work on the rail infrastructure.

2. Network Rail standards and controls

Network Rail standards and controls are a set of documents we produce to define the way we work. They set out the information we share, the principles we have and the business requirements we work to.

Together, they give us a consistent, safe and coherent set of working practices across the whole company. By having a single external source for this information, we can be sure that contractors and suppliers have access to the most up-to-date standards and controls information. We publish Network Rail standards and controls quarterly. Publication dates are the first Saturday in March, June, September and December. We'll communicate any changes through the Network Rail Standards and Controls Change Summary Report.

All our principal contractors:

- Should show that they have systems in place to access our standards and controls and brief their own people on changes.
- Should brief their subcontractors on changes or, assure us that the subcontractors are competent to brief themselves.
- Must not distribute our standards and controls outside their organisation.

To aid your briefing process, you may give your subcontractors a copy of the Network Rail Standards and Controls Change Summary Report.

3. Who do I contact for more information?

Suppliers, principal contractors and subcontractors can access Network Rail standards and controls and the change summary report by registering for the [Network Rail Standards Portal](#)

To register, please complete and submit the webform. Please [Click Here](#)

To find out more, please contact the Network Rail Standards & Controls Management Team:
STSupplierSupport@networkrail.co.uk

Changes to your shift times and increased fatigue risk

It is important that you notify your consultant as soon as possible if there is a change to your rostered work pattern while working on the Network Rail Infrastructure.

As part of our commitment to you and our obligations to monitor and manage your fatigue, we must always have an accurate understanding of where and when you are working.

In addition, you also have a legal obligation to ensure that you are safe to work, the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. This states that “Workers have a duty to take care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work”

Do not start work until you are satisfied that the safety arrangements are appropriate to the activity

Never, ever drive while feeling tired

If you are starting to feel fatigued while you are onsite then instigate the work safe procedure.

Work-safe Procedure

This is for anyone to use, it works as follows:

If you believe the Safety Arrangements to be inadequate:

- Stop Work and talk to the Team Leader or person in charge; they should:
 - Review the arrangements
 - Change them if necessary and re-brief

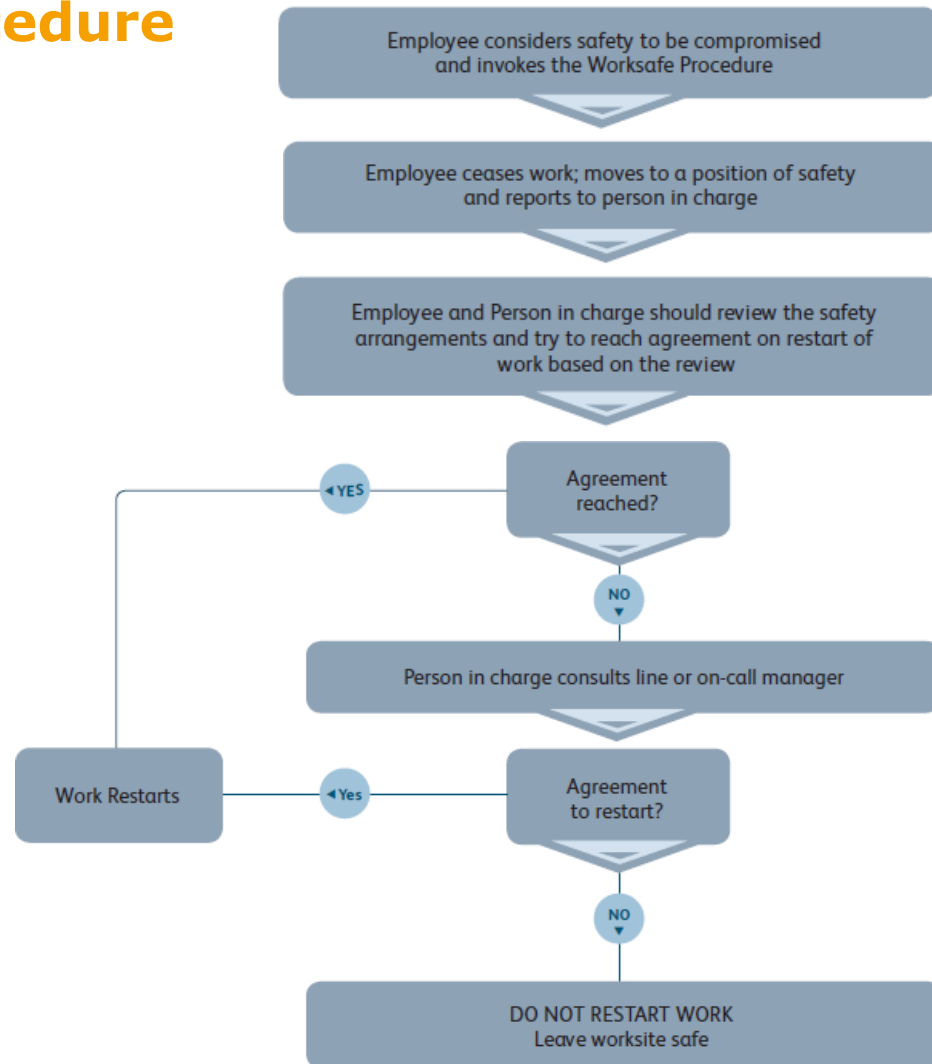
If you are still unhappy DO NOT RESTART; escalate to the next level by contacting one of the following:

- Your Line Manager, Your Safety Rep, Any member of the management team, The DU Safety Advisor, Network Rail Control, MT on-call 07786 265531
- Do not start work until you are satisfied that the safety arrangements are appropriate to the activity



STEM TALENT PARTNER OF CHOICE

Work-safe Procedure



Contact the Rail team

24 hour on call - 07786 265531 Store this number in your phone in case of an emergency.

Use this on-call number if you need to contact someone from the company urgently, for example to report an accident / incident or if you are being pressured to do something that you are not comfortable with, such as being asked to exceed the working hours rules etc.

This number is not to be used to query timesheets or to enquire about vacancies, it is an emergency contact number.

If you would like to suggest a topic for future safety briefings, or need to talk to someone in confidence then email the Rail HSQE manager Joe Christopherson; jchristopherson@matchtech.com

Your Feedback is always welcomed, email us at MT railonboarding@matchtech.com

Previous monthly rail briefings

<https://www.matchtech.com/about-us/health-and-safety/safety-briefings>

Safety sQuaRed

See it, Scan it, Share it

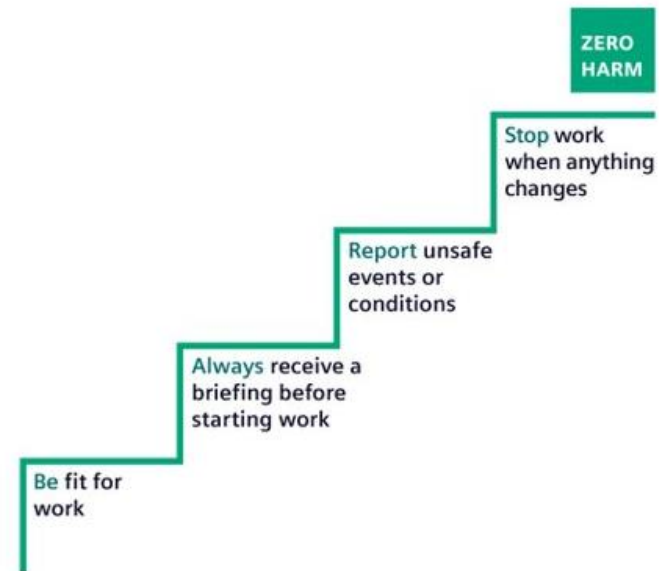


<https://www.gattacaplc.com/report-near-misses>

4 Steps to Zero Harm

Our Priority: Your safety and wellbeing is our absolute priority. We believe that Zero Harm is achievable each and every day by following the four steps and through our behaviours.

Our expectation of everyone, whether an employee / an agency worker or a contractor, is that you will know and live by the 4 Steps.



SIEMENS

Our Lifesaving Rules



Always be sure the required plans and permits are in place, before you start a job or go on or near the line.



Never use a hand-held or hands-free phone, or programme any other mobile device, while driving.



Always use equipment that is fit for its intended purpose.



Always test before applying earths or straps.



Never undertake any job unless you have been trained and assessed as competent.



Never assume equipment is isolated – always test before touch.



Never work or drive while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.



Always use a safety harness when working at height, unless other protection is in place.



Always obey the speed limit and wear a seat belt.



Never enter the agreed exclusion zone, unless directed to by the person in charge.



STEM TALENT PARTNER OF CHOICE

CIRAS

CIRAS

Confidential Safety Hotline

If you have a safety concern,
make the right call and report it.

Tell your supervisor, or contact us in complete confidence.
Call 0800 4 101 101 or download our CIRAS reporting app.

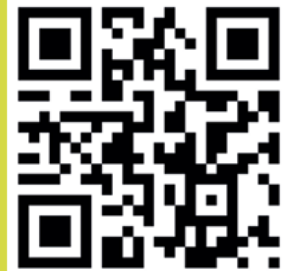


Scan me

 Google Play

 App Store

We find safety in listening.



Scan me