

# Personal Track Safety



## 06 Safe working

# Safe working

## Introduction



As well as knowing the rules about safety, you need to have the right attitude and behaviours when working on the railways.

Here's Steve, the Controller of Site Safety (COSS), to tell you what you'll cover in this PDF.

“ This PDF will show you what can go wrong when precautions aren't taken and safety isn't put first.

You'll be shown the rules and procedures you need to follow to ensure your safety and to prevent incidents happening.

You'll also find out how to report them if they do happen.

Reporting incidents will make sure we learn from our mistakes, and help more people stay safe on the railways.

”



# Safe working

## Touch and go

### When you don't put safety first, things can go wrong.

Our vision for safety at Network Rail is to get everyone who comes into contact with the railway home safe every day. But are we and our contractors as consistent as we could be? Are we as safe as we should be? Here are some of the incidents that have happened in the last few years.

We begin at Smallmeads, where a driver reported a near miss. Shocking footage from the scene shows that as the train approached, a group of workers moved clear, but someone had moved away from the group and was using their mobile phone. When they realised how close the train was, they ran across the upline. Luckily, the driver applied their emergency brakes, and the worker was not hit.

It isn't just rail traffic that poses risks. The plant we work with and the environments we work in can be extremely hazardous. In January, a caterpillar crane overturned while setting up at Morryston viaduct. The operator simply didn't lower his outriggers when the boom was at full extension.

A team carrying out repairs to a roof at Haymarket had a close call when a section of the roof collapsed, while a miscommunication between two operatives working on an escalator in Reading resulted in a major injury. One of the workers got their arm trapped in a working mechanism, causing a severe crush injury and laceration.

And a frightening incident took place at Hope station. Two S&T technicians undertaking track renewal work were standing on the up line observing cables during tamping operations on the down line, when a Road Rail Vehicle approached quickly on the up line. One of the technicians was able to dive clear, but the second was crushed against the platform edge and trapped between the RRV caterpillar tracks and the edge of the platform. He was taken to hospital and released later the same day with bruising to his leg and ankle. This could have been much more serious and it's being investigated as if it was a fatality. An independent inquiry has been established involving contractors, Network Rail, and the RMT.



# Safe working

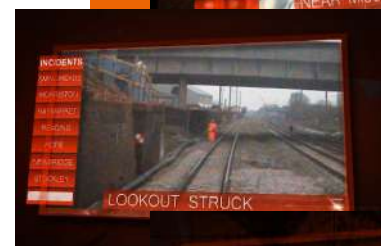
## Touch and go

These next incidents highlight just how important it is that safe systems of work are rigorously planned, understood and adhered to.

An intermediate lookout was struck by a passenger train at Stockley Road Bridge whilst red zone working as part of the setup for a planned safe system of work arrangement. He sustained injuries to his arm from a glancing blow from a train travelling at approximately 55 miles per hour.

All of these incidents will have had some effect on those concerned, whether physical, mental and in some cases, life-changing injuries.

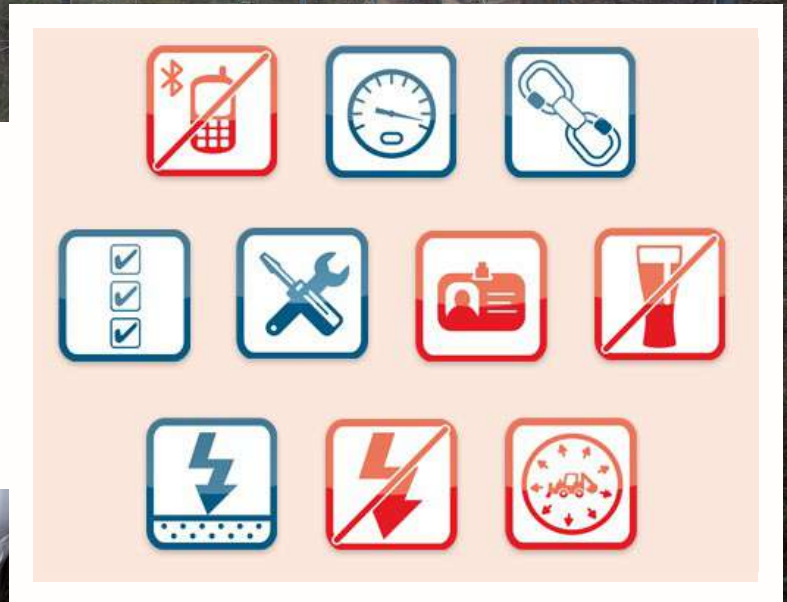
In our final example, a young man paid the ultimate price. Scott Dobson was killed when he was acting as a COSS with a gang of six people at Saxilby. For reasons unknown, he left the safe working area and was struck by a passing train. A formal investigation has been concluded, and recommendations made. Scott Dobson was only 26 years old.



# Safe working

## The Lifesaving Rules

You'll be expected to work in a number of different situations – many of which can be dangerous. Network Rail has worked with its people, contractors and the unions to formulate 10 key rules that **must** be followed in order to keep you safe on the Railway. These are the Lifesaving Rules.



## Working responsibly

There are **four** Lifesaving Rules for working responsibly.



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



Always use equipment that is fit for its intended purpose



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



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

## Driving

There are **two** Lifesaving Rules for driving.



Always obey the speed limit and wear a seat belt



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



# Safe working

## The Lifesaving Rules

### Working with electricity

There are two Lifesaving Rules for working with electricity.



Always test before applying earths or straps



Never assume equipment is isolated – always test before touch.

### Working at height

There is one Lifesaving Rule for working at height.



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

### Working with moving equipment

There is one Lifesaving Rule for working with moving equipment.



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



**everyone  
home safe  
every day**

### Everyone home safe every day

The Lifesaving Rules are there to make sure everyone goes home safely, every day.

So, if you ever feel that a rule is being broken, you must speak up.

It's not actually always easy to speak up, so you'll now go on to look at how to do this and why it's so important.



# Safe working

## Reporting an incident

Occasionally accidents will happen, or incidents where someone nearly got hurt.

It's important that you respond in the right way and record them so we can try to stop incidents happening again.



## Reporting your concerns

Your first step should always be to tell the person in charge, your COSS or Safe Work Leader so that they can make sure the area is made safe. You should then tell your supervisor, line manager or sponsor about it, so that it can be reported as an accident (if someone is hurt) or a 'close call' (if someone could have been hurt).

There is a Close Call System for reporting incidents like this. The more data we receive about Close Calls, the smarter we can be in preventing accidents nationally.

## Reporting confidentially

If you feel that you can't report something directly to your manager, you can also contact the Confidential Incident Reporting for Safety service (CIRAS).

CIRAS captures health and safety concerns raised by railway workers and gets responses from the companies involved.

CIRAS is completely independent, entirely confidential and helps make the industry even safer.

Whether you are frontline staff or a manager in a rail company, CIRAS should be of interest to you. You can contact them using the details on their website [www.ciras.org.uk](http://www.ciras.org.uk)

## Don't be afraid to speak up

If you have a concern, you should never feel that reporting it means you are dropping others in it.

You may not always feel comfortable about speaking up, so always remember that it may well prevent a more serious incident from happening.

# Safe working

The way you behave matters

## The way you behave towards your team matters to your and their safety.

As you'll see in this scenario, you need to look out for your colleagues and show each person the respect they deserve.

### Luke's first day

It's Luke's first day in his first ever job. He's excited to start working on the railways. As he leaves the house, his mum looks at him lovingly.

"Your Dad would have been proud of you."

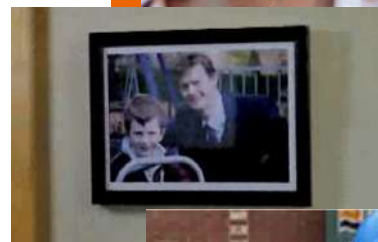
Luke feels great. That's all he's ever wanted, to make his Dad proud. He's completed all his training and feels prepared for whatever the day might bring.

When he arrives on site, Luke meets his new team – Dan, Donuts, and the supervisor Chris. He wants to make a good impression, but they're not very welcoming to him. They don't take him seriously because of his young age, particularly when he talks about his training. Luke's disappointed, but determined to turn their opinions around by showing them how good he can be.

### A long morning

By the end of the morning, Luke's feeling tired. His team is working on replacing a section of track, and it's been hard work.

At first, he found that he was a lot slower than the others, but then Chris showed him the method the others were using. Luke knows he should really be using the method he was taught in training, but Chris's way was quicker, and he was so tired of the guys laughing at him for being 'wet behind the ears'.





# Safe working

## The way you behave matters

### Break time

As the team sits down for lunch, Luke's sure he's worked hard enough to show them he belongs. But as he moves towards their table, Donuts makes it clear he's not welcome.

"I think you might be more comfortable over there with the other Klingons", he says, pointing to a table at the other side of the room. Luke turns to see a table of bored-looking young people, not talking to each other, staring at their phones.

Embarrassed, Luke moves slowly towards the other table. He would prefer to have a conversation and get to know his new team, but he knows better than to push it on his first day.

### Taking responsibility

That afternoon, Luke is given a chance to prove himself to the team. As they lift the rails onto a lorry using a crane, Chris asks Luke to steady the load. Luke knows how to do this – they covered everything in his training.

The first rail reaches its destination safely, but something's worrying Luke.

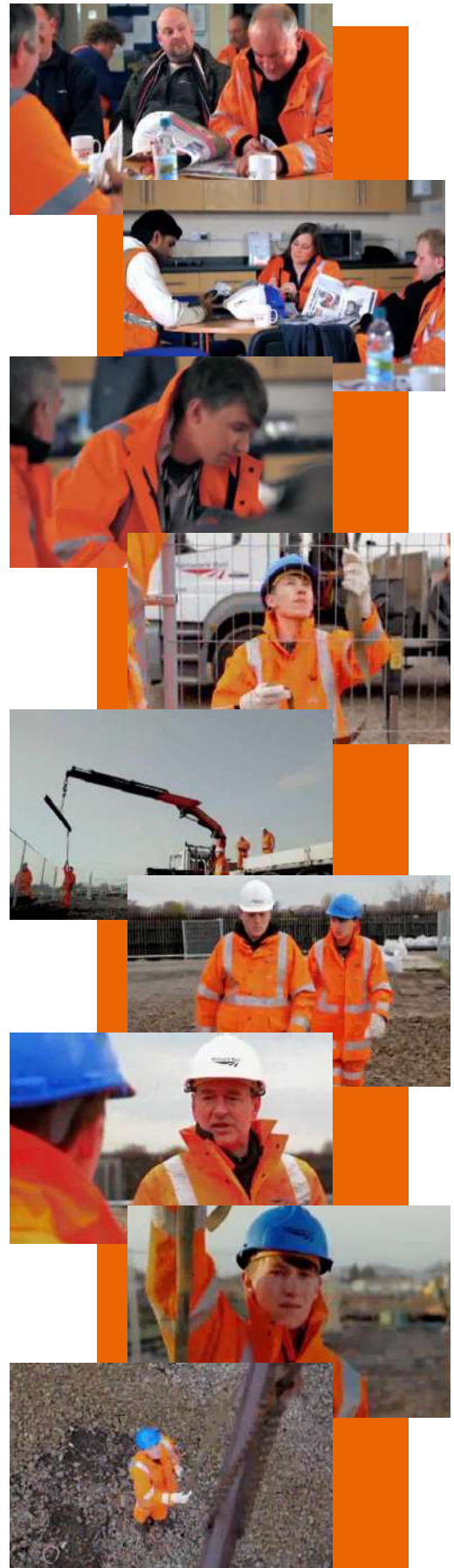
"Is it alright if I go and check the stores to see if there's a clamp lock?" he asks Chris. "It's just that in training..."

"Look, son," Chris replies, "I want you to do two things for me. First of all let me worry about supervising the work, and secondly, before you take your break go and clean that van out."

### A dangerous situation

By the time Luke is finished cleaning the van, break time is over and it's time to go back to work. He didn't find a clamp lock, but he doesn't feel like he can complain again. He has no choice but to continue without one.

This time, as the rail hangs suspended above Luke's head, a senior supervisor approaches Chris. The machinery is loud, so Chris halts the work to listen. But when the supervisor leaves, Donuts is nowhere to be seen.



# Safe working

## The way you behave matters

Then Dan starts laughing – he’s spotted Donuts returning from a toilet break. Luke can’t believe what’s happening – how could they leave him in a dangerous position like that? It’s one thing to make jokes at the lunch table, but...

Suddenly, Luke hears Dan yelling his name. He looks up to see the section of rail falling fast towards him...

### Consequences

Luke’s mum looks puzzled as she walks to answer the door. Who could be ringing the bell at this time of day? She’s not expecting Luke for another hour.

As she opens the door, her expression is surprised, then horrified.

“No... What’s happened?”

### Tough decisions

Luke doesn’t know what to do. After all his hard work and preparation, his first day was worse than he ever could have imagined.

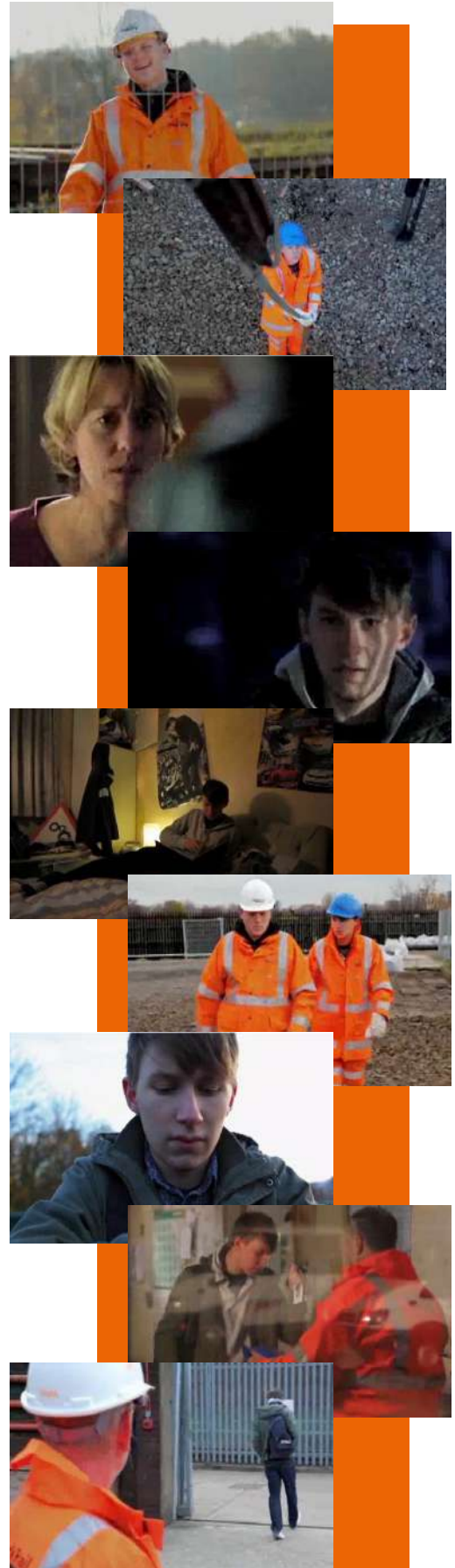
He could have been seriously injured, or even killed in that incident. He feels shocked and disgusted by his manager’s poor approach to safety, not to mention the complete lack of respect his co-workers showed him.

He can’t believe in the space of one day he’s gone from being so excited about his new job to wishing he’d never even started the training. He doesn’t want to go back there and risk his safety again, but he feels like he’d be letting his dad down if he quits.

### Respect cuts both ways

The next morning, Chris, Dan and Donuts are standing by the van chatting, when they see Luke approaching.

“Alright?” Chris says, ready to get on the road. Luke keeps his head down and walks straight out of the gate.



# Safe working

## The way you behave matters

“Whoa!” Chris hears Dan’s voice behind him. “Who’s done this!?” He turns and looks into the back of the van. It’s more organised than he’s ever seen it.

“...That was Luke.” He says quietly. In the background he sees his supervisor approaching.

“Hey you lot, I need a word with you! What the hell happened yesterday? Do you know what a valuable young employee you’ve just lost us?”

### Summary

Luke was not shown the respect he deserved. His safety was put in danger by the attitude of his colleagues, including the manager who was responsible for his safety. The manager’s approach to safety was very poor and Luke could have been seriously injured in the incident. Luke resigned which affected him and his Mum.

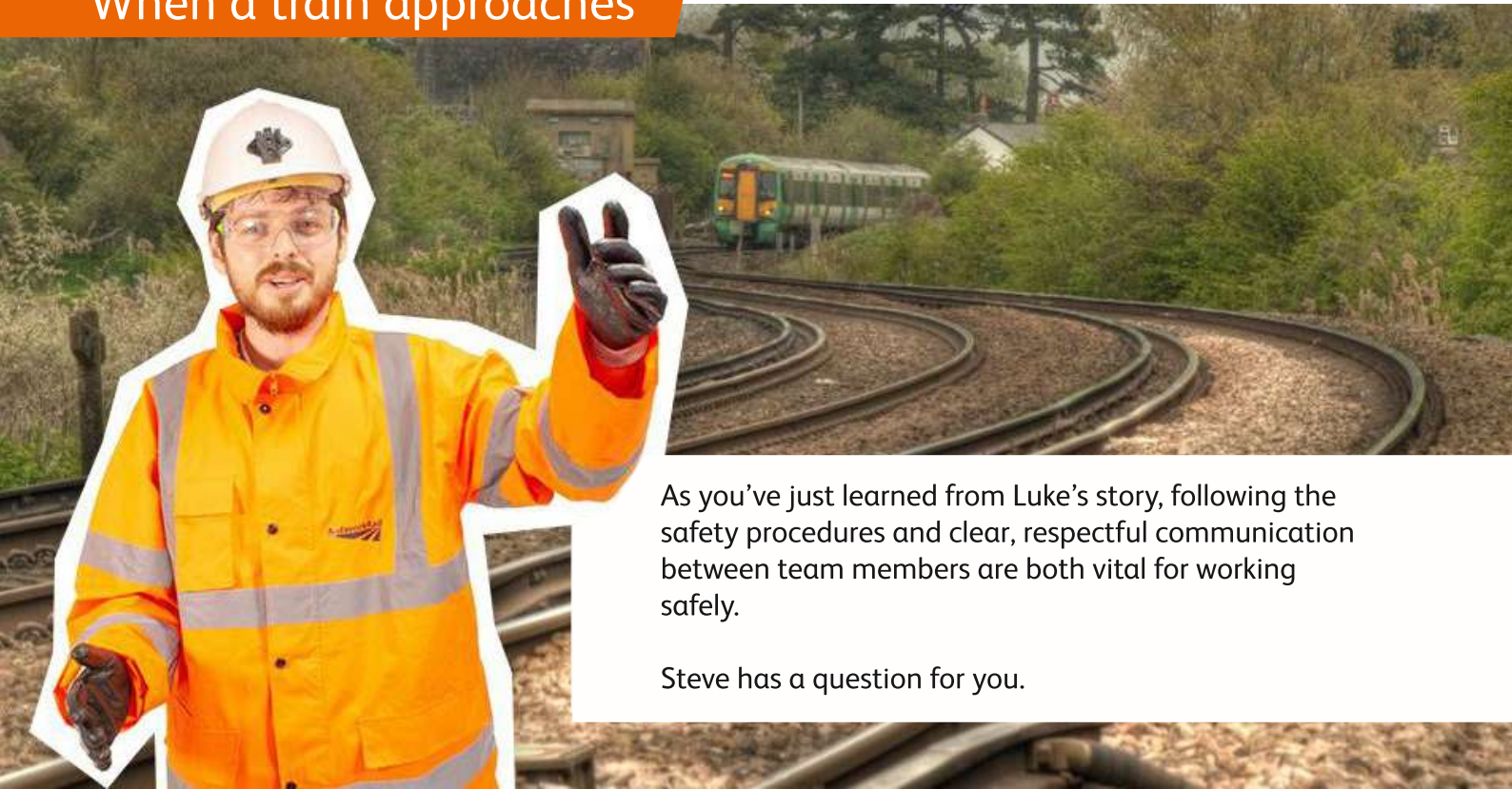
The manager, the team and Network Rail lost a very capable young employee.





# Safe working

## When a train approaches



As you've just learned from Luke's story, following the safety procedures and clear, respectful communication between team members are both vital for working safely.

Steve has a question for you.

“ The safety of my team is an absolute priority. But, sometimes, a confusing message can put everyone in danger.

A few weeks ago, Janos and Caz had a big scare on track. I don't want you to go through what they did, but I want you to know what to do if the worst happens. They weren't hurt because they acted quickly and correctly.

Would you do the same?

”

# Safe working

## Between the lines



Janos and Caz are out on the track inspecting a defective train that is on a line just outside a station.

They've been told by their COSS that the line that the train is on has been blocked, as has the one next to it.

They make their way down on to the line to take a closer look at the problem with the broken down train.

They are both standing in the 6-foot between the two lines.

Suddenly they hear a train sound its horn and realise that the adjacent line isn't blocked.



The train is approaching at high speed.

They don't have time to get to a position of safety – and have only a split second to decide the safest thing to do.

They know that standing upright while a train passes at speed would be a very dangerous thing to do, and they don't have time to get to the cess.

They decide to lie down in the 6-foot parallel to the line. Thankfully, they made the right decision. The train passes, and Janos and Caz are unhurt.

Once the train has passed Janos and Caz rush off the tracks and onto the platform. They were lucky but are very shaken up.

# Safe working

## Between the lines



## A close call

Caz and Janos did the right thing.

If a train passes unexpectedly and you don't have time to get to the cess or another place of safety, the best action is to lie down in the 6-foot parallel with the lines until the train passes.

This is the safest position.

Standing still or standing upright would be very dangerous if a train is passing at speed.

You should never lie down in the 4-foot.

## Reporting the incident

After their near miss, Caz and Janos report the incident to the COSS and then report it using the Close Call System.



# Safe working

Take a closer look



As you've seen, strong team communication, following the safety guidelines and reporting any incidents are all vital to minimising risks on the line. There are lots of resources online if you want to find out more.

Why don't you take a look at the following?

Our Network Rail website

[www.networkrail.co.uk](http://www.networkrail.co.uk)

Safety Central and the Rail Infrastructure Assurance Group (RIAG):

[safety.networkrail.co.uk](http://safety.networkrail.co.uk)

Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB)

[www.rssb.co.uk](http://www.rssb.co.uk)

CIRAS

[www.ciras.org.uk](http://www.ciras.org.uk)

Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB)

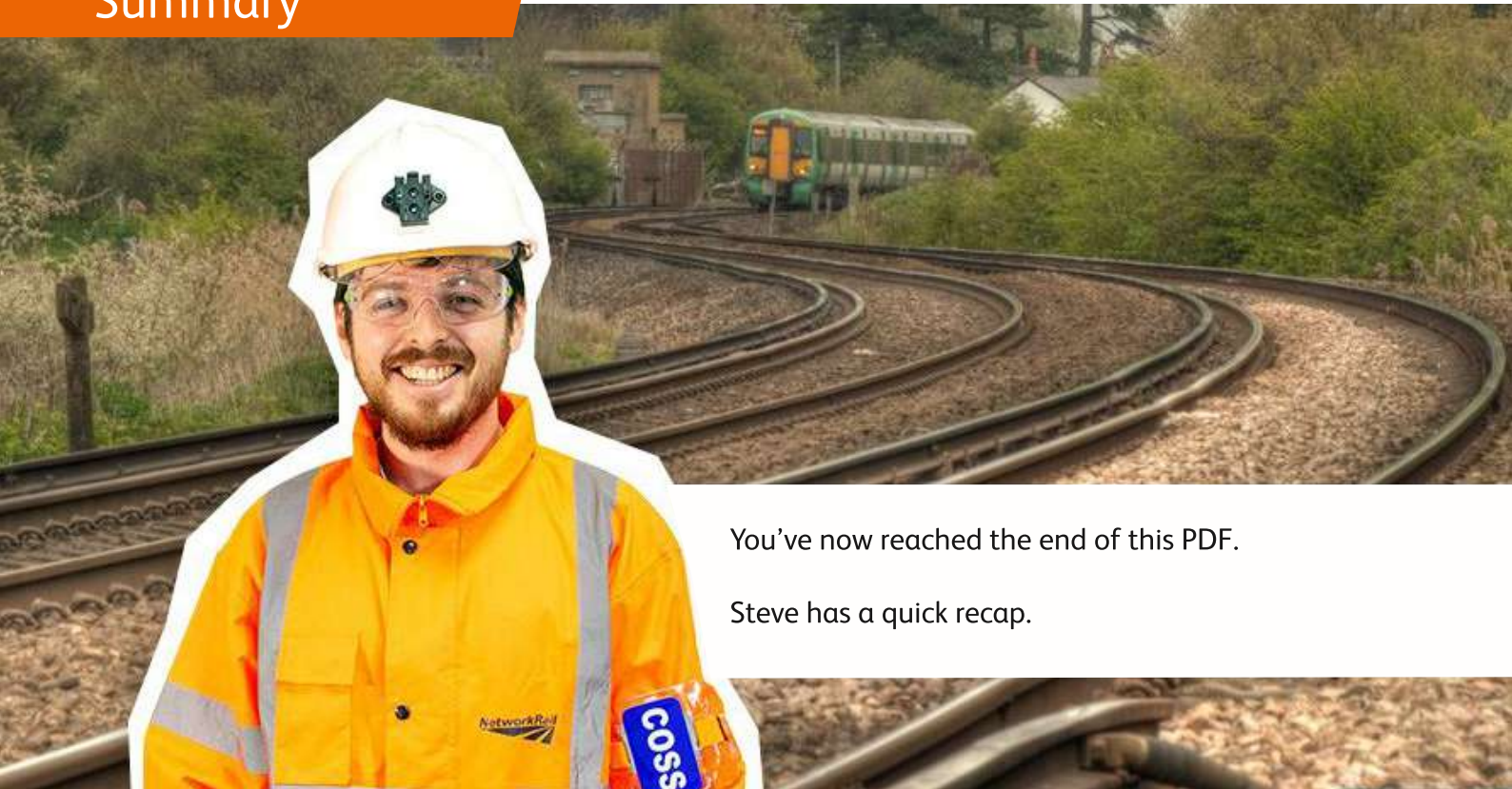
[www.raib.gov.uk](http://www.raib.gov.uk)

Sentinel

[www.railsentinel.co.uk](http://www.railsentinel.co.uk)

# Safe working

## Summary



You've now reached the end of this PDF.

Steve has a quick recap.

“

Hopefully you can now see that your attitude to safety matters.

Don't forget that we have 10 'life-saving rules'. Make sure you're familiar with them and follow them – we don't call them life-saving for nothing.

Strong communication is so important to avoid dangerous situations.

Always show respect to your fellow workers.

And finally, report any incidents whenever they occur. Make sure you inform your COSS or Safe Work Leader and use the **Close Call System** if someone nearly got hurt. The more we know about railway incidents, the more we can do to avoid them.

Remember, you can report your concerns to **CIRAS** if you'd rather it remained confidential. Whatever you do, don't just ignore it. Speaking up can help prevent more serious incidents from occurring.

That's the end of this part of the Personal Track Safety (PTS) learning. Please read the other PDFs or e-learning topics in this course before you take the online Assessment.

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