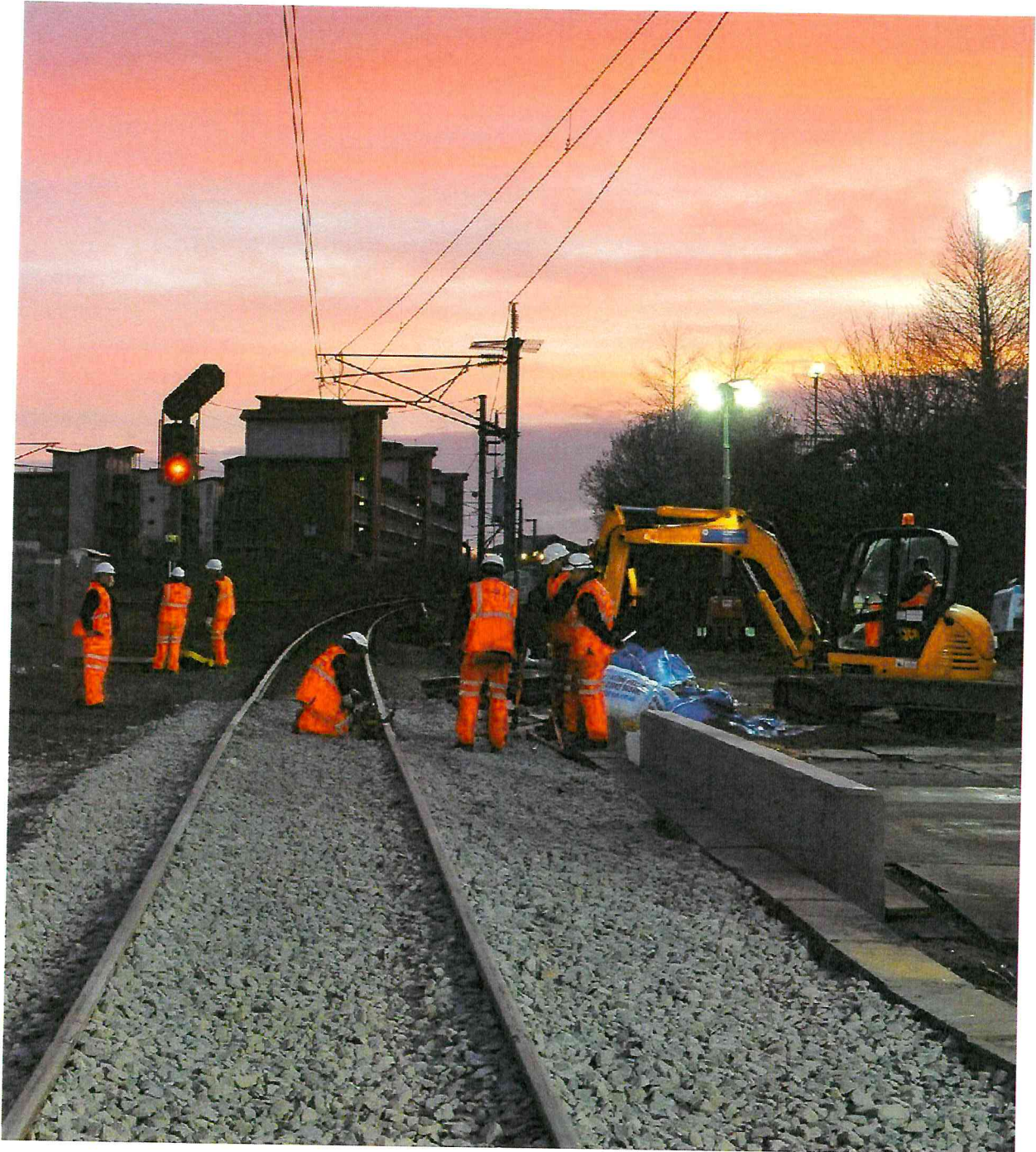


Trackside safety

Reason	Attention to safety must be continuous and complete. The construction industry is hazardous enough; add the dangers of railway activities and the risk of injuries and fatalities will increase.
Outline	This talk covers some hazards and precautions associated with working on railways.



There are many trackside hazards and you must be appropriately trained, competent and authorised to work in a railway environment

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Hazards

1. The danger of injuries resulting from the impact with a moving train cannot be emphasised enough.
2. In addition to direct impact, there is also the danger of being dragged under a fast-moving train by the variations in air pressure as the train passes.
3. Electrified lines create extra hazards; beware of electrical dangers from overhead lines and third and fourth line systems.
4. Scaffolding must be properly erected to cater for the movement of trains.
5. The effects of alcohol and drugs, including some prescription drugs, can reduce your concentration levels and therefore affect your safety.
6. Deaths and severe injuries have occurred through accidental damage to buried high-voltage cables.

Precautions

1. You must be trained, competent and authorised to work in a railway environment. Ensure you carry your appropriate card at all times or you will be refused access to the site.
2. Your Controller of Site Safety (COSS) will set up a safe system of work. Always follow the directions given, particularly with regard to safety distances and track clearance times. If in any doubt, ask the COSS for further guidance.
3. The COSS must brief the workers on the site safety rules prior to the work starting, and brief the incoming COSS at the shift changeover.
4. Familiarise yourself with the differences, and restrictions imposed, when working in different zones.
5. Always wear the correct standard of personal protective equipment (PPE), including high-visibility clothing.
6. Always treat overhead lines and the third and fourth rails as live.
7. Remember that an electrical isolation does not guarantee safety; it does not prevent non-electric locomotives from using the track.
8. Never allow yourself or anything you are handling to come within the designated distance of overhead lines. Safe distances should be detailed in your safe system of work.
9. Exercise extreme care if handling scaffold poles or other electrical conductors.
10. Ladders must be wooden or of approved non-conductive materials, never metallic.
11. If you have to remove trackside fencing, replace it as soon as is practicable.
12. Do not excavate, dig or otherwise penetrate the ground surface unless a survey for underground services has shown that it is safe to do so.



How does the permitted amount of alcohol for trackside safety compare to that for road vehicle drivers?

Who should you speak to if you have concerns about trackside safety?

If you have to remove trackside fencing, how soon should you replace it?