

Contractor accident while using Premier Compact 110 Series Soil Sampling Machine

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

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Location: Heaton Down Yard Development Site, Newcastle

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Overview

At around 14:00 on the 22nd February during the setup of the Premier Compact 110 Series (a 2.5 metre high, tracked compound soil sampling machine), the carriage and enclosed weight (a 110kg percussive hammer) detached from the guide rails of the mast, swung sideways, and struck the lead driller in the right hand side of his head and face. No injuries were sustained, and the driller was able to resume work the next day.

An investigation has been completed, and it is thought that the incident occurred because an essential 'lock bolt' was not inserted or had not been inserted sufficiently into the guide rod. As a result, the carriage came away from the main body of the drilling rig. This event has subsequently been reported into the Safety Management Intelligence System, and also as a 'RIDDOR DO1 - LIFTING EQUIPMENT - COLLAPSE, OVERTURNING OR FAILURE'.

As part of the ongoing investigation it has been suggested that similar incidents have occurred before, and specifically as a result of incorrect insertion of the 'lock bolt'. While anecdotal (at this time) this points towards a more systemic failure in relation to use of this specific machinery, and not necessarily solely 'operator failure'.

Although this activity relates to a specific piece of machinery, please ensure when using any machinery, you undertake the checks below.

Immediate action required

- All machinery/equipment must be properly maintained and have evidence of maintenance.
- Always ensure machinery is set up correctly and pre-use checks have been undertaken.
- There is a safe system of work in place and it has been suitably briefed.
- Only use machines/equipment you are trained and competent to use.
- Advise contractors that they must undertake the above checks and be competent if they are to use this machine.
- Brief the contents of this safety advice to all relevant staff and contractors.