

BLUEBELL *Safety* NEWS

2013 / 2 (June 2013)

A Safety Culture

Do you think our railway has a safety culture? This term originated in the atomic energy industry in the 1980s. (Do you remember Chernobyl?) It is now widely used, including by the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR), who aim for "all parts of the railways to have excellent health and safety culture and risk control processes by 2014." They also "expect the rail industry to continuously examine its behaviour and management systems to identify and implement reasonably practicable improvements."



Don't think that this is just about the Big Railway. The Heritage Railway Association (HRA) and the ORR are jointly promoting the development of a safety culture in the country's heritage railways – so expect to hear more on this in the near future. Recent, high-profile incidents on heritage railways only highlight the need for improvement.

Staff competence

A specific area of interest to the ORR, and to ourselves of course, is the competence of staff – particularly but not exclusively those staff in safety critical roles.

Each department has its own competences, and the training and

assessment regime to demonstrate that people are qualified and capable of performing their roles. You are reminded that you should



only perform duties or tasks for which you are currently deemed competent by the Bluebell Railway. That includes medical competence – as determined by the Medical Officer – where applicable. If you are in any doubt about the status of your competences then ask your manager.

Why are we here?

That's not meant to be a starting point for a debate on the meaning of life, but an invitation to all readers to reflect on all aspects of their role at the railway. In particular it is timely to remind ourselves that (quoting from the Rule Book) "... *staff MUST see that the safety of themselves, other members of the staff and the public is their chief care under all circumstances.*" Whatever else we are here for, safety should be number one.



The picture above was taken by a member of the public. Apparently several members of staff walked

past these visitors, who were sitting with their feet over the platform edge, without comment or taking any action.

Now we are open to East Grinstead ...



... it's timely to remind ourselves that access to the line and lineside north of Kingscote is not permitted to photographers ...



... and special arrangements need to be applied for staff access to "The Narrows" – approximately from Kingscote up advanced starting signal (KC56) to the down home signal (KC53). Do not go into this area unless you have been briefed on the procedure and have taken the necessary precautions.



Remember, members of staff are allowed to go on or near the line, or on the lineside **only** if required to do so by their duties at the time.

If you have any observations, concerns, worries or improvements with regard to safety on the extension please let the safety manager know.

Any other safety concerns?

Don't forget that you should raise any safety concerns through your local, departmental safety meetings. You should know who your representative is, who chairs the meeting and when they are held. If you don't then ask your manager.

What's happening?

Do you know what is going on, what's new or changed when you come to work at the railway? Most departments have a requirement for staff to read relevant notices, including Special Traffic Notices and Special Operating Notices, when signing on.



Do you know what you should be reading?

Lessons learned

Investigation reports relating to accidents and incidents on Bluebell Railway, and those published by RAIB, are reviewed by OSRG to understand the relevant learning points. One incident at Elephant and Castle has highlighted the need for clear and effective communication.



In this case a signaller and driver were involved but the learning is widely applicable. Simply repeating back a message does not necessarily indicate understanding.

If you are unsure of the meaning of a message don't be afraid to say so. If someone asks you to be more clear accept their request and do so calmly.

Don't butt in

A couple of recent accidents and incidents at Bluebell have highlighted the need for people not to get un-necessarily involved in tasks that are under the control of others. Helping out is very much OK. But do ask and don't distract. Don't interfere as you may cause confusion, and that's never a good thing.

Do you have Microsoft Access skills



The railway is looking for a volunteer to help support one of its administrative databases. This

is built upon the Microsoft Access platform. If you have the appropriate skills and some time available to provide support for fixes and minor enhancements we would like to hear from you. Please contact the safety manager, Roland Law, via safety@bluebell-railway.co.uk if you can help.

Mind the doors!



There has been a recent spate of incidents where trains have travelled with one or more carriage

doors "on the catch" – ie not properly locked, with the door handle horizontal. Guards and station staff are reminded to check that doors are shut and properly locked before departure, including doors on the off side – ie not against the platform in use – where possible.

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This newsletter is distributed around the railway's workplaces. It is also available on the Bluebell Railway website at:

<http://www.bluebell-railway.co.uk/bluebell/safety>