

STOP AND THINK **TALK** 4

WHEN RAIL MEETS ROAD!

Network Rail's annual level crossing safety report in 2010 reported that in 2009, 13 people died and 145 motorists – almost three a week – narrowly avoided potentially fatal collisions with a train. There were also over 3,200 incidents of misuse at level crossings in the same year. Recently a tipper became a 'near miss' statistic as it failed to clear an unmanned level crossing before the barriers came down.

The tipper was following a line of traffic over the crossing when the traffic came to a halt, leaving the tipper straddled over the crossing. At this point the red traffic lights came on and the warning alarm sounded just before the barriers started to come down. The driver attempted to edge forward and then traffic ahead started to move. He didn't quite clear the crossing before one of the barriers hit the top of his tipper. As he moved off the crossing, the barrier broke and landed on the rail track. The driver quickly got out of his vehicle and moved the damaged barrier off the track only moments before the train came through.



The damaged barrier laid at the roadside

The train had been alerted of incident and was travelling slowly over the crossing. The tipper driver was later interviewed and breathalysed the Transport Police before advised him that he could be facing prosecution for his

A briefing tool for managers

SAFE DRIVING TIPS

LEVEL CROSSING SAFETY

Rule 291 in the Highway Code:-

A level crossing is where a road crosses a railway or tramway line. Approach and cross it with care. Never drive onto a crossing until the road is clear on the other side and do not get too close to the car in front. Never stop or park on, or near, a crossing.



Rule 293: Stop when the traffic lights show

LEVEL CROSSINGS – They're Not Time Wasters, They're Life Savers!

A collision between a train and a motor vehicle on a level crossing is the single biggest risk of a catastrophic incident on the railway

VEHICLE ROLLOVER & OVER AGAIN!

Two incidents were lucky not to result in injury! Both involved contractors delivering aggregates in tipping vehicles, but surprisingly only one was an artic; the other was an 8 wheeler (32 tonne gross). Artic rollovers are a far too common occurrence within the industry, but a rigid vehicle is very rare.

Both rollovers were at customer sites. The artic incident occurred when an experienced driver, but with very little experience with tippers, tipped a load on an area which was not even or compact.

The 8 wheeler happened during the spell of bad weather leading up to Christmas. Temperatures were sub-zero and although the product had been loaded the same morning as the delivery was to be made, during the short journey to the customer site, the load had frozen and compacted in the body. On arrival at the site, the proposed tipping area was not accessible due to the heavy snow, therefore the customer asked the driver to tip at the site entrance. After re-positioning the vehicle a number of times before the driver was happy that he had achieved a satisfactory tipping position, the driver commenced discharge. On reaching the 3rd ram of the raised position, the driver realised that the product was not flowing as it should be, only approx. 1 ½ tonne had been discharged. At this point, before the driver could stop the body raising any further, the vehicle rolled over; fortunately the driver managed to climb safely out of the cab.

STOP AND THINK TALK

Preparation

This stop and think talk can be used individually or with a group of drivers. It could be delivered in the vicinity of a vehicle to enable wider discussion of other issues, taking care that the area is isolated from traffic and people can hear what you are saying. Participants should receive a copy of the talk for their CPD files as well as signing the training declaration.

Introduction (After reading out the case studies)

In 2005 MYSPACE was introduced as an aid for LGV drivers to manage their safety on site whilst going about their daily duties. This involved carrying out a 1-2 minute risk assessment before undertaking any task on site and encouraged the use of the Near Miss Hazard Alert process to highlight and improve those conditions. Even though the MYSPACE initiative was initially a success there are still incidents occurring which could quite easily be avoided – these result in both personal injury and property damage. The principles of MYSPACE can easily be adopted on the road too, by just taking that little bit extra time to look ahead, look around you and ask yourself – How Can I Be Hurt, What/Who can enter or influence what I do in MYSPACE and Who/What can be injured / damaged in MYSPACE

THE TALK

Use the questions below to open the discussion under each heading and then go through the lists explaining in detail each hazard / control and what is expected

Question 1 – What should you do to avoid obstructing a level crossing or pedestrian crossing

- Be alert at all times and avoid distractions
- Look well ahead. As an LGV driver you are higher up than most car drivers and therefore can see a greater distance
- Do not enter any type of crossing unless you are sure that you can clear it – make sure there is sufficient space at the other side before you enter the crossing
- Follow traffic signals. If an amber light appears – stop before the white line
- Only cross a level crossing when the barriers have fully raised (if applicable).

Question 2 – What should you do if your vehicle breaks down or you have an incident on a level crossing

- Get everyone out of the vehicle and clear of the crossing immediately
- Use a railway telephone if available to tell the signal operator.
- Follow the instructions you are given
- Move the vehicle clear of the crossing if there is time before a train arrives.
- If the alarm sounds, or the amber light comes on, leave the vehicle and get clear of the crossing immediately

Question 3 – What should you do if you temporarily block a pedestrian crossing with your vehicle.

- Be extra vigilant of pedestrians all around your vehicle. Do not get distracted by your surroundings
- Be cautious of pedestrians trying to take a short cut – it has been known for pedestrians to have gone under artic trailers as access to avoid walking around

- Always check all mirrors, especially before moving off – pedestrians have a habit of crossing in front of LGVs without realising that you may not have seen them
- If your vehicle is older than 2007, it is not a legal requirement to fit the front downward facing mirror. If you haven't got one fitted – get one!
- Ensure your mirrors are adjusted correctly and that they are clean and free from damage.

Question 4 – What are the contributing factors to vehicle rollovers?

- Inadequate tipping area - uneven or soft ground
- Product loaded to one side / uneven loading
- Sticking loads – wet / frozen
- Artics – tractor unit not in line with trailer
- Inexperienced driver
- Failure to open tailgate
- High winds.

Question 5 – What are the control measures to these contributing factors?

- Always tip on firm, level ground – Do NOT tip if you feel it unsafe to do so. Carry out a MYSPACE check.
- Always check that the load is evenly distributed
- Be cautious if the product is wet or it may be frozen - check the load before tipping
- Driver training and experience will ensure that the driver knows how to line the vehicle correctly and follow the correct safe tipping procedure
- Always remain in the cab when tipping with the seat belt fastened and a safe tipping exclusion zone established.

And finally.....

1. Clarify any points as required
2. Ask if there are any other safety related issues that should be discussed.
3. Thank everyone for their participation.

