



# Safety Alert

## Fractured ankle injury

13 July 2021

The following pages of this safety alert were issued by Highways England's supply chain partner:

**Colas**

# SHEQ ALERT

Reference number:	012/2021	Date 03-06-21
Title:	Fractured ankle injury	

## Overview:

At 2245hrs on the 1<sup>st</sup> June, a TM crew was installing traffic management when they stopped to install a 'Road Ahead Closed' sign, the frame had to be stood on the opposite side of temporary VRS which was located on the verge, the IPV Foreman disembarked the IPV, carried out a visual inspection of the ground on the opposite side of the barrier before proceeding to step over it, when stepping over using his right foot first he stood on what he believed was the ground, as his left leg followed his right ankle rolled away causing a fracture to his ankle, on inspection there was a 4x4 post that was flush up against the barrier and had been hidden by a shadow cast by the street lighting and vehicle mounted task lighting, unbeknown to the foreman when he had first stepped over with his right foot he had stood on the post, when his second leg followed his right ankle rolled off the post causing the injury.



Image shows post against barrier using the flash on the

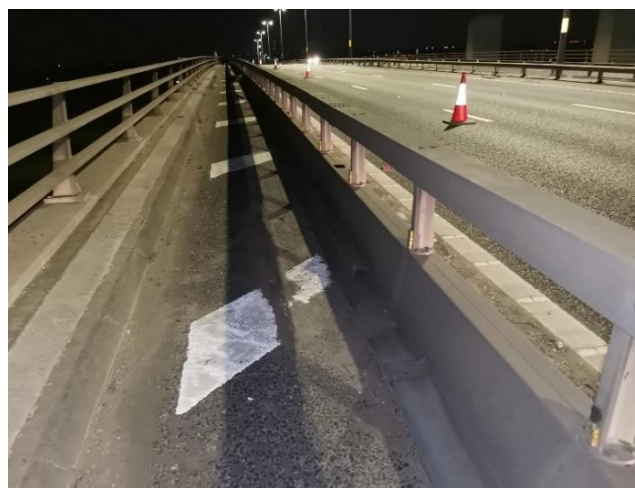


Image shows the post hidden in the shadow cast by the Streetlighting

## Findings

- A build-up of various items of motorway debris was noticed behind the Temp VRS after the incident, previously unseen during drive by checks of the area.
- The IP was wearing full PPE and his head torch was operational, however his boots were not tied tightly so the Operative could slip his boot on and off thus not giving full support to his ankle, the top eyelets were also not used.

## Lesson Learnt

- Thorough checks must be made regarding foot placement, don't step where you haven't looked.
- If you are unsure an area is safe to working in, STOP & CHECK! (Free to be safe & Safe to Stop principles)
- PPE MUST be worn to the manufacturer's guidance; boots should be laced up with enough pressure as comfortably possible without compromising support to the ankle.
- When working at night make sure personal and task light is suitable for the task been undertaken, extra checks may be needed in areas where shadows are cast.