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**STATIONS SAFETY COUNCIL**

**DEC 2012**

**SPECIAL BULLETIN**

**Winter weather/snow clearance.**

The Stations and Revenue Health and Safety Council have been raising the issue of winter weather/snow clearance for several years. We would like to take this opportunity to remind all Station Supervisors of their responsibilities when instructed to lay ice melt or clear snow from platforms and the relevant sections of the current issue (2) of the Rule Books.

Rule book 11 (Section 7.6) must be read in conjunction with Rule Book 13 (Sections 1 and 2), Rule Book 21 (Sections 2 and 15) and Rule Book 22 (Section 3). There has been a very important clarification of the activities that can be performed within 600 mm. of the platform edge in issue 2 of rule book 11. All reference to litter picking and sweeping duties have been removed.

**If instructed to carry out any of these activities within 600mm. of the platform edge you are deemed to be on or near the track and protection is required.**

LU documentation states that **snow must not be cleared on to the track; it must be cleared** **to the back of the platform**. To comply with this instruction you would be required you to turn your back to the platform edge**, an inherently unsafe practice in our opinion**.

Ask what support/resources you can expect to receive and ensure that you have requested the assistance of contractors (cleaners) that are supposed to undertake this work as part of their cleaning contracts. Have you had manual handling training? Inform your manager of any personal issues if relevant, such as back problems or any medical restrictions.

You could also ask to see the following:

* Valid workplace risk assessments with specific reference to snow clearance
* Valid manual handling assessments
* Valid COSHH assessments, safety data and instructions for the products being used
* Location and use of PPE

Furthermore, this issue has recently been raised at Functional Council level and the relevant minutes of that meeting have been appended to the email chain.

**Rule Book 11**

**7.6 Dealing with wet conditions and snow at stations**

When snow is forecast, you must follow your local instructions and check the station premises. You must make sure cleaning staff are aware and any equipment needed is available. During and after a snow fall or when dealing with wet conditions, you must:

• keep floors and platforms clear from a build up of snow or water

• tell customers to take extra care when on or about the station

• place notice boards advising customers to take extra care as surfaces might be slippery

• use cleaning staff where available.

**Rule Book 13**

**1.1 What this book is for**

This book contains instructions for London Underground (LU) operational staff when providing assistance to a work group needing protection during Traffic Hours.

**1.2 Who needs this book**

You will need this book if you are carrying out the activities of:

• a controller

• a signaller

• a train operator

• a station supervisor

• an appointed handsignaller.

**2 Principles for protecting work groups in Traffic Hours**

**2.1 Introduction**

When providing protection for a work group working on or about the track in Traffic Hours, the risk of the work group being struck by a moving train or vehicle is controlled by the following two ways:

• keeping out of the way of trains

• stopping trains.**eneral**

**section**

**Rule Book 21**

**2 On or near the track**

You are on or near the track if you are:

• within two metres of any rail

• on the track itself

• on a platform end ramp

• carrying out engineering or technical work within 600 mm of a platform edge.

You are **not** on or near the track if you are on:

• the other side of a permanent structure or fence or behind a temporary fencing or hoarding

• a station platform (unless you are carrying out engineering or technical work within 600 mm of a platform edge).

**15.4 Working in an area 600 mm or less from the platform**

**edge**

During Traffic Hours minor repairs are allowed in the Line Safe area providing both the station supervisor and controller give permission, and the relevant protection arrangements have been

put in place. If necessary, the station supervisor must close the platform to passengers and/or arrange protection by holding a train in the platform.

Rules for holding a train in the platform are stated in Rule Book 13

*LU staff responsibilities - Traffic Hours protection*.

During Traffic Hours for minor emergency work in the Line Clear area, and major emergency works at any location, the train service must be stopped.

**Rule Book 22**

**2.1 Introduction**

When providing protection for a work group working on or about the track in Traffic Hours, the risk of the work group being struck by a moving train or vehicle is controlled by the following two methods:

• keeping out of the way of trains

• stopping trains.

**2.2 Principle of keeping out of the way of trains**

This involves setting up a safe system of work that alerts the work group to the presence of an approaching train, making sure that there is sufficient time for the work group to go to a place of safety before the train reaches the worksite. The work group working on or about the track will have at least 25 seconds sighting of an approaching train that represents a hazard to them. The protection master liasing with the site person in charge will set up the safe system of work to provide protection to the work group.

If you are instructed to clear snow near the platform edge, and you are not aware of any agreed safe system of work for your area, make sure you protect yourself and ask for protection. Use the pro-forma template that came with this email, and send it to the manager who is instructing you to do it.

What should also be noted is the following passage, from the stations functional council in bold that re-affirms the industrial position that ultimately, station supervisors have the right to decide if they should keep their station open if they don’t feel they have the tools or support to run it safely. DO NOT TAKE RISKS.

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| **Staff Side Position**  **They said that if a Station Supervisor did not receive any support to keep a platform clear of snow and ice, they should not have to do it on their own and should not be put under any pressure to keep a station open.** |
| **Management Position**  **Management side stated that if a Station Supervisor was unable to obtain any additional support, then that supervisor would have to make a decision whether to keep a station open.** |

For more info, speak to your local rep or a council rep.

REGS

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THE INFORMATION IN THIS BULLETIN IS THE WORK AND OPINION OF THE TRADES UNIONS OF THE STATIONS AND REVENUE SAFETY COUNCIL. IT MAY NOT BE THE VIEWS AND OPINIONS OF MANAGMENT.