highways england

INFORMATION

Safety Alert

Gritter Fire

15th January 2020

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

Ringway

SAFETY ALERT

November 2019
Ref 081

Milton Keynes - Gritter Fire

Date: 19 November 2019
Time: 05:20hrs
Location: Yard, Milton Keynes Depot
Division: Ringway Milton Keynes

An incident has occurred involving a winter maintenance vehicle catching fire upon return to the depot at Milton Keynes after completing a grit run. The vehicle involved was a six-wheeler Econ gritter with a Mercedes chassis.

On return to the depot after driving through the depot barrier, the driver noticed flames coming around the body of the gritter on the passenger side. The driver continued to drive the gritter forward away from the building and parked the vehicle approximately 30m away. Immediately after parking up the driver exited the vehicle, jumping from the cab. From the point of exiting the cab it was clear the vehicle body and cab had caught fire. A member of the workforce ran over to assist the driver while another called the fire services who attended site and controlled the fire within about 15mins.

The Division have started a full toolkit investigation to establish root causes and to identify corrective actions.

Please ensure the following actions are undertaken:

- **All cabs are clear with no obstruction and access steps are clean**
- **Vehicles are clean with no remanence of diesel/ oil on the body**
- **Daily vehicle checks abeing undertaken**
- **5 minutes on safety undertaken for all operations at the start of their next shift with a reminder on 'Fire & Rescue' not to put themselves in any danger**
- **Skyguard devices to be worn and switched on during all lone working activities**

DP Campbell

David Campbell
Health, Safety and
Environment Director UK

Safety for a reason

EUROVIA VINCI

SAFETY ALERT - UPDATED

December 2019
Ref 081b

Milton Keynes - Gritter Fire

Date: 19th September 2019
Time: 05:20hrs
Location: Yard, Milton Keynes Depot
Division: Ringway Milton Keynes

The investigation into the recent gritter fire incident in Milton Keynes is still ongoing, however as a precautionary measure please ensure you familiarise your team with findings so far to ensure we are taking all reasonable measures to prevent a reoccurrence.

Examination suggests that a potential cause could have been as a result of pressurised hydraulic oil being discharged over the exhaust manifold and turbo charger which subsequently caused the fluid to ignite. The oil is believed to have come from the permanently driven hydraulic pump mounted on the rear of the engine close to the exhaust manifold. As shown in picture 2. Whilst the root cause remains inconclusive at present we ask that the following actions are taken:

- **Examine all similar vehicles for any evidence of oil leaks from the pump or pipework/unions/connections.**
- **Undertake the examination with the gritter engine running and the gritting hydraulic control in the on position and off position as the pump runs continually (to confirm any leak in either mode).**
- **Check the valve block for any oil loss, and any oil loss to the area generally.**
- **Particular attention should be given to the centre of the pump flange (between the two unused fixing holes) which can be seen as unpainted on the replacement pump as this is understood to be the point at which oil leaked.**
- **Report and investigate the requirement to add hydraulic oil to the reservoir at any time.**

DP Campbell

David Campbell
Health, Safety and
Environment Director UK

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