Why do we need Design Close Calls?

There is a direct relationship between the number of Close Calls raised and the number of accidents that happen on our projects. This means that Close Calls raised during the development and design stages can have a real impact in reducing frontline accidents.

Whilst the reporting, capture and monitoring of Close Calls is widely used for site-based activities, they are not currently used effectively for design activities.

Understanding what hazards and risks are occurring during the design stages will allow us to take direct steps to reduce them in the future. This will improve the safety within all designs that are developed and subsequently reduce incidents and accidents during on-site activities.

The Design Close Call Guidance Note has recently been updated to include the categories which these Close Calls should be recorded as. Appendix A - How to log a Design Close Call using the Network Rail app has also been included to ensure Close Calls are submitted correctly. The updated guidance document is for use with immediate effect.

The document can be viewed and downloaded on the Southern Shield website or by clicking the image above.

Contact us: shield@networkrail.co.uk or go to www.southernshield.co.uk
There are several factors that support these numbers, including the size and complexity of their portfolio and the date at which the Design Close Call initiative was rolled out in each company. The statistics are used as a measure of overall response levels across IP Southern rather than a measure of individual company response rates. The earlier data has been generated from IP Anglia who have been running the process for some time.

Key actions from this analysis

- Good practice when communicating residual hazards on design documentation.
- The introduction within the supply chain of a requirements feedback process covering the suitability of the requirements and focusing on the inclusion of explicit safety requirements.
- Design Close Calls on design detailing will be reviewed to highlight specific areas that need to be addressed. A RAG will be maintained to allow these to be checked during the Interdisciplinary co-ordination (IDC) and Interdisciplinary review (IDR) meetings. This will be distributed to project engineers and contractors engineering managers.
- The IDC, IDR and design review meeting guidance will be kept updated to allow participants to escalate issues where individual or group behaviours need to be improved, to achieve correct safety outcomes.

Did you know... there are different Design Close Calls that can be raised?

The three issues that are currently raised the most are:

- issues with the documented design;
- the requirements for which the design is being produced;
- and the behaviours of individuals involved in managing the design process.

These are commonly caused by:

- Inadequate description or resolution of residual hazards and risks within the design documentation.
- Missing or inadequate detailing within the design documentation.
- Poor documentation of design requirements and scope.
- No inclusion of specific safety requirements as part of the scope.
- Poor behaviours when discussing safety issues at various points of the design lifecycle.

Next steps for Design Close Calls working group

The key activities the Design Close Call working group will be focusing on for the next quarter are:

- To review Design Close Calls data to identify emerging trends and issues.
- To identify and address three further Design Close Calls.
- To communicate updates on a regular basis to the wider supply chain.

If you would like to participate in the working group or have any feedback contact: Kobi Mustafa