

Incident description:

A serious incident occurred recently where a road user travelling in the wrong direction of the M62 motorway came into contact with some temporary works when Mouchel staff were present. The motorway had been closed so the scheme – a footbridge demolition – could be carried out safely. It appears that, for whatever reason, the road user travelled in the wrong direction before striking a 'crash mat' made up of hardcore and aggregate intended to absorb the impact of the demolished bridge (so as not to damage the carriageway). The vehicle was launched into the air when it struck the crash mat before hitting the ground and spearing across the carriageway and into a retaining wall. Miraculously, the vehicle and flying debris missed two members of supervising Mouchel staff who were observing in the hard shoulder by a matter of feet and they escaped unharmed.

Investigation/findings:

This photo shows the path of the vehicle, and gives some idea of the evasive action our staff had to take. Only a combination of luck and instinct on the part of the Mouchel site staff stopped them from being seriously hurt or killed.

This incident serves as a stark reminder of just how dangerous this type of work can be.



Further Information:

Please contact our National Health & Safety Division
NH&ST@highwaysengland.co.uk

Actions

The following points need to be taken into consideration every time we venture out on to the carriageway:-

- Regardless of all of our safety controls such as wearing the correct PPE, utilising traffic management and working behind safety barriers, it is vital you are vigilant, alert and ready to call on your instinct if you need it. Tiredness, alcohol, drugs and noise can all affect reaction times for example, and in this case the reaction of the two site staff probably saved their lives
- Expect everything – even a motorist driving the wrong way along a closed motorway! Think about where you are stood – is it safe, do you need to be so close to the works area and can you retreat to a safer place are all questions you should ask yourself. Remember - what shouldn't happen can happen, so don't assume everyone is sensible and aware of your presence.
- Ensure risk assessments are updated where necessary to reflect the risk of carriageway incursions. This is not just a paperwork exercise, it is our method of communicating risks and controls to our staff
- Finally, where we are involved in the approval or review of Traffic Management layouts, consider carriageway incursions and if they have been accounted for. This may be a particular issue in urban areas.
- Just being compliant with Chapter 8 may not be enough.

For information about alerts process contact:
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