

Global Safety Stand Down (GSSD) Briefing for worksites

1. Everyone will be brought together in **small** work groups where this briefing sheet for worksites and lessons learnt from the investigation is **distributed and read** out.
2. There should then be a **minute's silence** in respect of the deceased and their family.
3. A **discussion and questions** session should take place about the implications for the worksite from the lessons learnt based on discussion points in the briefing sheet.
4. Discussion leader to **collect feedback** and **submit to BUP**.

GSSD Dominik Rychert Crushed in Trench Collapse

Location: DW 222 Gdańsk – Starogard Gdański,

Date of accident: October 2 2018

Family: Bachelor, Age 19, Skanska subcontractor

Background:

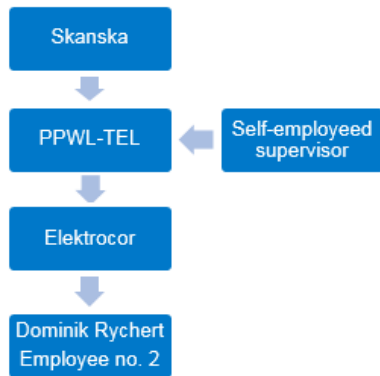
Skanska is employed by a public client to reconstruct the highway DW 222 Gdańsk – Starogard Gdański. In addition to their main contract Skanska were instructed to remove the underground telecommunications cable that was running alongside the highway. Dominik Rychert was working as a fitter/excavator operator for Elektrocore, a contractor to carry out the excavation work for the removal of the phone cable.

Incident:

The Energy Works Manager (Skanska S.A.), gave the work to excavate the cable to subcontractor PPW EL-TEL, they hired a Subcontractor to be responsible for the supervision and technical issues, and employees of Elektrocore to perform the task (see Organization chart on page 2). Skanska Energy Works Manager, met with PPW EL-TEL and the workers at the planned task location, providing work details, these included the location of the phone cable running along several hundred meters of the road and they were advised that the method of uncovering and removing the cable was with an excavator. The subcontractor supervisor conducted the pre-task briefing, highlighting the hazards of excavations and restrictions on working close to the excavation and moving vehicles. This safety briefing was not documented. Two test holes were made to find the depth of the phone cable. On October 2nd work started at 7:00 a.m., the supervisor, Dominik Rychert and another fitter came to site. Dominik Rychert, was not briefed on the project health and safety plan, method statement, or the task risk assessment and he did not receive the project health and safety induction about the project before starting work. The phone cable initially was at a depth of less than 0.5m (2.5ft) and was excavated manually using a spade. Dominik Rychert, used his excavator to uncover the cable along the road embankment. The excavation depth increased gradually along the route to over 2-2.5 m (8ft), was approx. 0.6 m (2ft) wide and approx. 3 m (10ft) from the road.

At about 10:00 a.m., part of the trench Dominik was excavating collapsed, but the supervisor told him to continue as it would not be a problem removing the cable using the excavator. He reminded both operators that no one can enter the excavation. At about 12:50 p.m., the supervisor went to the restroom and told Dominik to continue the works and not to leave the excavator. He returned after 15 minutes and saw that the excavator was switched off and the bucket was set to one side from the excavation. He noticed that part of the trench had collapsed near the excavator and a hand protruding from the ground. Despite the team's best efforts to release him, Dominik was declared dead by a medical team.

The likely hypothesis is that he was walking back to his machine along the top edge of the excavation at the side of the road when the ground gave way and Dominik fell into the excavation and was buried. The exact details of how he came to be in the trench may never be known..



Organization chart



Location of the trench side collapse



Position of trench collapse where Dominik Rychert was trapped

Immediate Causes of the accident

- Trench collapse

Contributory Causes

- No pre-task planning was done prior to starting the work and there was no method statement detailing how the work was to be undertaken. There was no agreement as to when to stop work if site conditions changed such as the depth of the cable changing or the ground becoming less stable.
- The procedures for selection and appointment of contractors was not followed.
- Energy Works Manager thought this additional work could be done quickly and would deliver increase profit on the project.
- The section manager did not participate in the planning and coordination meetings for this work.
- Dominik was working alone at the time of the accident.

Learning Points for the BU and Skanska

- Lack of adequate planning and organization of work activities by the Skanska managers and supervision at the project for this task
- Failure to comply with several Skanska procedures including procurement, planning, supervision, and following the Safety management system.
- There is a tolerance of rule breaking that ultimately leads to serious accidents.

Actions Taken by Skanska Poland to prevent similar accidents

- All Skanska Poland worksites were closed for safety reviews.
- Reinforcement of the Skanska procedures including procurement of contractors and pre task planning and pre task briefing.

Discussion points for the GSSD meeting:

- How well do we procure and manage all levels of subcontractors on site, including levels two and three?
- What can be done at your workplace to prevent colleagues from knowing or unknowingly breaking safety rules?
- What is the procedure at your worksite when your work plan changes? What are you expected to do?