

Safety Alert

Acoustic Fencing

29th May 2019

Background information

In order to undertake work overnight and to ensure that noise levels were adequately controlled, Acoustic Fencing was used. When a HGV/LGV passed the fencing (during the daytime), it failed and fell from the verge area into the oncoming traffic striking a car.

Investigation Findings:

- The fencing had been left in situ for several days
- The fencing was positioned less than 1.2m from the edge of the carriageway (0.8m)
- One of the acoustic panels became detached from the mesh fencing allowing for high winds to enter inside causing the end panel to be pushed from the footing and from the couplers causing it to fall to the ground
- The fencing was battered by high winds (causing excessive wind loading) that was generated by vehicles passing causing the fencing to gradually fail

Lessons Learnt (Consider):

- The fencing was only a temporary solution to reduce noise levels and should have been removed once the road closure had been lifted, but preferably after noisy operations have been completed and replaced with Chapter 8 orange barrier
- Where fencing and acoustic barriers are exposed to environmental factors such as wind loading, a suitable temporary design should have been developed.



Actions (Considerations):

- Ensure that regular checks of the site are completed especially where signage, fencing, etc is left in situ
- Fencing with acoustic barrier to be removed at the end of the working shift or when road closure is lifted/removed, **but preferably A.S.A.P. after noisy operations have been completed.**
- Where the fencing can't be removed, the acoustic panels should be removed from the mesh fencing to remove the risk of wind loading unless a temporary works design is in place and the fencing has been erected to that design
- Regular inspections of fencing (especially when acoustic barrier is attached) should take place ensuring that it is safe and that it won't cause a danger to the public.
- Regular pre-start briefings and toolboxtalks to be completed

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