

Safety Alert

CCTV Camera Winch Failure

6 May 2020

Background information

On the 24/04/2020 a RTMC engineer and a technician attended a camera site on the M25 to investigate and correct a fault. This particular site has two cameras installed on the same trolley/carriage.

After changing the faulty camera, the carriage was raised back up the mast to the home position. At approximately 13 metres up the engineer noticed that there was an issue with the winching process and with the control cable, without prior warning the carriage was now descending.

The emergency braking mechanism did not activate. The camera carriage impacted at the base of the mast destroying both cameras sending debris flying. Both operatives were able to move clear of the base of the mast and were unharmed.

This is a WEC mast with a WEC winch, installed during 2012.

All winching operations have been suspended at CCTV installations on the M25 where two cameras are installed on the same carriage.

The incident is currently being investigated and the asset tested to fully understand the root cause.



Recommendations

- Maintenance teams and inspectors should be aware of this concern and should appreciate the potential for **any** winch mechanism to fail:
 - Be aware of early warning signs, (for example, a jammed, kinked or frayed cable);
 - Do not rely on automatic braking systems for protection;
 - Monitor the progress of the lift or descent of the cradle at all times, and;
 - Be aware of the area covered by a falling cradle before commencing any ascent/descent operation.
- Do not operate any winching mechanism that has not been maintained in accordance with supplier's instructions or shows signs of not being properly maintained, or, is visibly damaged.