



Safety Alert

Damage to Underground Service

11 June 2020

The following pages of this safety alert were issued by:

National Grid

Rapid Incident Notification

Damage to Underground Service

What happened?

The Principal Contractor was undertaking trial hole investigation works as part of London Power Tunnels project to establish positions of existing services to allow a road widening to be installed.

This activity was planned, had agreed RAMS and was being performed in accordance with HSG47 including the use of a Vacuum Excavator. A Cat and Genny survey was performed prior to breaking ground with re-scanning every 150mm as the work progressed.

During these Vac Ex works a concrete block was uncovered and needed to be removed. This was discussed on site between ET operations, Capital Delivery and the Principal Contractor on 2nd June during a site walkover.

When lifting the concrete block, the watcher saw a clay duct stuck to the concrete, so they stopped the activity. The clay duct was embedded into the concrete. As the block was lifted the clay duct shattered, revealing the duct and its contents (5 cables).

To make the area safe the concrete block needed to continue to be moved. Once the block was safely removed it could be seen that there was damage to one of the cables (the outer sheath of a 15mm cable).

The approximate position of the concrete block is shown by the red outline on the picture to the right.



Concrete block (after removal)
Approx position prior to removal



Immediate actions taken/Initial learning

All excavation works where stopped immediately

All relevant parties informed within timescales

Drawings and CAT+Genny surveys are not a guarantee that all services have been identified.

Additional actions are required to prove an area is sterile of buried services (e.g. perimeter slit trench using safe digging methods)

Investigation underway to understand learning

Categorisation of the incident: Medium

Incident Details

Date of incident: 3rd June 2020

Time: 16:30

Location/Site: Hurst Site

Principal/Contractor: Hochtief Murphy Joint Venture

Key Contacts

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Accountable Person: Phil Billington

Entity/Function: Capital Delivery

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