

Police bridge strike protocol – initial actions



BRITISH
TRANSPORT
POLICE



Bridge strike: initial actions

A BRIDGE STRIKE IS A POTENTIALLY CRITICAL INCIDENT

This Protocol is an agreed framework of key actions to be undertaken by the Police and Network Rail, following a bridge strike at a railway bridge. The purpose of this Protocol is to ensure all those involved in the response to a bridge strike work together in a consistent manner and achieve high levels of safety, whilst minimising delays to train services.

This Document has been produced in consultation with the following organisations:

British Transport Police
Association of Chief Police Officers
(England, Wales & Northern Ireland)
Association of Chief Police Officers
(Scotland)
Network Rail

- 1 Police control will immediately inform Network Rail of any reported bridge strike, and provide the following information as soon as available irrespective of the damage caused:
 - date and time of incident
 - location of the bridge
 - whether the bridge is over the road or over the railway
 - bridge identification shown on the bridge identification plate
 - any known hazards or if persons are trapped
 - whether at a rail over a road bridge, the vehicle is wedged
 - police incident reference number
 - details of any witnesses
 - vehicle and driver details if available
- 2 Network Rail will decide whether train movements will continue.
- 3 Network Rail Control will implement rapid response arrangements for the bridge to be examined and to enable actions to be taken as necessary to maintain the safety of the railway or train movements to be authorised.
- 4 When a bridge strike is reported to Network Rail by other than Police Control, Network Rail Control will report the bridge strike to civil Police Control. Network Rail control will also report all bridge strikes to British Transport Police.
- 5 Police may not generally attend damage only road traffic collisions. There is however a statutory duty under the Road Traffic Act to report damage to roadside property caused in a road traffic collision. Thus the name and address of the driver(s), details of the vehicle owner(s), and the registration number(s) of the vehicle(s) involved in a bridge strike incident should be obtained and reported.
- 6 Police Control will advise other emergency services' controls as necessary.



Police Control

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Network Rail document references:
RT/LS/P/250: Module 7 - Emergency Services Incident Protocol
RT/LS/P/250: Module 4 - Railway Safety for the Emergency Services
NR/L3/OCS/043: National Control Instructions
Response to a Bridge Strike over the Railway
<http://www.networkrail.co.uk/asp/3563.aspx>

References to Police in this Protocol means:

The Police Forces in England, Wales & Scotland

- 7 Network Rail Control and the Police Control will agree a single point of contact and keep each other updated on the incident.
- 8 If the Police require access to the tracks, the procedures in the Emergency Services Incident Protocol (Network Rail document RT/LS/P/250 Module 7) shall be followed. Access shall be in accordance with Railway Safety for the Emergency Services (Network Rail document RT/LS/P/250 Module 4).
- 9 The Police will advise Network Rail of any road closure implemented following a bridge strike incident, and the local highway authorities' emergency response contact when road diversions are necessary.
- 10 Network Rail may need access to the road under a railway bridge to examine the bridge or remove loose debris over the road. In such circumstances, a local arrangement may be made with the Police Officer at site or Network Rail Control will request the Police Control to implement suitable traffic management to enable the examination to take place.
- 11 When a vehicle wedged under a bridge is required to be removed, the Police Control shall advise Network Rail Control, who will make arrangements if considered necessary for train services to be suspended for the removal.
- 12 Irrespective of whether damage to the bridge is visible or not, the Police Officer on site shall submit a formal accident report for each bridge strike.
- 13 There is no legal impediment under the Data Protection Act to details of the driver/owner of the vehicle being passed to Network Rail when such information is provided direct to a Police Officer at the scene of a bridge strike incident by the driver/owner. If not obtained at site, Network Rail may be provided with such information following a formal request.

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