Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway Plc
Risk Assessment for Task Risk Assessment : Fishplate Greasing/Oiling - Permanent Way

Risk Assessment - Task Risk Assessment : Fishplate Greasing/Oiling

Reference No: PER-46061-85
Version No: 1
Assessment Approver: Kevin Jarvis

Part of the generic suite of risk assessments for 'standard' tasks undertaken by the P-way Dept : Fishplate Greasing/Oiling

Department: Permanent Way
Date Of Assessment: 08 February 2026
Review Due Before: 12 May 2031
Lead Assessor: Paul Fuller (Track Maintenance Manager)
Team: Kev Jarvis (Process Assurance), Colin Charman (Safety Director), Graham Willis (HR Director), Andy Stratford (P-way Saturday Team Leader), Jim Graham (P-way Wednesday Team Leader), Pete Lightfoot (P-way Safety Rep)

Personal Injury

Type	Hazard Cause	Persons Affected	Control Measures	L S T Overall	Additional Control Measures	L S T Overall	Owner/Action
Health and Safety	Musculoskeletal injury Bending over / crouching down / incorrect posture	Volunteers & Staff	1) CRITICAL - Engineering: Interflon (Teflon-based liquid) is filled into a 2 litre spray bottle. No requirement for heavy power tools (impct wrench) to be used as the product simply is applied to the fishing surtaces with the fishplates in-situ. - Effective 2) CRITICAL - Administrative: Training leaflet has been created and distributed to all P-way staff showing how to correctly use and apply the Interflon. - Effective 3) CRITICAL - Administrative: Only volunteers who offer to undertake the oiling programme are used and are briefed on the risks before departing Winchcombe. Any volunteer with bad back or posture problems is not asked to undertake this task. - Effective 4) CRITICAL - Administrative: All volunteers in the department to have watched the 'Manual Handling' training video on the Portal and completed the quiz questions. They are reminded to be careful in their approach to the greasing programme and to pace themselves as necessary as so not to rush. - Effective 5) CRITICAL - Administrative: PTS awareness applies at all times. - Effective	2 x 2 = 4 Low - Risk to be monitored to ensure it remains adequately controlled to an acceptable level.	1) Administrative: First Response Team are available to call if required : 07395 448213 - Effective	2 x 2 = 4 Low - Risk to be monitored to ensure it remains adequately controlled to an acceptable level.	n/a
Health and Safety	Working with COSHH substance Interflon Lube EP	Volunteers & Staff	1) CRITICAL - Administrative: COSHH assessment for Interflon Lube EP created and uploaded to the GWSR COSHH register and available for everyone to freely access. - Effective 2) CRITICAL - PPE: Correct PPE to be worn when handling the product - gloves. If required, goggles are also available. - Effective 3) CRITICAL - PPE: Hand washing facilities available at all stations for volunteers/staff to clean their hands. - Effective	2 x 2 = 4 Low - Risk to be monitored to ensure it remains adequately controlled to an acceptable level.	None	n n n	n/a
Health and Safety	Working on a live railway Train operations	Volunteers & Staff	1) CRITICAL - Elimination: When oiling fishplates through platforms, or Greet Tunnel, a Line Block with the controlling Signalman MUST be obtained. - Effective 2) CRITICAL - Engineering: The application of Interflon is done with the fishplates in-situ so the fishplates do not need to be removed. - Effective 3) CRITICAL - Administrative: On operating days, an entry onto the Daily Ops Notices on the Sign-On system must be entered so train crew are aware of staff on and about the line. - Effective 4) CRITICAL - Administrative: PTS rules apply at all times. - Effective 5) CRITICAL - Administrative: The fishplate oiling to be undertaken by a minimum of 2 people, with at least one acting as a Lookout for approaching trains. - Effective	1 x 2 = 2 Low - Risk to be monitored to ensure it remains adequately controlled to an acceptable level.	None	n n n	n/a

Type	Hazard Cause	Persons Affected	Control Measures	L S T Overall	Additional Control Measures	L S T Overall	Owner/Action
Health and Safety	Noise and Vibration Use of power tools (e.g. impact wrench)	Volunteers & Staff	1) CRITICAL - Elimination: Application of Interflon does not require the removal of fishplates so no power tools are required. - Effective	1 x 1 = 1 Low - Risk to be monitored to ensure it remains adequately controlled to an acceptable level.	None	n n n	n/a

Affect on Operations

Type	Hazard Cause	Persons Affected	Control Measures	L S T Overall	Additional Control Measures	L S T Overall	Owner/Action
Operations	Failure to grease fishplates resulting in 'frozen joints' Winter/cold weather - broken fishplates | Summer/hot weather - track buckles	Everyone	1) Engineering: If fishplates are not greased frequently enough, the fishplate can rust itself onto the rail ends which prevents the joint from opening or closing with the expansion or contraction of the rail. In the winter time, this will lead to broken fishplates as the joint pulls apart, and in the summer this may result in a buckled joint due to the compressive forces being applied through the adjoining rails. - Unacceptable 2) Administrative: Interflon can be applied biennially but internal GWSR P-way Dept. policy is to apply Interflon annually. - Effective	2 x 2 = 4 Low - Risk to be monitored to ensure it remains adequately controlled to an acceptable level.	None	n n n	n/a
Operations	Removal of fishplates during extremes of heat Winter/cold weather - rail ends opening up | Summer/hot weather - rail ends closing up. Unable to fully bolt plates/rails back together.	Everyone	1) CRITICAL - Elimination: Fishplates are not required to be removed for the application of Interflon. - Effective 2) CRITICAL - Engineering: Fishplates should not be removed during hot weather as there is a risk of the joint closing up due to rail expansion. - Effective 3) CRITICAL - Engineering: Fishplates should not be removed during cold weather as there is a risk of the joint opening out due to rail contraction. - Effective 4) CRITICAL - Engineering: The Track Maintenance Manual allows for joints to be 'fly-fished' in the worst case scenario, without the need to reduce train speed as long as the joints are inspected frequently and fully-bolted as soon as possible. - Effective	2 x 2 = 4 Low - Risk to be monitored to ensure it remains adequately controlled to an acceptable level.	None	n n n	n/a
Operations	Train operations Working between trains on a live railway	Volunteers & Staff	1) CRITICAL - Engineering: Line Blocks can be requested from the controlling Signalman if required. - Effective 2) CRITICAL - Administrative: The application of Interflon to fishplates, provided the fishplates are not removed, is permitted to be undertaken on running days in accordance with the GWSR Rule Book. - Effective 3) CRITICAL - Administrative: PTS rules apply at all times - Effective 4) CRITICAL - Administrative: Notice to be posted on the Daily Notice page of the sign-on system prior to 00:01 of the day in question. Details must include the type of work being undertaken and the location of the works. - Effective	2 x 1 = 2 Low - Risk to be monitored to ensure it remains adequately controlled to an acceptable level.	None	n n n	n/a

Environmental Impact

Type	Hazard Cause	Persons Affected	Control Measures	L S T Overall	Additional Control Measures	L S T Overall	Owner/Action
Environmental	Damage to the environment Spillage; fluid entering water courses	Everyone	1) CRITICAL - Engineering: Spray bottles designed to only apply a certain volume of liquid per pump. - Effective 2) CRITICAL - Engineering: Bottles contain no more than 2 litres of Interflon when full. Spill of whole bottle of fluid will not be of sufficient quantity to affect nearby water courses. - Effective 3) CRITICAL - Administrative: H412- Harmful to aquatic life with long lasting effects. > not used near watercourses, only on fishplate joints. - Effective	2 x 1 = 2 Low - Risk to be monitored to ensure it remains adequately controlled to an acceptable level.	None	n n n	n/a

Reference

Type	Hazard Cause	Persons Affected	Control Measures	L S T Overall	Additional Control Measures	L S T Overall	Owner/Action
Health and Safety	Additional reference Documentation	Volunteers & Staff	1) CRITICAL - Administrative: Also refer to Risk Assessment "Manual Handling and Fitting Track Components", ID: PER-44110-79 - Effective 2) CRITICAL - Administrative: Also refer to Risk Assessment "Fishplate Maintenance", ID: PER-44220-93 - Effective	1 x 1 = 1 Low - Risk to be monitored to ensure it remains adequately controlled to an acceptable level.	None	n n n	n/a

COSHH Assessments

The following COSHH assessments are applicable to this risk assessment:

• COSHH-44226-89 - Lube EP

Ends