



NJUG CASE STUDY

CASE STUDY 37: 'Zero Harm' ***Winner of the NJUG 2009 World Class Award***

The National Joint Utilities Group (NJUG) is the UK industry association representing utilities on street works issues. The 39 companies¹ we represent work to deliver gas, electricity, water and telecommunications to both individual consumers and UK plc.

NJUG members need to continue to drive forward further improvements. We have therefore developed the NJUG Vision for Street Works, which revolves around six main principles:

1. Safety is the number one priority
2. Damage to underground assets is avoided
3. Utilities work together and in partnership with local authorities to minimise disruption
4. Utilities deliver consistent high quality
5. Utilities maximize use of sustainable methods and materials
6. Street works in the UK are regarded as world class

This case study is an example of NJUG delivering on these principles and turning the vision into reality.

Overview:

An analysis of training within EDF Energy Networks indicated that few of those with street works qualifications had ever attended refresher training, particularly on their responsibility for ensuring a safe work site. Whilst there is no requirement for any refresher training under NRSWA, EDF Energy Networks have a 'Zero Harm' philosophy, in alignment with NJUG's own vision on safety, to keep employees and the public safe. Furthermore an increasing number of regulations require employers to demonstrate the competencies of their employees to perform their job roles; these include the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007, Traffic Management Act 2004, and Health & Safety at Work Act 1974.

Therefore, with the assistance of their alliance partners, local authorities and the police, EDF Energy Networks developed a new training course which went beyond the NRSWA training requirements. The objectives of this safety refresher training were to enable EDF Energy Networks employees to be trained in the right skills to complement the company's business requirements and to conform to all current Government legislation and Codes of Practice. This innovative course is designed to employ a number of training techniques to stimulate and reinforce the safety message. The training material is delivered to more than 2000 EDF Energy Networks employees and contracting staff, and interest in the material has also been shown by local authorities and contractors.



¹ NJUG's current members are Energy Networks Association (representing electricity and gas), Water UK (representing all water and wastewater companies), National Grid, Openreach, and Virgin Media. Our associate members are Clancy Docwra, Skanska McNicholas, Balfour Beatty, Morrison Utility Services, Morgan Est, NACAP, PJ Keary, First Intervention, Carillion, Enterprise, Laing O'Rourke, AMEC and SQS Ltd. Including members through trade associations, NJUG represents thirty-seven utility companies, and twelve utility contractors.

Case study:

Refresher training & testing

This one day course is designed as a refresher for operatives and supervisors who have NRSWA units 2 or 10, and employees who will take the NRSWA certificates in unit 2 and / or 10 (signing, lighting and guarding). The aim of the course is for delegates to:

- Learn that they have responsibility for safety.
- Learn that Red Book requirements must be followed and are a minimum requirement.
- Learn how to prepare traffic management plans and lay out a site.
- Take a competence test.

The training opens with a DVD presentation “On Any Work Day” This hard-hitting production is designed to convince the targeted audience that liability may be down to individual employee and not the company. It emphasises also that criminal prosecution and imprisonment could follow, despite a previously reliable and responsible work record.

The DVD session also includes a discussion half way through and is followed by:

- A review of the Red Book requirements both in presentation and discussion format.
- A practical element for each delegate including the design and setting out of traffic management plans using an interactive sign, lighting and guarding computer system.
- A 20-question must-pass multiple-choice test. Failure to pass results in a retake or attendance of an external full unit 2 or 10 course.

Benefits arising from the project / initiative

EDF Energy Networks aim is to help employees look at safety in a new way and teach them to rely on themselves and each other to stay safe. This approach has fostered an increase in peer-to-peer communication about safety, allowing safety to become second nature to the individual and, over time, a greater and more integrated part of EDF Energy Networks ‘Zero Harm’ culture.

This project supports the safety objectives of both NJUG and EDF Energy Networks, by teaching responsibility, accountability and ownership of signing, lighting and guarding requirements to all their employees working in the highway. Furthermore the “Safety at Street Works and Road Works” training course is intended to conform to the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, ensuring so far as is reasonably practicable the well-being and safety of all their employees and their duty of care to customers and the general public.

More and more companies are viewing a strong safety culture as key to achieving business excellence. EDF Energy Networks ‘Zero Harm’ programme emphasises how safety awareness has a strategic business value that links reduced workplace injuries to improved business performance, working to these five key principles:

- Every job will be done safely, no matter how important or urgent it is.
- Every individual has a personal responsibility for their own health and safety and for those around them.
- Putting people to work carries a specific responsibility and accountability for safety and health which will be visibly demonstrated by individuals by their own health and safety, and of those around them.
- Each ‘near miss’ learnt from reduces the chance of harm next time.
- Every individual will spot, report and deal with hazards to help create a harm free workplace.

Through continued training and refresher training, EDF Energy Networks help their employees build the observation and communication skills necessary to establish a safe working environment. The most successful training programs evolve from a long term strategy that management, employees and local highway authority’s support.