

Industry comments on ORR overview of work related ill-health in GB rail industry in 2010

Response of 30 June 2011 from London Underground Limited

You have asked for comments on the paper. It is excellent and makes several profoundly important points. I strongly support it. Just a couple of comments.

I'm not sure that trauma/psychological shock is a good proxy for other forms of stress. The report particularly cites the other causes of work related stress as highlighted by the TUs – including bullying and long working hours. I'm not sure how you could get a measure of these, but don't think that simply looking at the figures for trauma/psychological shock is the answer. In London Underground the usual causes of trauma/psychological shock are person under train incidents and workplace violence and give no indication of other issues. We would usually look at our sickness absence figures rather than the LUSEA returns when thinking about these other areas of stress. Distinguishing between work related and non-work related stress is difficult and not always particularly helpful, from the point of view of assisting the employee to recover. Where there is a clear work related issue then that obviously needs addressing, but very often there are multifactorial underlying issues, including the individual's beliefs about and attitude towards their situation.

The report mentions in passing the fit note – from the broader health point of view (rather than simply work related ill health), the ability of managers to make suitable adjustments is very important to allow people to return to work early after injury and illness, and to accommodate employees with short or long term health issues.

I hope this is helpful,

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