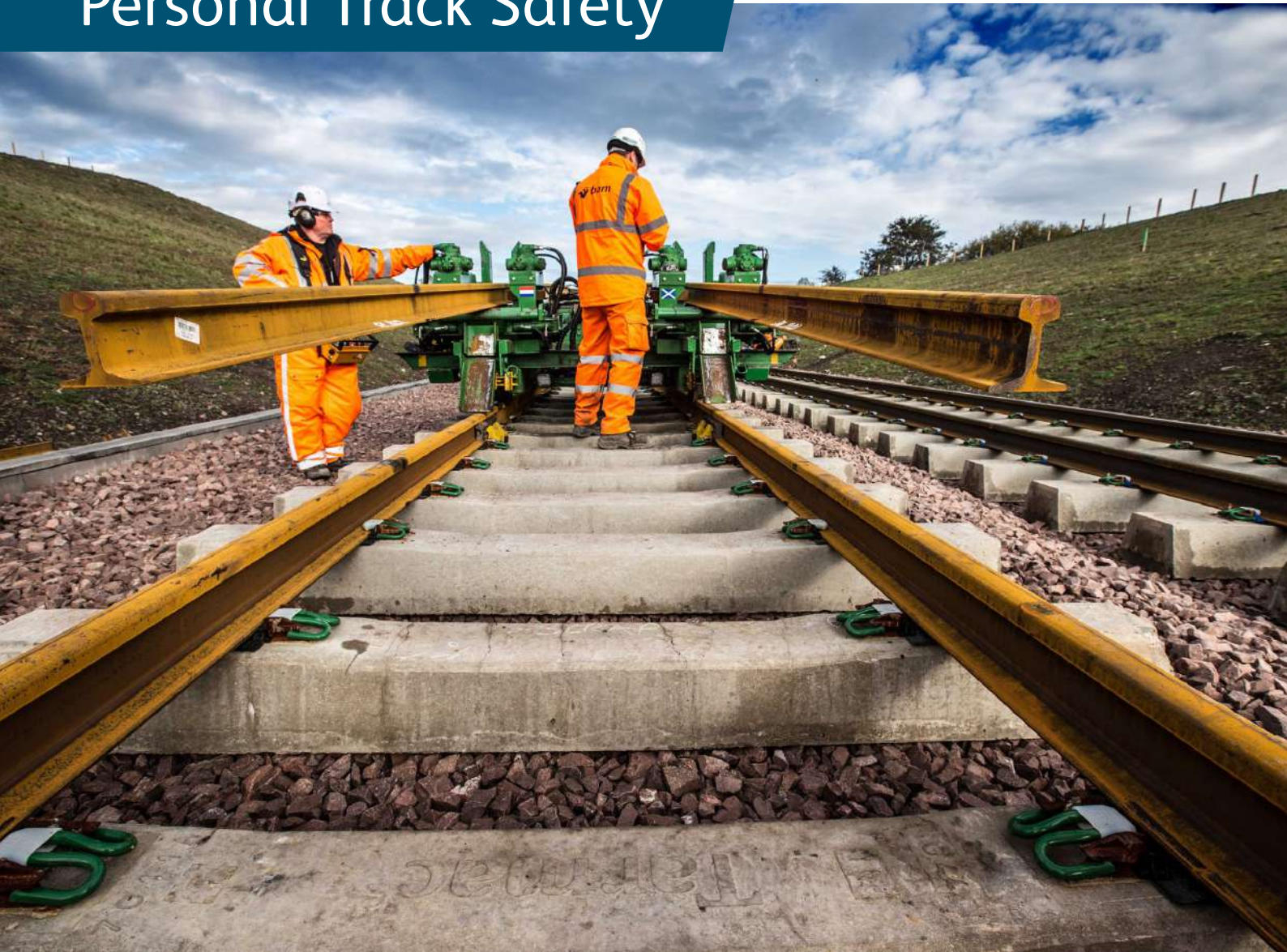


Personal Track Safety

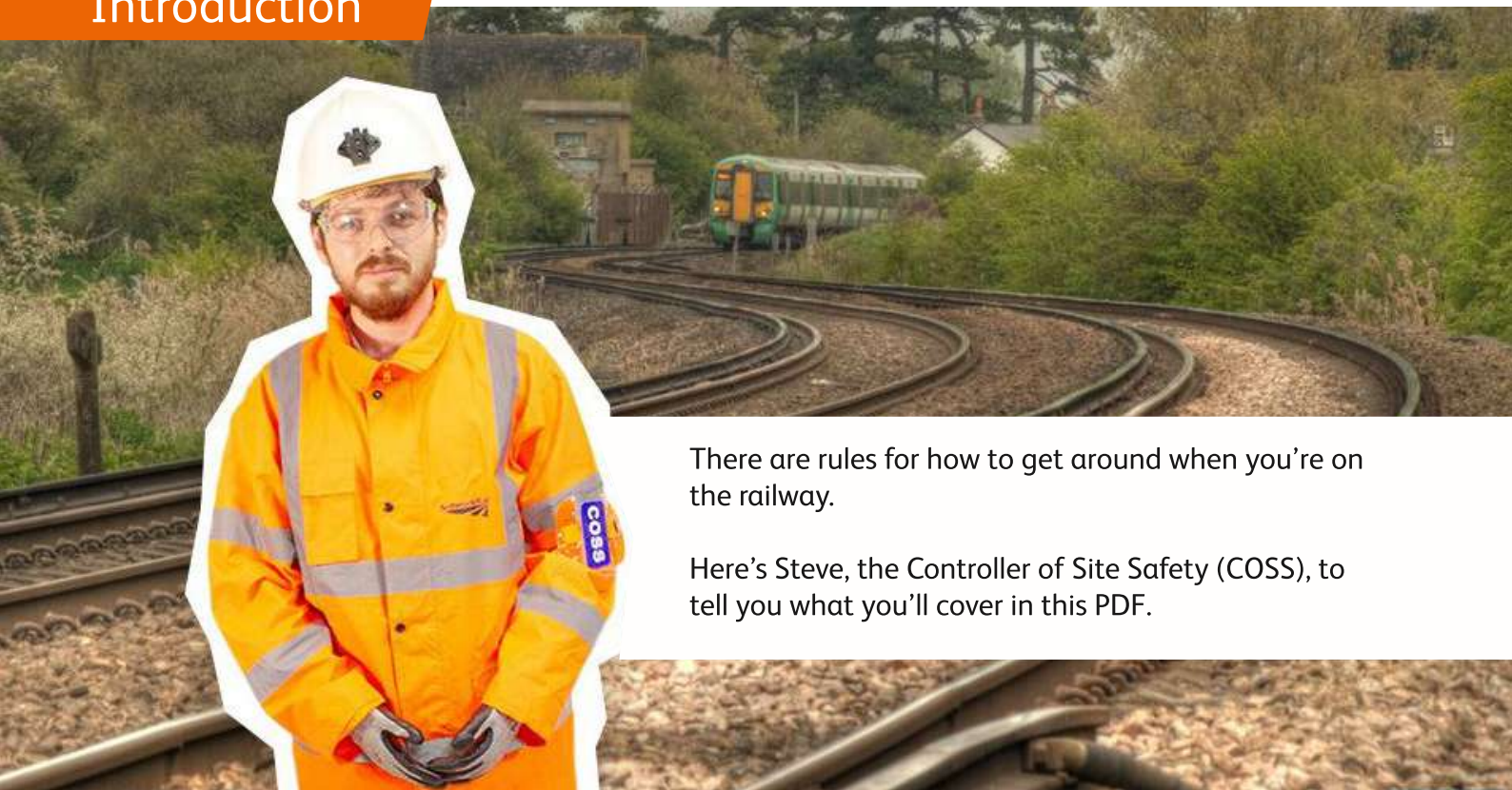


05

Going onto the railway

Going onto the railway

Introduction



There are rules for how to get around when you're on the railway.

Here's Steve, the Controller of Site Safety (COSS), to tell you what you'll cover in this PDF.

“

In this PDF you're going to explore the process and procedures for going onto and working on the railway.

You'll also find out about the main hazards and distractions you'll come across.

If you're going to avoid accidents, you need to know this.

”

Going onto the railway

Walking on track

Before you go on or near the line the person in charge will make sure the COSS has briefed you on the safe systems that will apply. However, sometimes you will need to walk alone.

Whenever you go on or near the line, be aware of the hazards and how to stay safe. This includes the approved access and exit point, and the speed and direction of approaching trains. There may be other dangers too, so check your Sectional Appendix and Hazard Directory, or ask your manager for advice.

If there is an authorised walking route, you should use it. Otherwise you can walk in the cess as the next option, or the forefoot if you really have to. Be aware of your surroundings, such as the conditions underfoot. Look up every five seconds, and keep on watching and listening for trains.

Sometimes, you will need to cross the line. It's best to use a public walkway, such as a bridge or subway if there is one. If there's nothing nearby, look for a place with a clear view of the track for all lines you need to cross. Before you cross, look and listen carefully for approaching trains. Then, step across the line, avoiding the sleepers and rails. Avoid crossing the line at points, as they could move without warning, and trap your foot. And remember, in sidings and work sites, stationary vehicles can move without warning, or block your view of oncoming trains.

In DC areas, look for a break in the conductor rail, or an area with protective cover. Otherwise, step over the running rail and conductor rail all in one go. Never put your foot in between them. This is a very dangerous thing to do.

Statistics show that the biggest cause of death on the railway is from impact with a train, so whenever one approaches, move into a position of safety at least ten seconds before it arrives.

Never assume you know which line the train will be on, especially near a set of points. When the driver sounds his horn, acknowledge the warning by raising one arm above your head.

Keep watching the train until you are sure the danger has past and remain in the position of safety until the Controller of Site Safety gives the all clear.



Going onto the railway

Know your figures

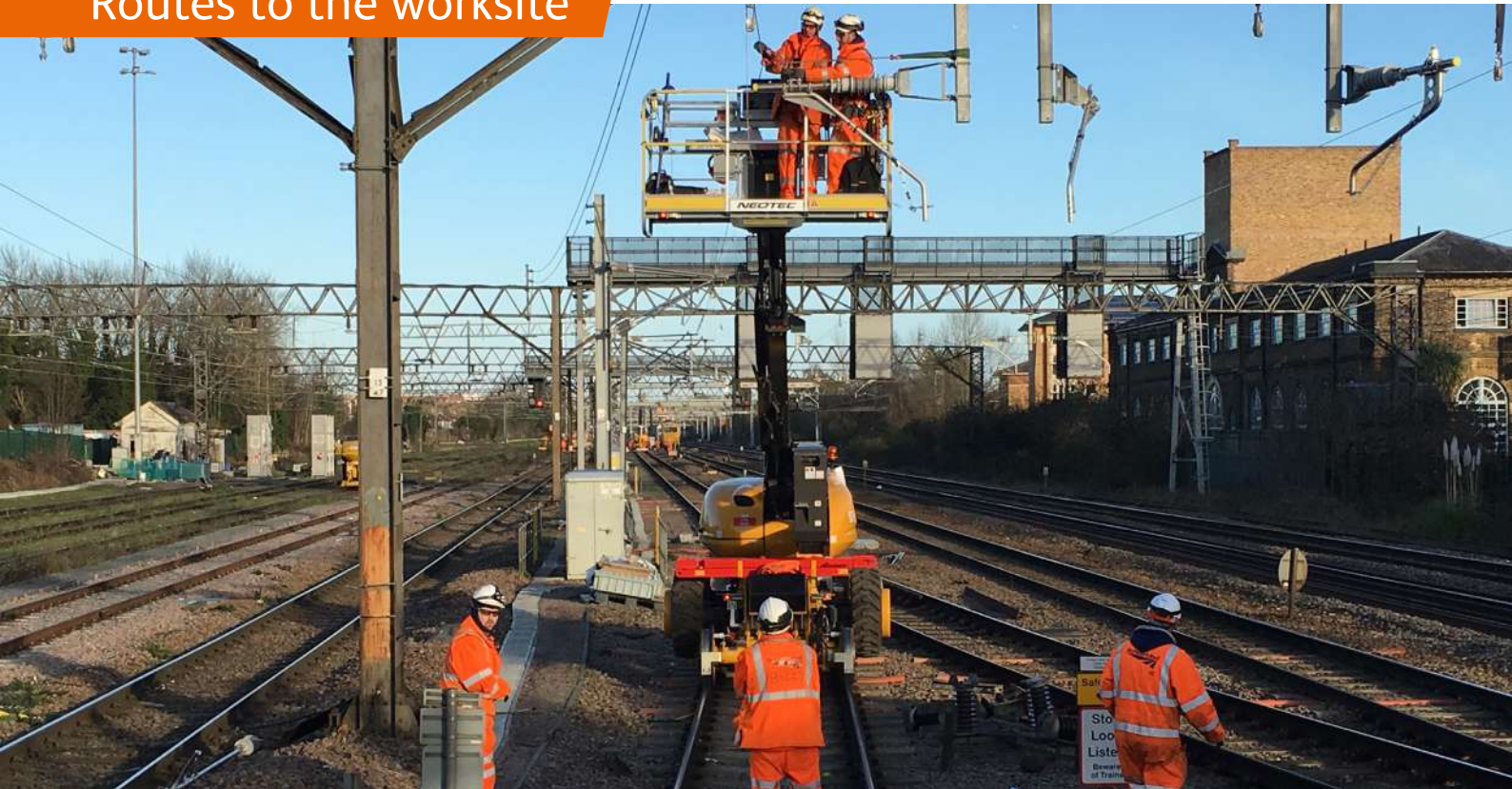


Here are some key points to remember

- If you know a train is coming, make sure you are in a position of safety at least **10 seconds** before it passes. Don't leave it any later than this.
- When walking on the line, leave a distance of at least **20 metres** between you and anyone else. This avoids any distractions that might prevent you from being alert to oncoming trains.
- If there is no authorised walking route, walk in the **cess**, unless your COSS or Safe Work Leader tells you otherwise. Make sure you are facing the direction of oncoming trains whenever possible.

Going onto the railway

Routes to the worksite



When you're walking on the track, use the authorised walking routes to keep safe.

Before going on or near the line, you must be briefed on the contents of the safe work pack. This includes the line speeds, direction of travel, hazards and any other safety related information.

Don't go on the railway unless you absolutely have to be there. When you do go on or near the line, you must be totally clear about the dangers and how you are going to stay safe. Safety must be your first concern. You must not put yourself or others in danger.

If you become aware of an unsafe situation, you must stop or warn others from placing themselves in danger. This also includes members of the public and passengers.

Going onto the railway

Using road vehicles near the line

You may need to use road vehicles near the line. There are a few things to be aware of when you're using them.



Make sure a COSS or Safe Work Leader is present and has given permission for your road vehicle to be on or near the line.

Or, if you have an Individual Working Alone (IWA) competence you can drive the vehicle on or near the line.

Make sure that you are wearing your full PPE before stepping out of the vehicle and onto the infrastructure.



No part of the vehicle should come within 2m (6ft 6in) of the line, including open doors etc. If the vehicle needs to be driven in the area termed on or near the line, it must be under control of the COSS/SWL.



Remember to switch on hazard warning lights at all times.

Going onto the railway

Using road vehicles near the line



If you're working in darkness or poor visibility, use dipped headlights.



Turn the vehicle only at a suitable turning point and keep the back of the vehicle furthest from the line.



Switch off all red lights when the vehicle is parked.

Going onto the railway

Methods of warning

There are several ways you may be warned when a train is approaching.



The Look Out will use either the horn, whistle or touch. They may also use the Look Out Warning System (LOWS).



Flags are sometimes used as a method of warning between Look Outs.



In noisy environments, the best warning method is to touch people on the shoulder.



If a train approaches, it will sound its horn. You need to acknowledge the driver by holding up your arm until the train has passed.



If a train approaches unexpectedly, make sure that your work group does not scatter, but moves to their designated position of safety. Acknowledge the train in the usual way. You must remain in the position of safety until the COSS or Safe Work Leader tells you it is safe to leave.

Going onto the railway

Crossing the line and stepping over lines



You must use an over-bridge or subway to cross a line if there is one nearby.



Before crossing, always check there is a position of safety on the far side.

Always look both ways before crossing.



Never cross where visibility is restricted.

Make sure you have good visibility of all the lines you are crossing.



If you see a train approaching, **do not** cross in front of it.

Going onto the railway

Crossing the line and stepping over lines



Always cross the line at right angles.



Never cross at points, as there is an increased risk of getting your foot trapped.




Never step on sleepers or rails, as they can be slippery.



Beware of crossing in front of stationary vehicles.

Going onto the railway

Hazards and distractions



Hazards and distractions can make the track a dangerous place.



Weather conditions

Weather conditions – ice, snow and wet weather – can make the work site slippery and lead to trips or falls.

Bad weather, such as fog, falling snow, heavy rain or darkness can reduce visibility and will affect your sighting distances.

Looking towards direct sunlight affects visibility, especially low sun in winter months.

Extremes of hot or cold can also be hard to work in.

Traffic noise

General traffic noise from busy roads or low-flying aircraft can be distracting and may prevent you from hearing a warning.

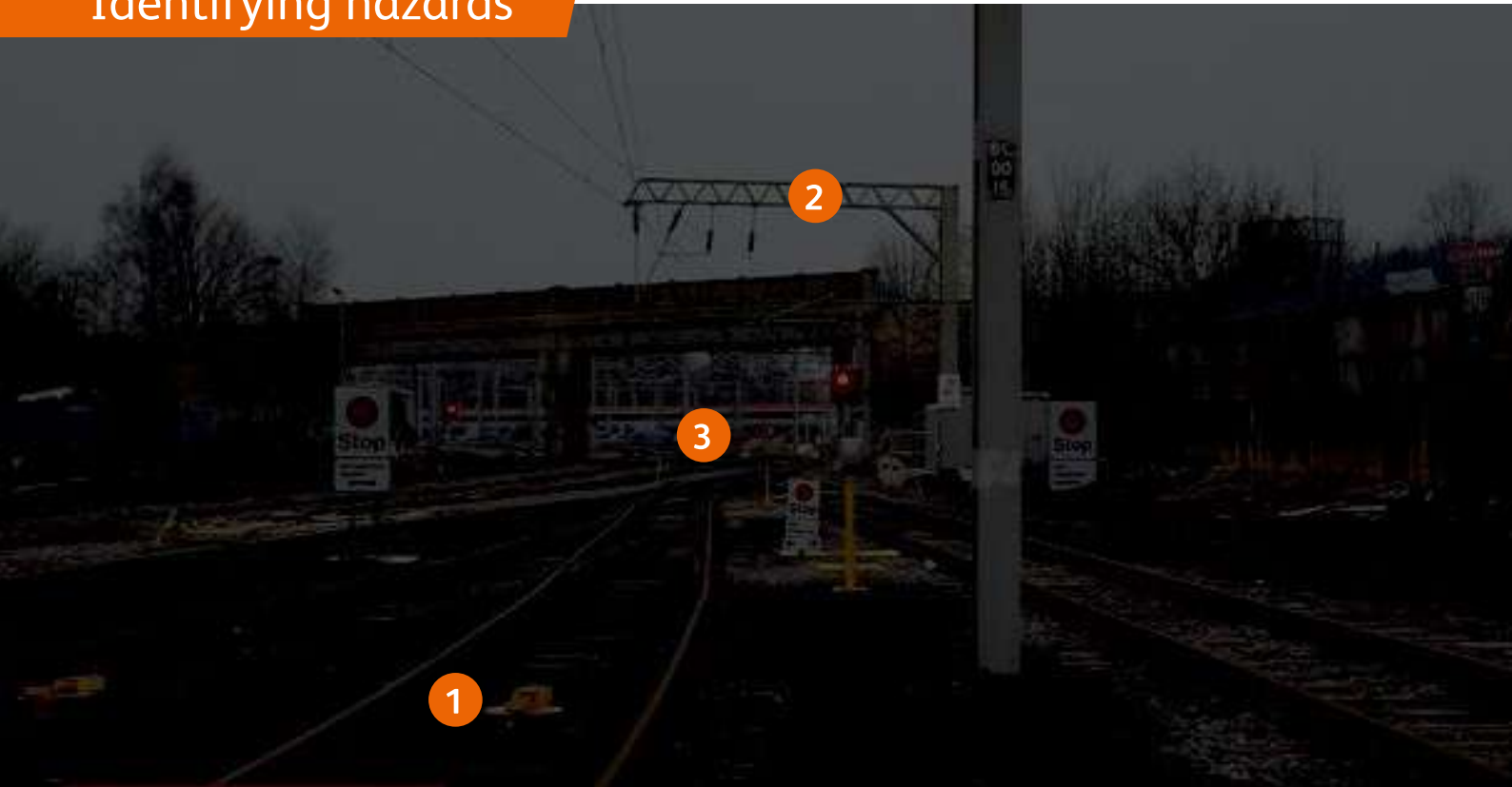
There may also be noise from nearby factories or construction sites.

Distractions

Be aware that people on station platforms or bridges may call out and distract you. You should also look out for distractions at level crossings.

Going onto the railway

Identifying hazards



Work is often carried out overnight so there are as few delays as possible. When you work in the dark, you need to take extra care.

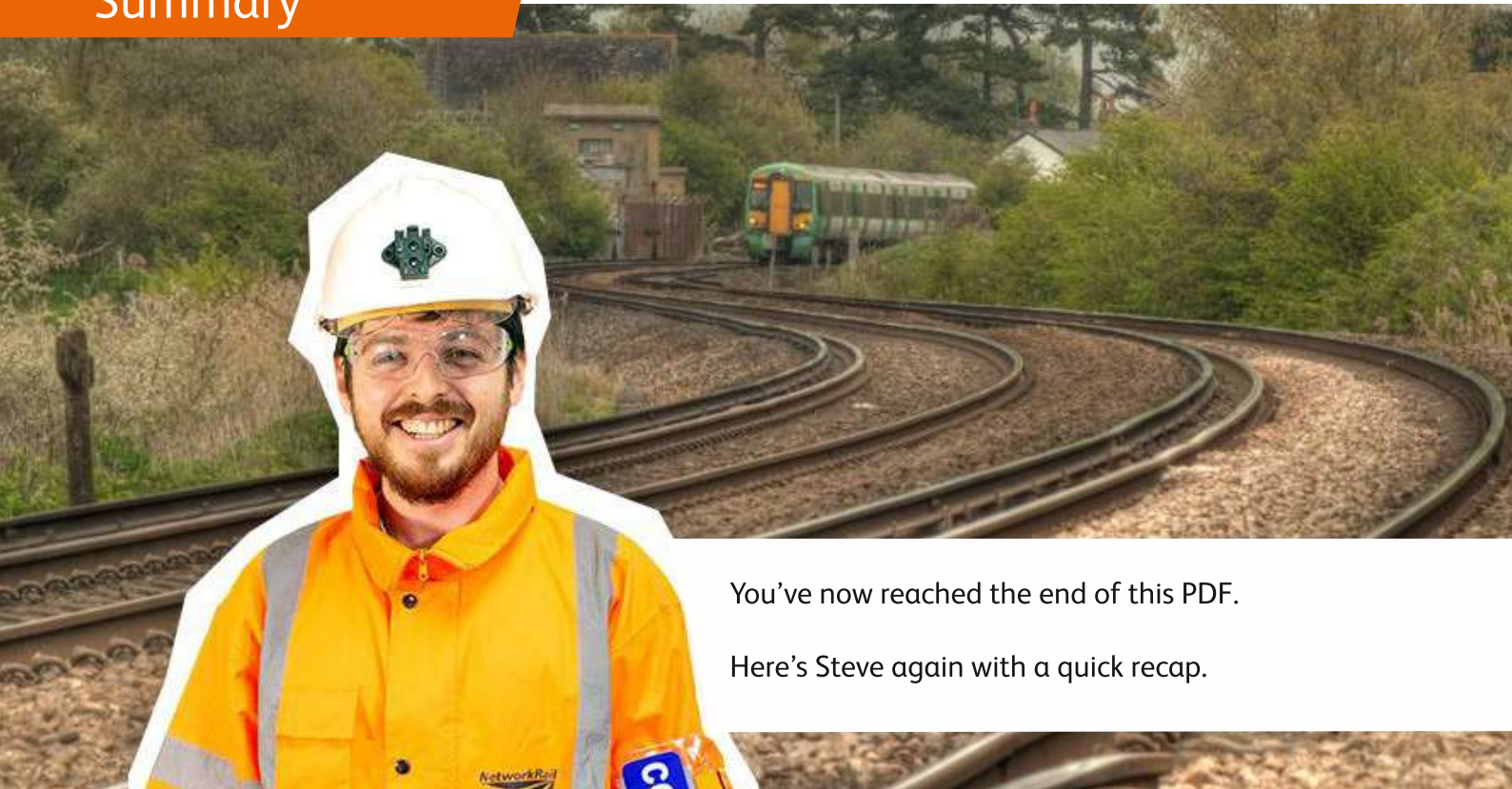
Common hazards to watch out for include:

- 1 Possession limit board:** these markers are used during possessions. Some areas are often under possession, and have limit boards like these folded down on the tracks. Be careful not to trip over them.
- 2 Overhead line equipment:** in the distance, you can see some overhead lines. You should always stay at least 2.75m away from them.
- 3 Points:** these are movable parts of the track and can trap your feet between the rails.



Going onto the railway

Summary



You've now reached the end of this PDF.

Here's Steve again with a quick recap.



When going onto the railway itself, there are a few things you need to remember.

- Firstly, always check to see if there is an authorised walking route and make sure you use it.
- When you have a Look Out with you, they might use a variety of different warning systems. Be sure you know which one to be ready for. The COSS or Safe Work Leader will tell you.
- As if there weren't enough things to watch out for, you need to be aware of hazards on the track and anything that might distract you while you work. This is really important when you're working in bad weather or in the dark.
- Finally, when using a vehicle on or near the line, follow the safety guidelines and don't leave it any nearer to the track than you have to.

That's the end of this part of the Personal Track Safety (PTS) learning. Please read the other PDFs or e-learning topics in this course before you take the online Assessment.

