



# Safety Alert

## Winch Cable Failure Incident

22 March 2021

The following pages of this safety alert were issued by Highways England's supply chain partner:

**Costain Jacobs Partnership JV**

# RDPN WHSE

## Incident Alert Information



<b>Sector</b>	Highways - Transportation	<b>Framework / Contract</b>	RDP North – Scotswood to North Brunton
<b>Date &amp; Time of Incident</b>	06 January 2021 / 10:51	<b>Incident Type</b>	HPE
<b>Location of Incident</b>	A1 Southbound Jct 80-79	<b>Alert Completed by</b>	RDPN SHE Team

### 1. Outline of Incident

On the 06 January 2021 at 10:51 a winch cable failed during a vehicle recovery operation. During the recovery, the vehicle was being winched onto the back of the recovery vehicle when the winch cable snapped, circa 1" from the ferrule, causing the vehicle to roll backwards off the recovery vehicle, towards the verge. There was no injury sustained, however the broken-down vehicle incurred minor damage.

Following the incident, the wire cable was sent off for an independent inspection by a third-party specialist. The inspection reported the following:

*'The winch has snapped close to the spliced ferrule termination at the hook end, this is a sure sign of a wire rope overload. Under close observation it was noticed that the 'dead end' of the wire rope again at the ferrule termination was damaged/pressed into the ferrule – this could be a sign the winch wire has been taken into the winch itself underload'.*

With the information available the investigation was unable to identify when this damage may have occurred. The recovery operator had conducted the daily/weekly checks and reported no defects to the winch cable prior to the incident. However, the recovery operator when questioned, states that the winch cable and ferrule did not enter the winch at the time of the incident.

### 2. Photographs



### 3. Lessons Learnt

- It was likely that the cause of the wire rope failure is due to the winch cable and ferrule being taken into the winch during a winching operation. However, the investigation could not identify when this occurred.
- Additional assurance checks to be conducted on the recovery contractors.
- Design solution required to prevent the ferrule being taken into the winch.
- Secondary safety strap to be minimum requirement for all Costain recovery contractors.