



### INVISIBLE WEAPON IN FIGHT AGAINST CABLE THIEVES IN SUNDERLAND

A new weapon is being used by Network Rail to protect essential rail equipment in Sunderland from thieves who are targeting it for its scrap value.

Thieves continue to target parts of the overhead line systems – even though a programme to replace the old copper cables with a less valuable alternative has been carried out by Network Rail.

In the past year there have been nine occasions when rail services were disrupted by thieves targeting this equipment – resulting in 1,454 minutes of delay and disruption to passengers and compensation costs to Network Rail of around £71,300.

Now a unique forensic taggant from RedWeb Technologies is being applied to the equipment to help police catch the thieves, by providing the link between the criminal and the crime scene

Richard Lungmuss, route director for Network Rail said: “Cable theft continues to cause massive disruption to passengers and freight services. This is not acceptable. Britain relies on rail and the disruption and delay has a significant effect on people’s lives – through being late for work, missing appointments or simply ruining a day out during the summer holidays.

“We are doing all we can to protect the network, including successful use of CCTV, extra dedicated police patrols and using various methods to make cables harder to steal. The use of the RedWeb marker is another weapon against these thieves who are bringing misery to so many people.”

Detective Inspector Mick Jackson, of British Transport Polices dedicated cable team, Operation Leopard, said, “Using Red Web on the rail network will assist us in identifying those responsible for stealing cable.

“Technological and forensic advances such as Red Web, are making life more and more difficult for thieves, and are increasing the opportunities for us to detect criminals.

“British Transport Police will continue to work hard to catch offenders in an effort to stamp out this problem. We will also continue to seek methods of detecting and preventing cable theft, and will endeavour to secure prosecutions on every occasion.”

#### Note to editors

RedWeb's [Molecular Taggant Technology](#) provides police and prosecuting authorities with evidence linking offenders to the scene of their crime. The technology is being used to mark essential railway equipment in the Sunderland area.

We will not be publishing any specific data about where the marking technology is being used. However it will only be used on rail property.

#### For more information contact

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### **About Network Rail**

Network Rail is the not for dividend owner and operator of Britain's railway infrastructure, which includes the tracks, signals, tunnels, bridges, viaducts, level crossings and stations - the largest of which we also manage We aim to provide a safe, reliable and efficient rail infrastructure for freight and passenger trains to use Our website: [www.networkrail.co.uk](http://www.networkrail.co.uk)