Road studs lead to safer level crossings after key decision

A LANDMARK decision by Network Rail paves the way for high-performance LED road studs to be installed at level crossings around the UK.

Active LED solar units supplied by Rennicks UK have been granted a Certificate of Acceptance by the authority responsible for the country’s railways.

The news opens the door for the use of LED road studs as an intuitive signal to pedestrians in the approach to and crossing the track. It also enhances delineation for cyclists and vehicle users providing further safety.

And it could be the first in a raft of measures designed to improve safety following the publication of a damning report warning that many hundreds of crossings still pose an ‘unacceptable’ danger to the public.

The Transport Select Committee document left MPs considering reforms to reduce risk and left the Office of Rail Regulation, which is responsible for rail safety, calling for innovative solutions such as the use of new technology.

John Swift, National Sales Manager of Rennicks UK, believes active LED road studs, shown to be far more effective than traditional reflective units, can now provide part of the solution.

He said: “By granting a Certificate of Acceptance for the LED studs, Network Rail are showing they’re considering changes very carefully by using new technology that maybe wasn’t available before.

“This aids level crossings around the country providing key decision points for all users traversing a level crossing at night.

“The solution uses dual LEDs with an internal prismatic system for high performance and solar/battery technology for environmental sustainability.

“They create a brightly illuminated indication of the length and width of the crossing surface edges and will be effective for both drivers and pedestrians during night-time hours, even more so with inclement weather conditions.”

MPs have been looking into a range of proposals to reduce risk, developed by experts at the Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB) and Transport Research Laboratory (TRL).

A final report will be published within six months, though the creation of a universal system to help road users become more aware of the rules at crossings is expected to be a top priority.

Mr Swift added: “There are around 8,000 level crossings in Great Britain and safety is obviously of paramount importance.

“We believe the use of these studs along with other measures, such as improved signage, can help reduce risk by providing better and intuitive information.”
“The Office of Rail Regulation is pushing the industry to deliver innovative solutions to make crossings safe and Network Rail need to ensure any improvements carried out deliver benefits hence the rigorous certification process.”

“The studs are also Type Approved by the UK Department for Transport for road use, which means local authorities can now work with the same solution on the approaches to the crossings - opening up and stretching the decision points further away.

“The studs are now officially recognised as conforming to exacting standards on both the road and rail network. You won’t see better.

“Rennicks have been pleased to assist with Network Rail’s safety agenda ‘everyone home safe every day’. Low is not zero in terms of accidents, delays and fatalities, but we will work towards that alongside other providers.”

ENDS

Notes to Editors
With more than 25 years’ experience, Rennicks UK is at the forefront of sign technology and design. Rennicks UK is part of the Rennicks Group, Ireland. Rennicks UK provide industry-leading solutions available across the UK, with innovative and time proven products, highly trained staff, efficient service delivery and excellent customer value. Customers include the Department for Transport, Highways Agency, national and local government contractors. They are a major provider to the emergency services and Network Rail.

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