



# RAIL SAFETY ALERT

RSA. No.

2005-01

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**SUBJECT: Safety requirements for use of Hi-rail equipment.**

## NOTICE TO TRACK OWNERS, OPERATORS AND MAINTAINERS OF HI-RAIL EQUIPMENT

### Issue

On 7 September 2004, a derailment occurred on the Port Augusta to Leigh Creek Railway involving a hi-rail vehicle that resulted in serious injuries to the hi-rail operator. The operator involved later died in hospital.

This incident has raised a number of deficiencies regarding the safe use, set-up, inspection and testing, and maintenance of hi-rail equipment.

All owners, maintainers and operators of hi-rail equipment are required to:

1. Ensure that the hi-rail vehicles they operate have been prepared for service in accordance with manufacturers specifications. This includes ensuring suspension systems have been modified in accordance with the specifications of the manufacturer of the hi-rail equipment, and that road tyres fitted meet the specifications of the manufacturer of the hi-rail equipment and of the vehicle.
2. Ensure that suspension systems and road tyres are maintained to the specification of the hi-rail equipment and vehicle manufacturers.
3. Take steps to ensure that hi-rail vehicles are not loaded beyond their designed load carrying capacity as specified by the manufacturer of the hi-rail equipment or the Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM) of the vehicle. Loads placed on the vehicle must be distributed to ensure that the stability of the vehicle is not adversely affected.
4. Consider fitting additional safety devices such as anti-derail skids, rail sweeps, speed limiters and vigilance systems based on the outcomes of a risk assessment.
5. Review the type and location of communication devices fitted to the vehicle. Care should be taken to ensure that such equipment is secure and the equipment, particularly aials, are of a type and in a location that, where possible, will minimise damage in the event of an accident.
6. Undertake a risk assessment to determine the benefits of fitting roll-bars to vehicles, and based on that risk assessment, install such equipment.
7. Ensure rail workers use seatbelts at all times, including when travelling by rail.
8. Review, and where necessary develop and implement, daily and weekly checklists that check the critical safety elements of hi-rail equipment and the vehicles to which it is fitted. The checklist should be developed in consultation with the manufacturer and/or maintainer of the fitted equipment.
9. Ensure that vehicles are serviced and maintained in accordance with specifications set by the manufacturer of the hi-rail equipment and the vehicle to which it is fitted. This should include an audit process.
10. In consultation with workers and manufacturers of hi-rail equipment, develop and implement a competency based training program for operators of hi-rail vehicles, including elements included in this Safety Alert. Such training should include periodic assessments and operator accreditation procedures.
11. Review maximum permissible speeds.

Accredited railway organisations are advised that another Safety Alert relating to workers remote from others has been issued in relation to this rail safety incident.

Transport SA does not require the results of the above actions to be submitted for review , but will check for compliance with this bulletin at future compliance inspections.

**This notice is effective from :** 27 / January / 2005

Approved :

Jon Steele  
Administrating Authority  
and Executive Director

Date: 27/01/05