



Rail Industry Safety Notice



RISN No. 15

Moving Plant Within Rail Maintenance and Construction Sites

Background

On 7 November 2006 a track worker received serious injuries after being struck by a reversing hi rail excavator on a railway construction site at Sandgate.

The Independent Transport Safety and Reliability Regulator's (ITSRR) initial investigation into the incident has identified several concerns related to the protection of people around moving plant at the time of the incident.

This notice serves to remind Accredited Operators and railway infrastructure contractors of their responsibilities to appropriately control the risks associated with the operation of moving plant in the vicinity of people. All railway construction work and maintenance within the rail corridor¹ must comply with applicable Safeworking Network Rules, Network Procedures and Operator Specific Procedures relating to the movement of rail mounted plant and moving plant on rail worksites.

This type of work must also comply with the relevant OHS Act, Regulation and Code of Practice requirements relating to the movement and use of moving plant.

Action

Accredited Operators should review their current Operator Specific Procedures to ensure they comply with both rail safety and OHS requirements applicable to the use of rail mounted plant and moving plant. Appropriate controls should also be employed by the Accredited Operator to ensure companies who are contracted to perform railway construction and maintenance work on their behalf, employ adequate systems for the use of rail mounted and moving plant.

In particular, Accredited Operators should review the OHS Code of Practice titled "*Moving Plant on Construction Sites Code of Practice 2004*". This industry code of practice provides practical guidance to achieving the standard of safety required by the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000* and *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001* for the use of mobile plant on construction sites.

¹ The Rail Corridor is a Network Rule term meaning from fence-line to fence-line, or if there are no fences, everywhere within 15m of the outermost rails.



Operators should note that the Code of Practice's definition of construction work includes the repair and maintenance of railways. The Code defines moving plant to include plant that:

- a) moves either under its own power, or is pulled or pushed by other moving plant
- b) moves on or around the construction site, enters or leaves the site, or moves past the site
- c) includes road vehicles.

Guidance on the identification of hazards, assessment of risks and control of risks associated with moving plant is provided within the Code of Practice which can be downloaded from the WorkCover website at:

http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/CECD0F81-D2C1-434F-A36B-E8A947C463E0/0/cop_moving_plant_1310.pdf

As stated in the Code of Practice (section 3.2), the use of specific measures to eliminate or control identified risks associated with moving plant should be based on a risk assessment. A summary of items that should be considered includes:

- isolating vehicles and plant used in or around the site and work area from persons on the site or work area
- using fencing, barriers, barricades, temporary warning or control signs, or a combination of these to secure the area where moving plant is used
- planning the direction that plant moves so the visibility of operators is not restricted
- using spotters/safety observers to control traffic movement
- implementing safe working distances
- using audible reversing alarms and/or other technologies or other safe work practices. (Note: reversing alarms may not be appropriate where multiple plant are using the same area or where work is to be carried out at night near residential areas)
- minimising the amount of moving plant working at one time.

The Code of Practice (section 3.3) also provides guidance on controls for the safe operation of plant. Systems of work must ensure that moving plant is operated safely.



A summary of the minimum items that should be considered includes the following:

- competence of persons working with plant
- capability of operators
- vehicle movement procedures for positioning and re-positioning of plant
- suitability and condition (state of maintenance and repair) of the plant to perform the intended task
- instruction and information about hazards – all persons who perform work using (or on) powered mobile plant must be adequately instructed in the hazards associated with the plant and carrying out the work on site and in the control measures for safe work. Safe operating procedures covering the use and maintenance of powered mobile plant should be available
- available information – ensure that all available manufacturer's information on the safe operation of the plant is provided, and that essential operating information is displayed
- special requirements
- site conditions
- appropriate staffing – the number of personnel required to perform the tasks safely.

ITSRR expects Accredited Operators to consider the Code of Practice guidance when reviewing their Operator Specific Procedures covering rail mounted plant and moving plant. Accredited Operators should also consult with their relevant contractors on the necessary controls to safely manage rail mounted plant and moving plant on their construction and maintenance sites, in accordance with the Code of Practice requirements.

Carolyn Walsh
Chief Executive