



Rail Industry Safety Notice



RISN No. 19

Protection of railway employees carrying out work within the rail corridor

Background

At approximately 5:48am on 16 July 2007, two rail infrastructure maintenance workers were fatally injured when they were struck by an empty coal train at Singleton in the Hunter Valley region of NSW. The details of this incident are still under investigation.

The Independent Transport Safety and Reliability Regulator (ITSRR) has issued this notice to remind all railway operators of the need to properly manage risks to the safety of railway employees when walking or working in the railway Danger Zone.

Action

Accredited operators are required under section 48A of the *Rail Safety Act 2002* to ensure they have in place a system to identify, manage and control risks of carrying out railway operations including those that involve railway employees walking or working within the Danger Zone.

As part of this, accredited operators are required to have in place suitable controls to satisfy themselves that Worksite Protection Officers are undertaking worksite safety assessments in accordance with the Network Rules and Network Procedures. Accredited operators are therefore reminded that the following issues should be considered by Worksite Protection Officers when conducting their safety assessments:

- The type of worksite protection is appropriate for the type of work to be undertaken at the worksite and for any adjacent lines. Refer to ANWT 300 (ARTC) and NWT 300 (RailCorp).
- Safety assessments must be carried out for each work location prior to entering the Danger Zone and conducting any work on track.
- Worksite protection arrangements are implemented and are applied continuously for the duration of the work in accordance with the Network Rules and Network Procedures.
- Where protection arrangements cannot be implemented in accordance with the Network Rules and Network Procedures, the work must not proceed or should be stopped. Worksite Protection Officers should then consider, again in accordance with the Network Rules and Network Procedures, if a higher level of worksite protection is required to protect railway employees on track. If a higher level of worksite protection is required, and cannot be obtained, the work should not proceed.

- If the type of work changes at the worksite, the worksite location moves or the worksite environment changes, the safety assessment must be reviewed to ensure the worksite protection arrangements are still appropriate.
- Access to and from a worksite must be carried out safely. Refer also to ANGE 200 (ARTC) and NGE 200 (RailCorp).
- Worksite Protection Officers ensure employees understand that trains pose a significant danger to employees walking in the Danger Zone.

ITSRR will, amongst other things, continue to monitor the above issues when reviewing worksite protection incidents and whilst attending accredited operator worksites.

Accredited operators are also reminded that, in addition to the obligations imposed pursuant to rail safety legislation, their accreditations and the relevant Network Rules and Procedures, they must comply with other statutory obligations, for example those imposed by the relevant occupational health and safety legislation, in carrying out railway operations.



Carolyn Walsh
Chief Executive