



## SAFETY ALERT

DATE of ISSUE: 18 September 2012	NOTICE No: RSN 2012 - 04
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SUBJECT	Safe operation of hi-rail vehicles (rolling stock) and rail safety worker competence
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ADVICE TO:	All affected Rail Transport Operators / All Regulators
FROM:	Rob Burrows - Director Rail Safety

Investigations into occurrences involving the operation of hi-rail vehicles (*rolling stock*) have raised a number of safety concerns including:

1. An accredited rail transport operator, a contractor and some rail safety workers did not comprehend that under the *Rail Safety Act 2010* hi-rail vehicles are rolling stock (s.3) and that they must be operated at all times in accordance with the rules and procedures for the safe operation of rolling stock. In particular hi-rail operation in sections of track closed for construction and maintenance works must be undertaken in accordance with the relevant network rules and safe operating procedures relating to rolling stock operation.
2. Training of operators may not be adequate. Operators of any hi-rail vehicle (rolling stock) must receive adequate competency based training for operation of the particular type of rolling stock to be used. The operator must be deemed competent by qualified training assessors to undertake the work required. The accredited operator and its contractors must have adequate processes in place to ensure the competency of hi-rail operators for the work that is required to be undertaken, and be able to readily demonstrate that the competency is current.

The *Rail Safety Act 2010* is specific in that all accredited (s.77) "rail transport operators must ensure that each rail safety worker who is to carry out rail safety work in relation to the rail transport operator's rail infrastructure or rolling stock has the competence to carry out that work". Additionally, duties of an accredited rail transport operator (RTO) extend to rail safety workers who are engaged by contractors (s.28).

It is crucial that:

1. Information for the safe operation of hi-rail vehicles (*rolling stock*) is obtained or made available from the designer and manufacturer of the hi-rail vehicle (*rolling stock*). Different types of hi-rail vehicle have different operating controls and functionality and require vehicle type specific operating manuals and training. This needs to also address retro-fitted equipment where utilised;

2. Hi-rail vehicle (*rolling stock*) controls and human interface hazards are identified with adequate risk control measures being implemented, including appropriate signage;
3. Procedural requirements are developed for the operation of specific types of hi-rail vehicles (*rolling stock*) and communicated to affected staff;
4. The methods for operating and for on and off tracking different types of hi-rail vehicles (*rolling stock*) are risk assessed. The risk assessment must take account of the nature of the operating environment where the particular vehicle is to be operated and on or off tracked;
5. Hazards resulting from the introduction and operation of rolling stock (including hi-rail vehicles) to a closed worksite are identified and adequate risk controls implemented;
6. Appropriate competency based training programs for the safe operation of specific types of hi-rail vehicles (*rolling stock*) are available;
7. Operators, including contracted operators, for hi-rail vehicles (*rolling stock*) receive competency based training in the operation and use of the vehicle and are assessed as being competent to operate the particular type of equipment ;
8. A form of identification is provided to all rail safety workers, including those of contractors and any operators of hi-rail vehicles (*rolling stock*), that shows their specific competence and training, and is readily available as evidence for the undertaking of that rail safety work; and
9. Previous Safety Alerts including Notice No: RSN 2011 – 01 are considered in risk assessments and managed accordingly.

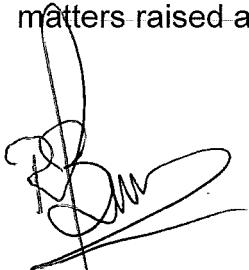
## **Actions**

Accredited RTO's have an ongoing obligation to comply with their safety duties for the safety of their railway operations. RTO's should review their Safety Management System (SMS) (s.59) regularly to ensure:

- they develop and implement safe systems for the carrying out of their railway operations (s.28)
- they identify and assess any risks to safety that have arisen or may arise from the carrying out of railway operations on or in relation to the rail infrastructure or rolling stock (s.59)
- they include procedures for monitoring, reviewing and revising the adequacy of those controls of the SMS (s.59)
- each rail safety worker who is to perform rail safety work in relation to the rail infrastructure, rolling stock and railway operations is
  - of sufficient good health and fitness to carry out that work safely; and
  - is competent to undertake that work (s.28)
- adequate facilities are provided for the safety of persons at any railway premises under the control or management of the operator (s.28(3)(e))
- they provide:-
  - such information and instruction to, and training and supervision of, rail safety workers as is necessary to enable those workers to perform rail safety work in relation to the railway operations in a way that is safe; and

- such information to other persons on railway premises under the control or management of the operator as is necessary to enable those persons to ensure their safety (s.28)
- each rail safety worker who is to carry out rail safety work in relation to the rail infrastructure, rolling stock and railway operations has a form of identification that can be produced on demand and that is sufficient to enable the type of competence and training of the rail safety worker for that rail safety work to be checked by a rail safety officer (s.78)

Whenever hi-rail vehicles are used in an RTO's rail operations then the RTO should review their SMS and application of the SMS with respect to the rail safety critical matters raised above.



Rob Burrows,  
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