
Summary of the CEO Industry Reference Group Meeting

7 August 2020

The key outcomes from the meeting include:

1. ONRSR's Chief Executive, Ms Sue McCarrey reported:
 - The ONRSR Corporate Plan is now available on the ONRSR website.
 - ONRSR's focus has been on areas of highest risk, which also includes intelligence feeding into the system from investigations. One area that has been identified as a concern is safety critical communication. A lack of network controller/ track protection/train driver confirmation of communication has been a causal factor for a number of near misses. There is not the formality in the communication that is required. ONRSR will be working with operators in this area.
 - ONRSR are expanding the use of the portal which feedback from operators indicates has been making day to day administrative work easier.
 - ARA, RISSB, ACRI and ONRSR are working closely together to focus on national rail safety issues. The Chief Executives meet on a regular basis and areas where they can work together are identified for example RISSB and ONRSR are jointly funding ACRI to undertake research on track worker safety technology.
 - ONRSR are rolling out the National Level Crossing Portal project on behalf of the National Level Crossing Safety Committee and are hoping to release the portal mid next year.

2. RISSB's Chief Executive Officer, Ms Deborah Spring reported:
 - RISSB have delivered against their workplan as originally forecast with 21 products delivered plus the national rules framework.
 - RISSB has expanded its work plan this year with the inclusion of a Major Projects stream to address major issues facing industry. This was developed based on consultation with CEOs and senior executives and complements the Australian Code of Practice (ACOP) work stream. The Major Projects portfolio has eight components and the plan is to deliver 16 products in FY 2020/21. In regard to ACOP products, the plan is to deliver 22 products this financial year which is consistent with previous years.
 - The National Rules Industry Reference Group has been established and is looking at rules which can be harmonised/rationalised that adds value to the industry. The Group has decided that the initial rule to be harmonised is communications and a new methodology is being trialled in this harmonisation. The draft of the harmonised communications rule is on track for October. The Group will also be developing a pipeline of rules to be harmonised.
 - RISSB has developed a new long-term equitable funding model which has been socialised with all jurisdictions. The intention is for the equitable funding model to be tabled at the forthcoming ITSOC/ITMM meetings.
 - For the 2020/21 financial year RISSB has reduced its fees for full member as well as providing a one-off 20% COVID-19 reduction in recognition of the impact that the Coronavirus has had on the rail industry.

- Stakeholder engagement remains a key focus for RISSB and, as part of this, RISSB have conducted through an external consultant a take-up survey with members and non- members. One of the key results is that there is an extremely high level of take-up of RISSB product in the rail industry with over 90% of those surveyed indicating that they use RISSB products in some way. A summary of the take-up survey results will be placed on the RISSB website.
 - RISSB will be launching at the end of August, Learning Express, which will provide on-line training courses. One of the courses offered through this platform is the National Track Work Safety Induction Course (NTSI) which will be available at the end of 2020.
 - The RISSB Rail Safety Conference will go ahead in October as a virtual event.
 - RISSB introduced in April a weekly one-hour Masterclass Webinar program. It has proven to be very popular and, as such, RISSB is currently looking at expanding the program to include podcasts.
3. The ARA's General Manager - Policy, Research and Advocacy, Mr Simon Bourke reported:
- ARA's events program has been impacted by COVID-19 and consideration is being given to changing to virtual events where possible. A decision will be made in the near future. ARA's education courses have been cancelled for this year and moving forward online options will be available.
 - Key focus areas/pieces of work for the ARA are;
 - Value of Rail report is undergoing a refresh and will be likely released in October,
 - Rail freight – looking at the impediments to modal shift - road to rail,
 - Rail Freight productivity,
 - Technology research, will be liaising with ACRI,
 - Commissioned research on Supply Chain – opportunities for growth,
 - Commissioned study on Faster Rail – focused on a staged approach to improving rail infrastructure,
 - Light rail investment – looking at the benefits of projects to date and the next wave of investment,
 - Employment and workforce development initiatives underway – proposal to establish a national skills academy online.
 - ARA are becoming more actively engaged with Federal and State Governments.
4. ONRSR's Chief Operating Officer Mr Peter Doggett reported:
- A key safety concern for ONRSR is track worker safety and ONRSR are currently planning its next interventions in this area.
 - The joint ONRSR and RISSB track worker safety research project online survey will be seeking information on technology solutions considered by a wide variety of industry players. Once this feedback is received a couple of workshops will be held to discuss the technologies. The final report will include a literature review, an update on technologies that have worked and possibly indicative costs. It is hoped that the results will be available at the end of year however this may be delayed due to COVID-19 impacts.
 - ONRSR are currently working on Safety Assurance Guidance for middle ground applications which will include information on how to structure a safety argument.
 - The ONSR Way has been updated with section 154 being made clearer.
 - With the exception of New South Wales and Victoria the rest of the country is almost back to normal for site visits.

5. ONRSR's Executive Director | Policy, Reform and Stakeholder Engagement, Ms Julie Bullas reported:
 - The Fatigue Risk Management Guideline has been released for consultation which closes on 2 September, all operators are encouraged to review.
 - Operators were reminded of the obligation to report prescribed incidences "immediately" to enable drug and alcohol testing to be undertaken by ONRSR.
 - The rail safety worker (RSW) definition came into effect from 1 July 2020. It does not apply for Western Australia (WA) and the old guideline is still on the ONRSR website for WA operators. Queries have been received from operators with regard to a transition period however there is no transition period in the law.
 - The Maintenance Advisory Group (MAG) will be putting a call out for issues, policy or change to be considered, in September this year. ONRSR coordinate the MAG in partnership with the National Transport Commission.

6. The next meeting is scheduled for Friday 27 November 2020 (subject to change).