

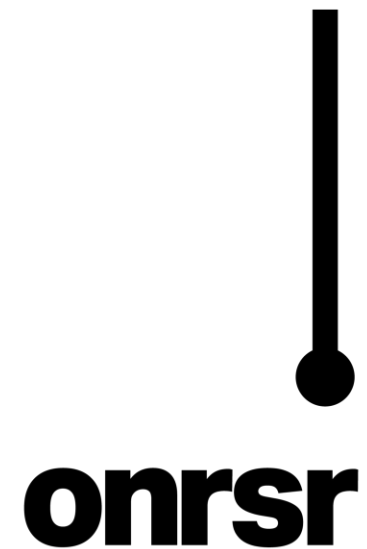
Road Manager Responsibilities for Level Crossing Safety

Grant Windsham & Andrew Mogg

25 August 2026



Office of the
National Rail
Safety Regulator



onrsr.com.au



ONRSR acknowledges the Gimuy Walubara Yidinji people as Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we meet, as well as Traditional Custodians of the various lands from which you have travelled today.

Many of our roads and railways follow sacred paths used by First Nations peoples for thousands of years. We acknowledge their unique cultural and spiritual relationship with, and contributions to, Australia and its many lands.

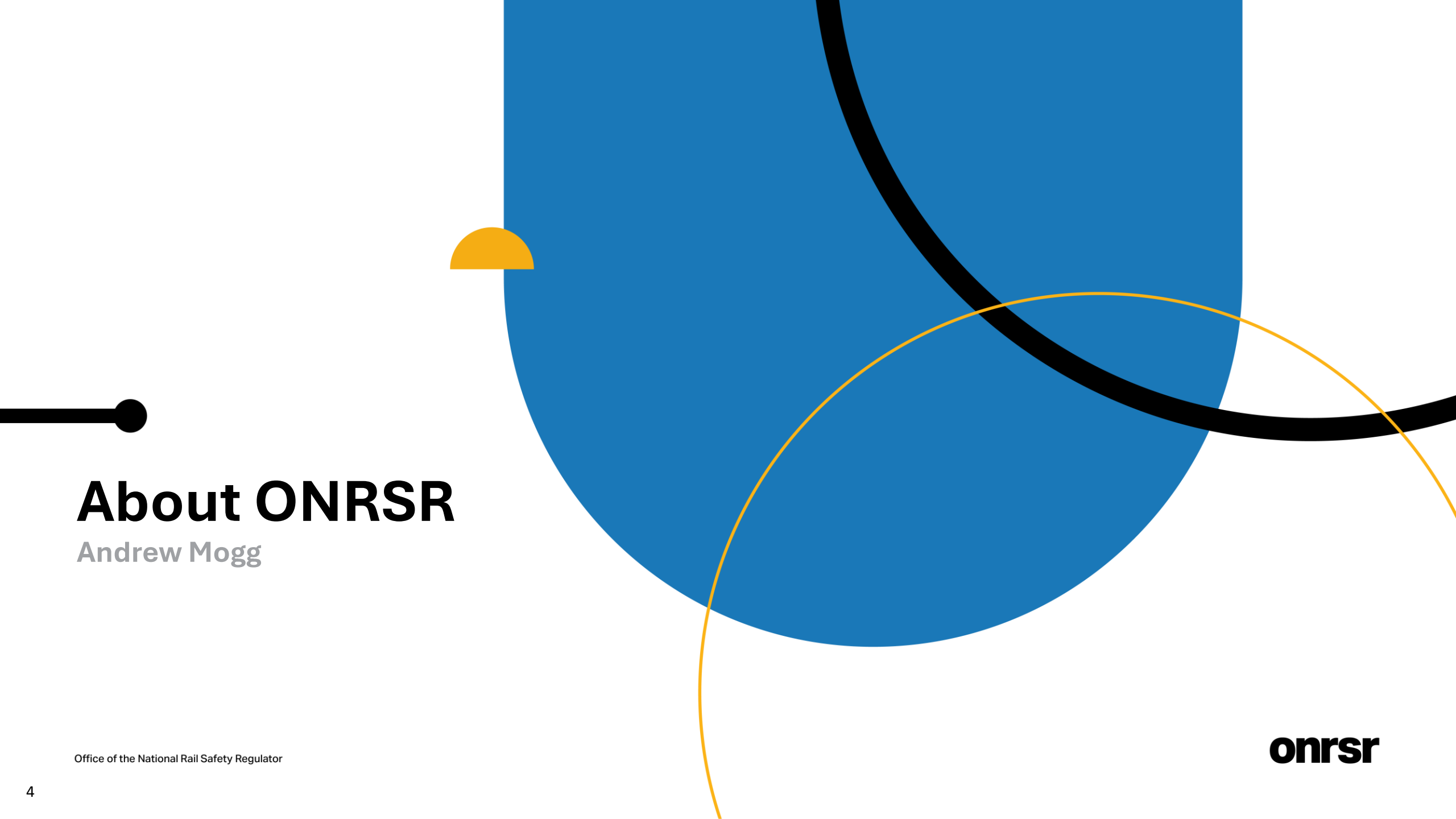
We pay our respects to Elders past and present and extend that respect to any First Nations people joining us today.



What We'll Cover

Level Crossing Safety

- About ONRSR
- Level Crossings in Australia
- Road Manager responsibilities under Rail Safety National Law
- Case studies
- ONRSR's Level Crossing Safety Program
- Guidance and support
- Q&A



About ONRSR

Andrew Mogg

About ONRSR

Level Crossing Safety

- ONRSR is the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator
- Independent regulator established in 2013 under *Rail Safety National Law 2012* (RSNL)
- Employ approximately 200 staff with offices in Adelaide, Brisbane, Hobart, Melbourne, Perth, Sydney





About ONRSR

Level Crossing Safety

ONRSR's functions under the Rail Safety National Law (RSNL) include:

- Administer, audit and review the accreditation regime for rail transport operators under the RSNL
- Work with rail transport operators, rail safety workers and others involved in railway operations to improve rail safety nationally
- Conduct research, collect and publish information relating to rail safety
- Provide advice education and training in relation to rail safety
- Engage in, promote and coordinate the sharing of information to achieve the objectives of RSNL
- Monitor, investigate and enforce compliance with the RSNL

Rail Safety Regulation Model

Applies to all duty holders – accredited and non-accredited

Monitor



Deliver a risk-based program through:

- Audits
- Inspections
- Site visits

Provide information to support compliance and improve rail safety management

Improve



Use data, information, and analytics to:

- Identify and prioritise safety risks for action
- Develop safety improvement programs
- Develop actionable safety insights
- Inform the ONRSR regulatory plan and programs

Investigate



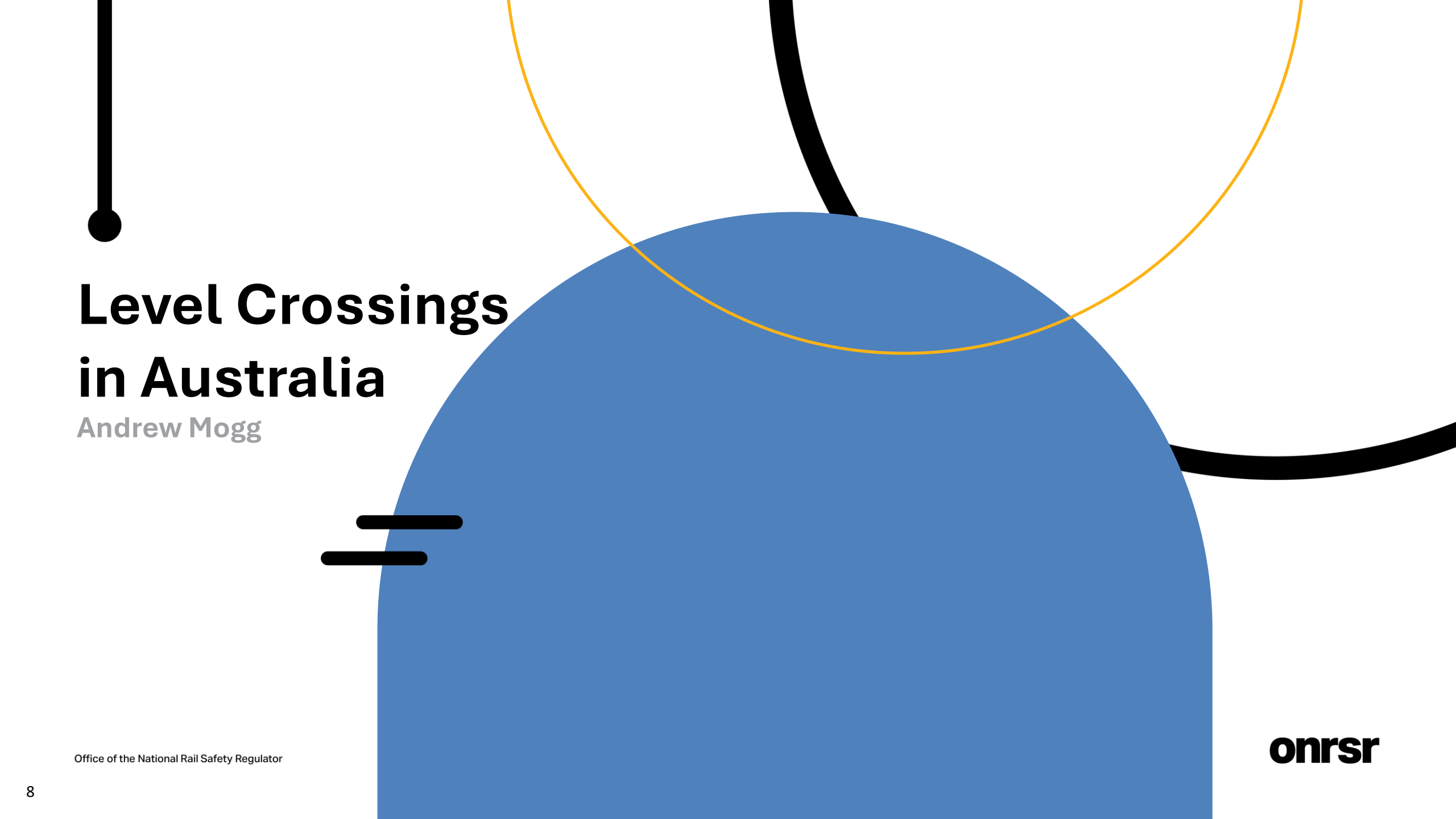
- Identify and address immediate risks to safety
- Identify breaches of the RSNL and enforce where appropriate
- Inform safety improvements through better understanding of causal and contributing factors

Engage



- Share safety information, insights and learning
- Promote safety improvements
- Develop partnerships and collaborations to amplify and support achievement of ONRSR's safety objectives

Enablers: ✓ IT Strategy ✓ Regulatory Intelligence Strategy ✓ People & Culture Strategy ✓ Governance & Risk Frameworks



Level Crossings in Australia

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● Snapshot – 2024/25

Level Crossings in Australia

- 20,000 + Level Crossings nationally
- Approx 22% actively controlled
- Approx 78% passively controlled
- 35 LX collisions (train/vehicle)
- 4 x fatalities, 2 x serious injury
- 400+ near hits (train/vehicle)
- 400+ near hits (train/person)
- Heavy vehicles 2.9% of total fleet but 16.9% of all near hits and collisions



Who's Involved

Level Crossings in Australia

OWNERS (SHARED)

- Rail Infrastructure Managers
- Road Managers
(State/Territory or Local Govts)

REGULATORS

- ONRSR (Rail)
- NHVR (Heavy Vehicles)
- Police (Road)

ROAD USERS

- Heavy Vehicle Operators
- Road Freight Companies
- Private Vehicle Drivers
- Pedestrians

RAIL USERS

- Rolling Stock Operators

POLICY AND STRATEGY

- State/Territory and Federal Govts/Depts
- Industry and Advocacy Groups (ARA, ATA, ALGA, TrackSafe)
- National Level Crossing Safety Committee



Road Manager responsibilities under the RSNL

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● Road Manager responsibilities under the RSNL

Section 107 – Road Managers must:

- Identify and assess, so far as is reasonably practicable, risks to safety that may arise from a level crossing
- Determine measures to manage those risks
- For the purposes of managing those risks, seek to enter into an interface agreement with the relevant Rail Infrastructure Manager (RIM)

Maximum penalty – individual \$50,000, body corporate \$500,000

Section 111 – Road Managers must:

- Maintain a register of interface agreements to which it is a party
- Maximum penalty – individual \$5,000, body corporate \$25,000

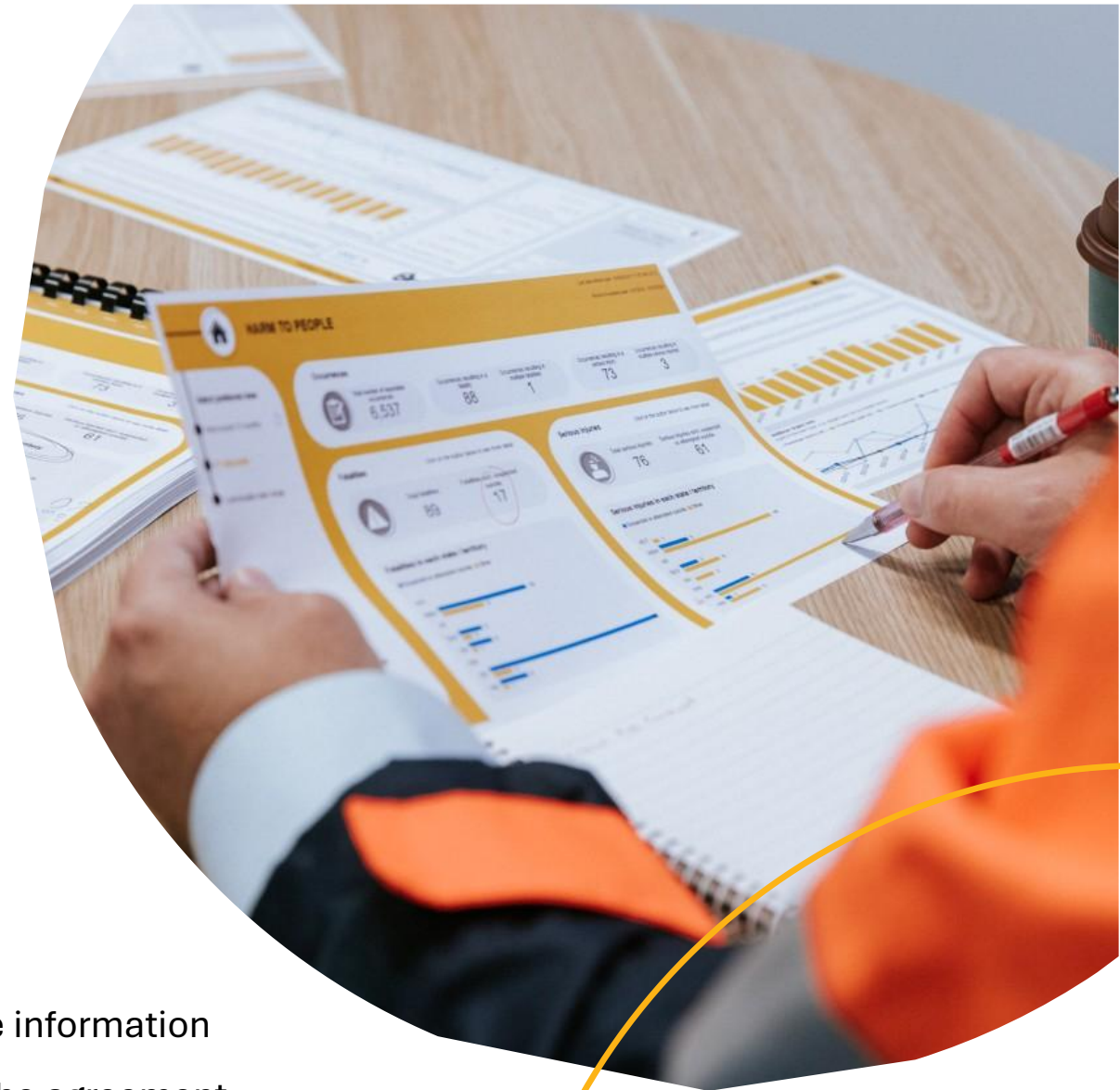
Maximum penalty – individual \$5,000, body corporate \$25,000

*Rail Infrastructure Managers have the same responsibilities under the RSNL
and are also required to seek to enter into interface agreements with Rolling Stock Operators*

Road Manager responsibilities under the RSNL

Section 105 – Interface agreements must include provisions for:

- Implementing and maintaining measures to manage identified risks
- Evaluation, testing and revision of measures in relation to identified risks
- Roles and responsibilities of Road Manager and RIM
- Procedures by which the Road Manager and RIM will exchange information about, and monitor compliance with, their obligations under the agreement
- A process for keeping the agreement under review



Road Manager responsibilities under the RSNL

Section 110 – ONRSR may give directions:

- If ONRSR believes a Road Manager or RIM is unreasonably refusing or failing to enter into an interface agreement, or is delaying the negotiation of an interface agreement, ONRSR may give written notice warning of its powers to issue a direction
- If ONRSR issues a notice and an interface agreement has not been entered into by the specified date, ONRSR may determine the arrangements to apply in relation to management of interface risks and direct the parties to give effect to those arrangements

Maximum penalty – individual \$20,000, body corporate \$100,000



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● In practice...

Road Manager responsibilities under the RSNL

Road Managers are responsible for:

- Selection, installation and maintenance of appropriate warning signs on the road approaches
- Maintenance of road markings on the approaches
- Maintenance of sight lines affected by vegetation in the road corridor

Rail Infrastructure Managers are responsible for:

- Selection, installation and maintenance of traffic control devices immediately adjacent to the crossing, including the flashing lights and warning bells
- Maintenance of the road pavement between the tracks and out to 0.6m on either side of the tracks
- Maintenance of sight lines affected by vegetation in the rail corridor

● Key considerations for Road Managers

Road Manager responsibilities under the RSNL

Identifying risks

- Interface configuration
- Road conditions
- Traffic volumes
- Obstructions to lines of sight
- Vehicle types
- Process for regular review

Managing risks

- Regular inspections scheduled
- Integration into maintenance schedules (eg vegetation clearing, road markings, approach signage)

Interface agreements

- Who is the key contact at the RIM?
- When was agreement last reviewed?
- Has road manager had adequate input agreement?
- Are any third parties involved (eg state govt)?
- Do you have a register of interface agreements?

Heavy Vehicle Access Permits

- Permits administered by NHVR
- Road Managers involved in providing consent
- RIMs should be consulted as level crossings present different risks for heavy vehicles

Case Study #1

Grant Windsham



The occurrence

Case Study #1

- In 2024, a fatal collision involving a loaded freight train and a light road vehicle occurred at a semi regional level crossing.
- Crossing is an active level crossing, protected by flashing lights, relevant road markings and signage.
- Collision occurred when a road vehicle veered off the marked road to avoid queued traffic at the intersection.

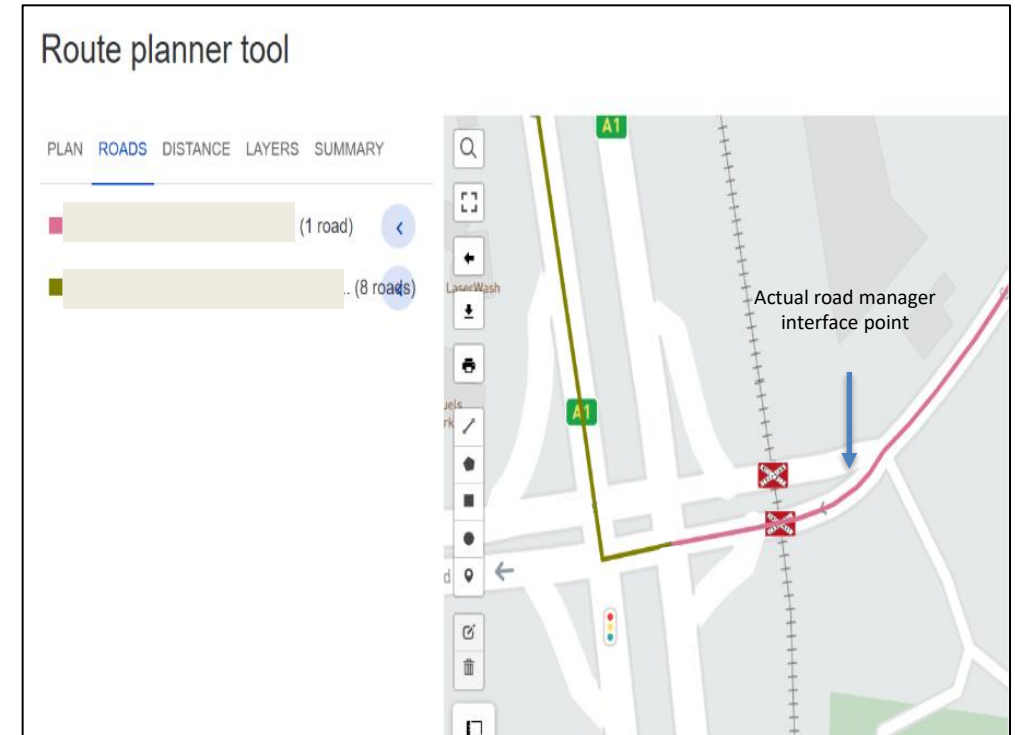


What we found

Case Study #1

ONRSR identified multiple potential safety issues at the crossing

- Insufficient barriers to prevent road traffic veering off the marked road
- Level crossing equipment restricting vision of oncoming traffic travelling from the south.
- NHVR Route Planner did not correctly reflect the relevant Road Manager of the crossing
- The incorrect Road Manager unknowingly provided restricted access vehicle consent for the level crossing.
- Restricted vehicle access consent condition to prevent “short-stacking” was impractical.



Improvements following fatality

Case Study #1

Improvement Notice issued to Rail Infrastructure Manager

1. Undertake a new assessment of the risks to safety associated with the level crossing
2. Lead a review of interface agreements relevant to the level crossing
3. Undertake a full and detailed review of the methodology used to assess the safety risk to safety associated with level crossings
4. Prepare a report for ONRSR on outcomes of 1, 2 and 3.

What else has improved

Case Study #1

Other Outcomes from Improvement Notices

- The RIM and Road Managers improved their understanding of the type and availability of data each party has access to and agreed on how to share this information. Relevant agenda items added to annual interface meetings to discuss changes to road vehicle type, use or traffic volume
- The RIM and Road Managers now consider how potential routes of Restricted Access Vehicles permits may impact railway crossings and provide the RIM with information on the permits
- The independent review commissioned by the RIM identified five recommendations which have been accepted and developed into an action plan

Semi-mountable curb barriers installed by road manager in 2026



Case Study #2

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Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator



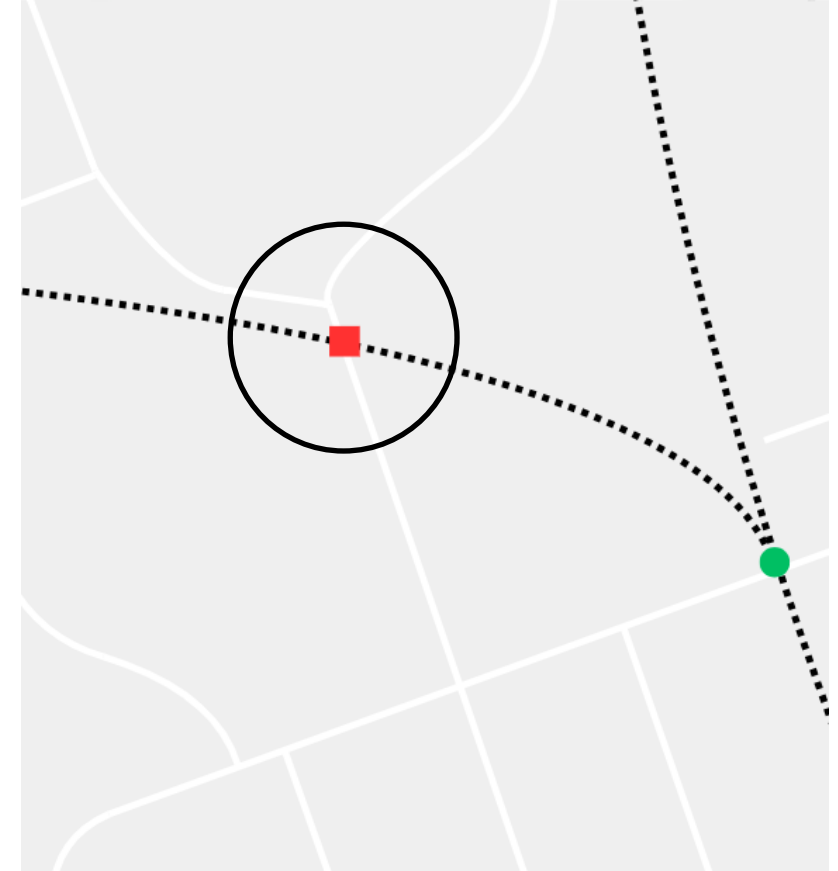
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Initial Concerns

Case Study #2

In April 2026, concerns were raised about heavy vehicle access at the identified level crossing.

- The road manager had provided consent for a Heavy Vehicle Access Permit, which the RIM was consistently rejecting, resulting in a dispute that the NHVR wanted resolved.
- A report triggered a visit to meet with the road manager (council), engage with the RIM, and conduct an on-site inspection at the crossing to understand the issues.



Engagement with Council

Case Study #2

The meeting with council ascertained the RIM had

- increased the track speed, and
- changed Give Way signage to Stop signage, and
- had not consulted council.

Council erroneously understood that when it completed a heavy vehicle assessment the NHVR portal would automatically seek input from other infrastructure owners.



Crossing Deficiencies

Case Study #2

The physical inspection showed the level crossing **was not suitable for any heavy vehicles**, given:

- the track speed at the location
- the type of protection in place (passive STOP signs), and
- sighting distances required when considering the two.



Outcomes

Case Study #2

- ONRSR immediately contacted the RIM and instructed them to reduce the track speed to ensure the crossing sight lines were compliant with AS1742.7
- All interested parties were informed of the safety issues, including the NHVR.
- The RIM was provided guidance around consultation with the road manager, and the council was provided information and guidance around its own obligations under RSNL.
- The road manager and RIM entered into discussions to review other crossings in the area to ensure both parties complied with their SIA.



ONRSR's Level Crossing Safety Program

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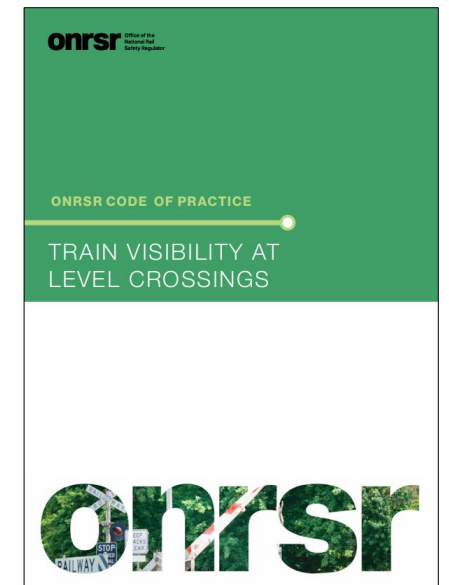
● Promoting Best Practice Compliance

Level Crossings Safety Program

- Inspections to measure compliance with the Train Visibility at Level Crossings Code of Practice
- Increase education to road managers about their RSNL obligations
- Update ONRSR's advice and guidance material on level crossings
- Address serious or ongoing non-compliance

Code of Practice

- Practical approach for RIMs, Road Managers and Rolling Stock operators to proactively demonstrate their compliance with the RSNL regarding management of level crossing safety risks.
- Has legal status under the RSNL and can be used in proceedings instigated by ONRSR to demonstrate non-compliance.



Supporting A Nationally Coordinated Approach

Level Crossings Safety Program

- Support **State and National Level Crossing Safety Committees** with Cwlth, State and local governments, rail and road industry
- Establish and maintain the **National Level Crossing Portal (NLXP)**
- **Participation in RSNL Review** – including potential changes to strengthen ONRSR’s powers to enforce interface agreements.
- Support development of **Level Crossing Handbook** by Australian Rail Industry Standards Organisation
- Support development and promotion of new **national education and awareness campaign**



Promoting Insights And Knowledge

Level Crossings Safety Program

- National level crossing safety dataset available to RIMs, Road Managers, Rolling Stock Operators, regulators and safety agencies
- Key data fields:
 - LX ID
 - Primary control type (passive/active)
 - Traffic data (road and rail type, volume, speeds)
 - Occurrences
- Councils encouraged to register
- Occurrences
- RIM, Road Manager



NLXP National Level Crossing Portal

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Reducing The Risks From Heavy Vehicles

Level Crossings Safety Program

- Safety Partnership with NHVR
- Raise awareness of LX attributes that present higher risks for heavy vehicles
 - Short-stacking
 - Curved approaches
 - Road/rail vertical alignment (humps)
- Increase involvement of RIMs in heavy vehicle access decisions.
- Data sharing and knowledge transfer between ONRSR and HNVR



● Promoting Insights And Knowledge

Level Crossings Safety Program

- Determine causal and contributing factors arising from investigations into level crossing incidents
- Promote the importance of human factor considerations when managing level crossing safety
- Develop insights from new technologies, including in traffic control devices and train conspicuity.





Guidance and Support

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ONRSR Website

Guidance and Support

Supporting documents and guidance available on ONRSR website

- Fact sheets
- Interface agreement template
- Case studies
- Code of Practice – Train Visibility at Level Crossings
- Road Manager Self Assessment Tool



Road Manager Self Assessment Tool

Guidance and Support

CoP Reference(s)	Indication of Evidence Sought		Action plan
6.1 Level Crossing Safety Management Responsibilities Under section 107 of the RSNL, rail infrastructure managers and road managers must for a public road:	- Can the road manager provide evidence that it has identified, assessed and determined controls for the risks of their operations at level crossings and those of the interfacing rail infrastructure manager (RIM)? - Has the road manager <u>entered into</u> or is seeking to enter into an interface agreement with RIMs? - Can the road manager reasonably demonstrate it has systems and procedures and corresponding evidence to demonstrate it is implementing its responsibilities in the interface agreement?		
identify and assess so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety risk arising from their operations and those of the interfacing rail infrastructure manager or road manager		☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown	
determine the measures, so far as is reasonably practicable, to control the risk		☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown	
seek to enter into an interface agreement with the interfacing party(s) (p.8).		☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown	
		☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown	



Questions?

Thank you

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