

Notice to Rail Transport Operators

Safety Alert

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1 Subject

Use of rail vehicle lifting jacks.

2 Issue

During two recent inspections of Tourist and Heritage railway operations, ONRSR rail safety officers observed rail vehicle lifting jacks used for lifts of rolling stock to accomplish bogie and wheelset changes.

In both cases, no supporting evidence could be provided to show that:

- > lifting railway vehicles had been identified as a risk;
- > the ground upon which the jacks were used could support the mass and loads exerted;
- > jacks were fit for service; and
- > staff had been appropriately trained in the use of jacks.

Lifting of railway vehicles pose a risk to safety in that:

- > people may be crushed if rolling stock that has been lifted by the jacks falls or the jacks fail; and
- > if rolling stock does fall or jacks fail, it could result in serious injury or death of those working underneath or in close vicinity to the rolling stock.

ONRSR expects that railway operators recognise these dangers and ensure safety so far as is reasonably practicable (SFAIRP).

ONRSR expects that:

1. operator risk registers identify the risks inherent in lifting railway vehicles and pro-actively detail risk mitigations;
2. geotechnical assessment is documented for the areas where lifting via jacks are used and evidence is provided that geological conditions are appropriate for the lifting of railway vehicles;
3. the lifting jacks are designed to suit the application and have current certification that they are fit for purpose;
4. evidence of instructions and training covering jack and lifting operations can be provided; and
5. evidence of staff competency for jack operation and railway vehicle lifting can be provided.

This advice is effective immediately.

Peter Doggett
Chief Operating Officer