

Confidential Safety Information Reporting Scheme

Electronic Devices in Signalling Complexes

A report was received that signallers and network controllers are using electronic devices including mobiles phones during their shift. The reporter was concerned that this unauthorised usage could lead to a serious safety incident due to signallers not being aware of what was occurring on the network.

CSIRS Requirement

As part of the OTSI investigation, RailCorp was requested to investigate the claims made by the reporter and provide OTSI with the findings and any remedial safety actions taken.

Investigation outcome

RailCorp's Director of Operations has met with shift supervisors and managers of signal boxes to reinforce RailCorp's zero tolerance to such behaviours.

In addition a new special instruction was issued further reinforcing RailCorp's requirements concerning the utilisation of electronic devices in signal boxes. The instruction applies to all staff working in a signalling complex. It said that all personal mobile devices are no longer permitted whilst in the signal box control room. They are to be switched off and stored in a locker. The only time they can be used is during an approved meal break within the confines of the meal room. Other tighter rules pertaining to television and radio use in meal rooms were included in these instructions. Breach of the rules around personal mobile devices will result in removal from duty and disciplinary action which may include dismissal.

OTSI Action

The outcomes of the inquiries made by RailCorp have been recorded in the OTSI Safety Investigation Database for future review and trend analysis.

OTSI has advised the reporter of the response and actions provided by RailCorp.