

## Drug and Alcohol Testing issues

It was reported that after a driver had passed a signal at danger, the driver was then directed to proceed to Central Station to undergo an alcohol breath test.

The driver was concerned that he was permitted to operate a train when his sobriety was being questioned.

### ***CSIRS Requirement***

The Office of Transport Safety Investigation (OTSI) sought verification of the claims from the operator, as well as specific comment about:

- The number of authorised personnel available employed the operator to perform alcohol testing.
- The quantity of approved equipment to perform alcohol testing.
- The methods used to manage an employee's operational duties when there may be doubt about their sobriety.

### ***Investigation outcome***

The operator confirmed the incident had occurred.

The operator advised that current policy requires the driver to be tested for the presence of alcohol following a safety incident. In this instance, an Authorised Officer was directed to test the driver for the presence of alcohol.

As the Officer had left his breath testing device in his motor vehicle, he elected to utilise the provisions of Clause 10 of the Rail Safety (Drug and Alcohol Testing) Regulation 2003, "Assessment of sobriety if breath testing device is not available." Following the Authorised Officer's assessment he was satisfied that the driver was not under the influence of alcohol. The driver was allowed to resume his journey.

On arrival at Central Station the driver underwent a further assessment by breath testing device with a negative result being recorded.

With respect to the matters that OTSI sought specific comment, the operator advised that:

- There are in excess of 164 Authorised Officers available to perform alcohol breath testing.
- 73 devices are available to allow Authorised Officers to perform alcohol breath tests. These units are centrally maintained and controlled by operator's Drug Evaluation Unit.

- When there is doubt about an employee's sobriety, the employee will be removed from duty, until a breath test or sobriety assessment can be made.

### ***Safety Action***

The operator has drafted a revised policy in relation to drug and alcohol testing. This revised policy will add greater clarity to the current policy and is currently undergoing stakeholder review.

In addition, the operator will review of the number of authorised officers and approved breath test devices available to perform alcohol breath tests.

### ***OTSI Action***

OTSI has advised the reporter of the response, actions and plans provided by the responsible operator.

The Transport Safety Regulation division of the Independent Transport Safety and Reliability Regulator has been advised of this occurrence so that it can monitor the effectiveness of Safety Actions undertaken and proposed by the operator.

The outcomes of the inquiries made by both OTSI and the responsible operator have been recorded in the OTSI's Safety Investigation Database for future review and safety trend analysis.