

Yard Working Conditions Affecting Train Preparation

It was reported that the layout of the Gosford yard made it unsafe for workers to carry out duties around moving trains. Limited space between tracks, unsuitable walkways and bollards obstructing movement were amongst the reported concerns.

At Cronulla, a report of a similar nature was received which outlined the difficulties encountered when dividing and amalgamating trains at station platforms. Some duties required staff to climb under platform coping to access particular areas of the train.

CSIRS Requirement

The Office of Transport Safety Investigation (OTSI) sought verification of the claims from the infrastructure operator, as well as specific comment about the mechanisms by which identified needs were addressed.

Investigation outcome

The operator provided information that outlined the process for improvement to yards and train preparation areas. The process involves employee consultation based on OHS needs and develops an improvement plan targeting the change requirements. At Gosford, a tender process had been completed and a full assessment of the Gosford yard is to be carried out by the successful party. On completion of the assessment, the project to upgrade the facilities will be prioritised and work will be commenced.

In relation to Cronulla, a ban had been placed on train preparations at platforms due to the safety concerns. This ban had been in place since 2000, and regular audits were to be carried out to ensure compliance with this direction.

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 Safety Investigation Database for future review and trend analysis.