

Pilot staff and ticket working

It was reported that during pilot staff and ticket working in the Awaba – Morrisset section, the pilot staff ticket was incorrectly marked. Track work often meant that this section would be traversed in the up direction on the down line, yet the ticket was not issued in a manner that was consistent with the direction of travel.

CSIRS Requirement

The Office of Transport Safety Investigation (OTSI) sought verification of the claims from the operator, as well as specific comment about the safety implications associated with such a practice.

Investigation outcome

The operator advised that pilot staff and tickets are made out for the direction of normal travel and provide the train with a clearance to operate between two locations. As a result, the pilot staff and ticket would reflect the normal direction of travel over a given line, rather than the actual direction when uni-directional line is being used for bi-directional travel during times of track work.

This method of pilot staff and ticket working, even when travelling against the normal direction, is the least complicated and most reliable method of train working.

To alter the inscription of the ticket would lead to confusion and increase the likelihood of error.

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.