

Train Radio Communication

A report was made that ever since regional signal boxes have closed down, the quality of the train radio system has deteriorated in the western region and that train communications to Broadmeadow are not as good as they were from Orange Control. The reporter was concerned that the recent change was affecting the normal operation of train communication in the area and may be a serious problem in the event of an emergency.

CSIRS Requirement

As part of the OTSI investigation, a Safety Valve Notification (SVN) was issued to Pacific National asking them to address these concerns and seeking clarification of the status of train radio communications in this area and to provide OTSI with the results of its findings and any proposed remedial safety actions.

Investigation outcome

Pacific National advised that an investigation was undertaken which found that the concerns raised by the employee were valid in relation to what was identified as being an increased number of events involving an inability to log-on to the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) train control system. The issue has been notified to ARTC who are taking action to improve the train radio system coverage in regional NSW to eliminate or reduce the number of train radio drop-outs or occasions when a successful log-on cannot be established. Pacific National stated that it will continue to work with ARTC to eliminate any risk of train radio communication failure.

OTSI Action

A copy of this summary report has been passed to the Transport Safety Regulation division of the Independent Transport Safety and Reliability Regulator. OTSI has also advised the reporter of the response and actions provided by the responsible operator.

This report and the associated response will be retained by the Office of Transport Safety Investigation for future safety trend analysis.