

Confidential Safety Information Reporting Scheme



Drug and Alcohol Testing of Rail Maintenance Workers

A report was received regarding RailCorp maintenance workers who were allegedly under the influence of drugs while performing rail maintenance operations. It was alleged that because these maintenance workers were working early morning shifts they were not being targeted for random drug and alcohol testing.

CSIRS Requirement

The Office of Transport Safety Investigation (OTSI) forwarded the details and location of the maintenance workers and requested that RailCorp investigate the circumstances and claims made by the reporter and provide OTSI with the results of its findings.

Investigation outcome

RailCorp undertook a targeted drug test on a number of maintenance workers. One employee was immediately removed from railway safety work pending the results of the test. The test results showed the presence of a prohibited substance and as a consequence the employee was not returned to railway safety work. RailCorp also stated that: 'RailCorp has a policy for the random drug testing of employees. The majority of testing takes place in the daytime as this is when most employees are at work. However, random testing is scheduled 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to ensure that a representative sample of shift work employees is included. Additionally, testing is triggered after certain classifications of incidents or targeted if reasonable grounds for suspicion exist.'

OTSI Action

A copy of this summary report has been passed to 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.