

Confidential Safety Information Reporting Scheme

Intercity Drivers being certified competent for new routes

The following detailed report was received regarding InterCity train drivers being certified in a different manner to suburban train drivers. It was alleged that whilst drivers based at Hornsby depot are being certified competent by Operations Standards Managers for the new routes and stabling facilities associated with the recent upgrade works at Hornsby, Intercity drivers based at Newcastle, Gosford and Sydney depots who frequently travel through this location are not being certified competent in the same manner. Instead of being instructed or assessed by Operations Standards Managers on the upgrade of the yard, Intercity drivers are rather being deemed competent by familiarity after a single journey through Platform 5 and the 'Down' yard with a pilot driver on board. The 'pilot driver' is not authorised to certify competencies or route knowledge.

CSIRS Requirement

The Office of Transport Safety Investigation (OTSI) forwarded the details to RailCorp and sought verification of the claims made by the reporter.

Investigation outcome

RailCorp responded that the new working was properly communicated to crew and implemented safely. This is their detailed response:

Over the past 3 years work has been carried out to provide additional platform at Hornsby (platform 5) and upgrade existing stabling facilities in Hornsby Up Yard. Changes include relocation of signals, provision of additional signals, alteration to speed signs, installation of a crossover at the northern end of Normanhurst and construction of an additional four stabling roads in Hornsby Up Yard.

Signal sightings were carried out at various stages before and during the construction with Operations Standards Managers (OSMs), Rail Tram and Bus Union (RTBU) representatives, Trainer Drivers/Guards and Principal Drivers.

In December 2008 a Risk Based Training Needs Analysis (RBTNA) was conducted in consultation with nominated RTBU delegates and local OHS representatives from Hornsby train crew depot, being the depot most affected by the changes. The outcome from this RBTNA was a determination to provide a briefing in the form of a General Order to affected train crew outlining the

Confidential Safety Information Reporting Scheme

changes, supplemented with and supported by route knowledge maps of the final track layout.

The briefing was delivered to both suburban and intercity crew through train crewing's document distribution process to the depots impacted by the changes with each crew depot receiving the same briefing. As the change was determined appropriate to be communicated by briefing there was no competency sign off required as indicated in the Safety Valve. It should be noted that Intercity crew, due to their work pattern, are not required to have Hornsby sidings road knowledge.

In addition to the briefings, support for train crew in respect of the changes was provided by OSMs who were specifically rostered for this purpose at both Hornsby and Central during the first week of commissioning. Crew at the time, and following commissioning, could avail themselves of the opportunity to discuss the new working with either a Trainer Driver/Guard or OSM prior to travelling the section. To date a limited number of train crew have requested further assistance to understand the changes and have been provided with instruction by an OSM. Follow-up consultation has been held with staff and RTBU representatives to ensure the new working was properly communicated to crew and implemented safely. OSMs were again utilised to provide additional face to face briefings as required.

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.