

Confidential Safety Information Reporting Scheme

Overloaded Coal wagons

A report was received that a number of overloaded coal wagons were entering the rail network. The reporter stated that there was no live monitoring of train weights by track owners; it was automated, and its functioning was checked infrequently. A number of examples were provided with specific dates and train identification details.

It was stated that such overloads have the capacity to cause infrastructure and equipment failure and the potential to cause injuries or deaths. There existed the potential for the coal peaks caused by overloading to hit the underside of road bridges and to dislodge pieces of coal to strike passengers on platforms.

CSIRS Requirement

As part of the OTSI investigation, Pacific National were requested to investigate these claims and inform OTSI of their findings.

Investigation outcome

Pacific National advised that a review had revealed that a number of overloaded wagons had indeed entered the network and that the information provided to OTSI was accurate. Pacific National stated that they checked the loading measurements in conjunction with ARTC to assess the accuracy of the monitoring stations. With ARTC they identified which monitoring stations needed recalibration. In response to the CSIRS, Pacific National added that they were liaising with ARTC to ensure ongoing monitoring was undertaken.

OTSI Action

The outcomes of the inquiries made by both OTSI and Pacific National have been recorded in the OTSI Safety Investigation Database for future review and trend analysis.

OTSI has advised the reporter of the response and actions provided by Pacific National.