



**Office of Transport Safety Investigations**

**RAIL SAFETY INVESTIGATION  
INTERIM FACTUAL STATEMENT  
RUNAWAY ROLLING STOCK  
ENFIELD YARD**

**3 MAY 2011**



# THE OFFICE OF TRANSPORT SAFETY INVESTIGATIONS

The Office of Transport Safety Investigations (OTSI) is an independent NSW agency whose purpose is to improve transport safety through the investigation of accidents and incidents in the rail, bus and ferry industries. OTSI investigations are independent of regulatory, operator or other external entities.

Established on 1 January 2004 by the Transport Administration Act 1988, and confirmed by amending legislation as an independent statutory office on 1 July 2005, OTSI is responsible for determining the causes and contributing factors of accidents and to make recommendations for the implementation of remedial safety action to prevent recurrence. Importantly, however, OTSI does not confine itself to the consideration of just those matters that caused or contributed to a particular accident; it also seeks to identify any transport safety matters which, if left unaddressed, might contribute to other accidents.

OTSI's investigations are conducted under powers conferred by the *Rail Safety Act 2008* and the *Passenger Transport Act 1990*. OTSI investigators normally seek to obtain information cooperatively when conducting an accident investigation. However, where it is necessary to do so, OTSI investigators may exercise statutory powers to interview persons, enter premises and examine and retain physical and documentary evidence.

It is not within OTSI's jurisdiction, nor an object of its investigations, to apportion blame or determine liability. At all times, OTSI's investigation reports strive to reflect a "Just Culture" approach to the investigative process by balancing the presentation of potentially judgemental material in a manner that properly explains what happened, and why, in a fair and unbiased manner.

Once OTSI has completed an investigation, its report is provided to the NSW Minister for Transport for tabling in Parliament. The Minister is required to table the report in both Houses of the NSW Parliament within seven days of receiving it. Following tabling, the report is published on OTSI's website at [www.otsi.nsw.gov.au](http://www.otsi.nsw.gov.au).

OTSI cannot compel any party to implement its recommendations and its investigative responsibilities do not extend to overseeing the implementation of recommendations it makes in its investigation reports. However, OTSI takes a close interest in the extent to which its recommendations have been accepted and acted upon. In addition, a mechanism exists through which OTSI is provided with formal advice by the Independent Transport Safety Regulator (ITSR) in relation to the status of actions taken by those parties to whom its recommendations are directed.

## Incident Overview

At approximately 12.45 pm on 03 May 2011, a rake of 28 wagons loaded with aggregate (total mass in excess of 2500t) ran away from North Road No.1 in Enfield Yard and through the yard before colliding with a rake of 15 empty fuel tanker wagons and three flat bed wagons stabled in South Road No.1. The force of the collision caused the tanker bogie closest to the point of collision to derail. The bogie continued, in a derailed state, until encountering some points which caused the other bogie and both bogies of the tanker immediately in advance to derail all wheels with the tankers slewing across the track and carrying away an overhead wiring stanchion. The combined runaway came to rest over 400m from the point of collision with the tankers foul of the Up and Down Main freight lines.

The rake of aggregate wagons was undergoing maintenance at the time of the runaway, with some brake shoes being replaced. The handbrakes applied at the time of the incident did not hold the rake on the prevailing grade. The qualified Terminal Operator who was working on the rake attempted to apply more brakes but was not successful in arresting its movement. The rake continued its unauthorised and uncontrolled movement through Enfield Yard, the points lying such that it was routed into South Road No.1.

The Signaller at Enfield became aware of the unauthorised movement and his mimic board indicated that Through Road No.1 and a section of the adjacent Up Main line were occupied. The Signaller placed blocks on signalling equipment to prevent the approach of rail traffic to the affected area.

The runaway and subsequent collision and derailment caused significant damage to rollingstock, overhead wiring equipment, and to track and signalling infrastructure. There were no injuries reported as a result of the incident.

## **Notification and Response**

OTSI's Duty Officer was notified of the incident at 1.15 pm. Two OTSI investigators were deployed to conduct a preliminary investigation and arrived at the Enfield Yard at 2.00 pm. After reviewing the preliminary investigation, the Chief Investigator determined that the accident warranted formal investigation pursuant to Section 45A of the *Transport Administration Act 1988* and Section 67 of the *Rail Safety Act 2008*.

## **Terms of Reference**

The terms of reference established by the Chief Investigator require OTSI's Investigating Officer to:

- a. identify the factors, both primary and contributory, which caused the runaway of the rake of 28 wagons;
- b. assess the effectiveness of procedures used by staff to prevent runaway wagons;
- c. assess the effectiveness of the emergency actions taken in response to the incident; and
- d. advise on any matters arising from the investigation that would enhance the safety of rail operations.

## **Status of the Investigation**

OTSI's investigation has commenced. During the course of the investigation, all Directly Involved Parties (DIPs) will be consulted and will be afforded the opportunity to comment on the draft report before it is finalised.

Once completed, OTSI's investigation report will be tabled in both Houses of the NSW Parliament by the Minister for Transport in accordance with Section 74 of the *Rail Safety Act 2008*. When the Report has been tabled, it will be published on OTSI's website and will replace this Interim Factual Statement.