Confidential Safety Information Reporting Scheme

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THE OFFICE OF
TRANSPORT
SAFETY
INVESTIGATION

DEFECTIVE RADIO

At Bankstown, while en route to the City Circle, the driver noticed that the train radio was not automatically changing area codes. The driver was concerned that he may not be able to communicate quickly in the event of an emergency.

The driver directed the guard to report the problem to Operations Control using the guard's company supplied mobile telephone. The driver was subsequently advised by the guard that an Equipment Examiner would be available when the train arrived at Central Station.

On arrival at Central Station the examiner was not present. The driver completed a circuit of the City Circle and returned to Central Station but the examiner had still not arrived.

It is understood that in such cases, the train is required not to continue in service and is to be transferred without passengers to a maintenance facility. The driver stated that when he contacted Defects, he was directed to continue in service to Ashfield. The driver refused to operate the train under those circumstances. After approximately 10-15 minutes of 'stand off', the driver was able to transfer the train without passengers to a maintenance facility.

Operator Response

RailCorp agrees that a train with a defective radio is to be taken out of service as per protocols in train working rule NTR 410 titled Defective Equipment and the minimum standards as described by Train Operations Manual OMET 200.

Safety Action

To prevent recurrence, train radio minimum standard protocols have been issued to Train Control personnel, including Mechanical Controllers, advising of the correct procedure when a defective radio is reported.

Additionally, Passenger Fleet Maintenance have undertaken the following:

- Required that all train radios be checked to ensure that the latest hardware is presently in use. To date approximately 12.5 % of train radios have been checked.

- An Engineering Instruction EI 204 has been re-issued. This includes instructions on how to check the under train transponder to ensure it is working correctly. This is the unit that takes the signal from the track mounted transponders to automatically change the train radio area codes.

- A Train Radio Reliability Project has been set up. A key element of this Project is the comprehensive testing and evaluation of the performance, reliability and integrity of the Metronet area code signalling system scheduled to be completed by the end of June 2004.

- Improved fault reporting is being carried out by Siemens to identify failure trends.

- Spare parts holdings are being revised with a view to increase the number of spare interrogator units.

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. The content of the summary report will allow future audits to review the implementation of safety actions.

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