

CSIRS Outcome Report

Confidential Safety Information Reporting Scheme (CSIRS)

Competence assurance and performance management of incident response personnel

The issue

A report was made to OTSI through the CSIRS about a rail transport operator involving the competence and performance management of their incident response personnel. The report made a number of assertions including:

- Removal and restoration of some rail safeworking competencies was not managed in accordance with the operator's safety management system
- Incident response personnel were not always managed consistent with the operator's safety management system when they themselves were involved in safeworking incidents.

OTSI action

OTSI provided the assertions to the operator and requested the matters raised be investigated.

Operator response

The operator provided a response that indicated the removal of rail safeworking competencies from incident response personnel may not have been managed consistent with the requirements of their safety management system. The operator did provide evidence that the subsequent restoration of the rail safeworking competencies had been undertaken consistent with the requirements of the safety management system.

The operator also identified that there were some shortcomings with the manner in which incident response personnel were managed when they were involved in a safeworking incident. An internal investigation undertaken by the rail operator into one particular incident involving their incident response personnel identified that:

- The individual incident response person did not comply with a number of the operator's rail safeworking requirements
- The investigation into this incident was undertaken by another incident response person who was a colleague of the person involved and was not undertaken consistent with the expected incident investigation standards
- There was not a functioning framework at the time to help line management determine fair decision making when managing incidents of this nature.

The operator advised that the following actions were either underway or had been delivered:

- A recertification process for the individual involved in the incident
- Additional assurance measures were put in place to monitor the performance of incident response personnel
- Development of an independent validation or assurance mechanism to be used when incident response personnel are involved in an incident
- Deployment of a decision-making framework to help line management make fair decisions.

Conclusion

OTSI is satisfied that the actions taken by the operator to address the assertions made in this CSIRS report are suitable to manage the issues raised and has closed the report.

The Confidential Safety Information Reporting Scheme (CSIRS) operates under the provisions of Section 46E of the Passenger Transport Act 1990. It is a voluntary, confidential and non-punitive scheme that enables employees in the public passenger transport sectors of the rail, bus and ferry industries to report safety matters.

OTSI provides feedback to each reporter on the investigation outcomes of a CSIRS report. In selected matters that have significant operational safety matters, OTSI also publishes a CSIRS Outcome Report. For more information on CSIRS, go to otsi.nsw.gov.au.