

TRACK WORKER STRUCK BY A PASSENGER TRAIN: SHARED LEARNING

# LAVERTON INCIDENT KEY CONTACTS - INTERFACE WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

TOOLBOX 10



Metro**Safe**



# OUR SAFETY PLEDGE

I WILL ENSURE THAT I  
CONSISTENTLY USE EFFECTIVE  
SAFETY CRITICAL COMMUNICATION  
PROTOCOLS WHEN INTERFACING  
WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS

ZERO HARM

# INTRODUCTION

A key aspect of every RSW's job is to effectively communicate with relevant stakeholders and ensure the activities on a worksite are conducted safely and on time. This includes everything from providing timely and accurate rail operational information to appropriately responding to unplanned situations or events.

This booklet provides information on how to use communication protocols as outlined in the Safety Critical Communications procedure to interface effectively with key stakeholders and how it relates to the Laverton Incident.

This is the tenth of ten toolbox talks created to share learnings with the industry.



# RELATED STATISTICS

More than

# 400

**track work safe working breaches**  
were reported in the 2014–2015 financial year  
from which ONRSR identified the recurring themes  
of rail safety worker competence and  
safety critical communication.

Inspections undertaken as part of the Office of the National Rail  
Safety Regulator (ONRSR) compliance project on track work –  
competency and communication identified recurring issues with the:

- types of worksite protection applied,
- identification and definitions of worksite locations, and
- removal of protection at worksites.

SOURCES: OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL RAIL SAFETY REGULATOR (2017), RAIL SAFETY REPORT 2016-2017,  
[HTTPS://WWW.ONRSR.COM.AU/\\_DATA/ASSETS/PDF\\_FILE/0012/20514/RAIL-SAFETY-REPORT-2016-2017-WEB.PDF](https://www.onrsr.com.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0012/20514/rail-safety-report-2016-2017-web.pdf), P. 34

# LAVERTON INCIDENT SUMMARY

## TRACK WORKER STRUCK BY A PASSENGER TRAIN

On the morning of Friday 2 October 2015, a workgroup was assembling track-side in Laverton, Victoria. They planned to undertake dog spike removal works in preparation for re-sleepering of a section of track on the Altona Loop Line.

At around 0910, the supervisor for the works commenced marking the track to identify those dog spikes to be removed. He was working in a track crossover about 400 meters on the Melbourne side of Laverton Railway Station. A lookout had been placed for his protection.

At about 0916, a Metro Trains Melbourne suburban commuter train arrived at Laverton station, bound for Flinders Street Station in central Melbourne. After its scheduled stop, the train departed Laverton and approached the worksite. The lookout observed the train, warned workers of its approach and signalled to the driver that the track was clear. However, as the train took the crossover, the supervisor was foul of the track, and was struck by the train that was travelling at about 59 km/h.





# LAVERTON INCIDENT SUMMARY

## SHARED LEARNINGS - KEY CONTACTS - INTERFACE WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

1

All RSWs must consciously practice Safety Critical Communication when interfacing with stakeholders. They must understand that all communication on site is formal and strictly follow communication protocols at all times.

2

All RSWs must recognise key stakeholders and their respective roles so that they may be able to notify or question appropriate stakeholders in time of any changes on the tracks.

3

All RSWs must have a clear understanding of how communication will be conducted along with the audible and visual warnings implemented to warn of approaching rail traffic.

# WHO ARE YOUR KEY STAKEHOLDERS?

Effective interfacing with stakeholders is a critical aspect of maintaining safety and efficient rail operations.

Any person or party involved in the procedure who can be impacted by your actions is considered a stakeholder. Some examples of stakeholders are TFPCs, WGSs, Signallers and Train Controllers.

The Pre-Work Brief covers the communication methods relevant to the job and introduces key stakeholders involved in the process. It is critical that all RSWs consider the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders, so they are aware of who is responsible for a specific task and its impact on Safety.



# WHAT IS SAFETY CRITICAL COMMUNICATION?

Safety critical communication is an integral part of the safe and efficient operations of the rail industry. All operational communication by frontline staff is safety critical.

Effective communication plays a crucial role in ensuring safety, however any communication that, if not delivered or not delivered accurately or promptly, could result in death, serious injury or incur significant damage to property, infrastructure or the environment is considered safety critical.

Safety Critical Communication occurs while

- Sending/ receiving emergency messages
- Sending/ receiving written Safe working directions
- Driving or operating rail traffic movements
- Controlling and/ or signalling rail traffic movements
- Reporting the state of equipment, infrastructure, or people that might impact safety

### **All RSWs should:**

1. Carefully consider whether the result of a failure in communication and the message being transmitted by any medium such as radio, telephone, signal or writing could result in an incident.
2. Practice good communication so that it can be extended to cover a range of their day to day work activities including communication during emergency situations and regular safe working conditions. In some instances, communication can originate in regular working conditions but has the potential to evolve into a safety critical situation.
3. Always follow the communication protocols irrespective of the reason for the communication. Formalising their daily communication would also ensure consistent use of standard protocols and procedures and prepare them to confidently use these protocols in case of an incident.



# HOW TO PRACTICE SAFETY CRITICAL COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS?

Consistent use of communication protocols can have significant impact on the quality of conversations between key stakeholders and impact how effectively information is shared.

Using communication protocols ensures safety critical information exchanged between different stakeholders uses standard phrases and keeps communication concise and unambiguous.

Safety Critical Communication protocols are:

- **Fundamentals** – plan what you intend to say, provide accurate, brief and clear messages in short complete phrases. Talk slightly slower and slightly louder than in normal conversation. Avoid redundancies such as ‘you know’, ‘er’, and ‘um’.
- **Procedure** – to be used when sending and receiving verbal Safety Critical Communications. Procedure covers steps to Start Communication, Exchange Information and Finish Communication.
- **Emergency Communications** start with “Emergency, Emergency, Emergency”. They must be prioritised and answered immediately.
- **Lead Communicator** is the person who takes the lead in the communication and follows steps to ensure communication protocols are followed.
- **Standard terms** are used to make sure consistent and effective communication between different stakeholders.
- **Phonetic** alphabet should be used to identify letters of the alphabet and spell for all key information that are difficult to say or may be misunderstood.
- **Spoken numbers** require you stress the syllables in capital letters like ‘thuh-REE’ for the number three and ‘Day Cee Mal’ for a decimal point
- **The 24 Hour clock** should be used to convey the time.
- **Written Safety Critical Communication** protocols apply to staff compiling safe working books, forms and records.

# GLOSSARY

**All Right Hand Signal:**

The All Right hand signal is one arm held in the horizontal position. By night a white light held steady.

**Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB):**

The **ATSB** is Australia's national transport safety investigator.

**Danger Zone:**

is all space within 3 metres horizontally from the nearest rail and any distance above or below this zone including being on the line, unless a Position of Safety exists or can be created.

**Flagman/Handsignaller:**

is a rail safety worker who displays hand signals to the operators of rail traffic movements. A Handsignaller is also referred to as a Flagman.

**Metro Trains Melbourne (MTM):**

Metro Trains Melbourne, known colloquially as simply Metro, is the franchised operator of the suburban railway network in Melbourne, Australia. Metro Trains Melbourne is a joint venture between MTR Corporation, John Holland Group and UGL Rail.

**Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator (ONRSR):**

An independent body corporate established under the Rail Safety National Law (South Australia) Act 2012. The primary objectives of the ONRSR are to encourage and enforce safe railway operations and to promote and improve national rail safety.

**Protection Officer (PO):**

The qualified worker responsible for rail protection (NSW, SA, QLD, WA).

**Position of Safety (POS):**

is a place where people or equipment cannot be struck by rail traffic.

**Rail Safety Pre-Work Briefing:**

is a formal briefing on the worksite protection arrangements provided by the Track Force Protection Coordinator to all rail safety workers associated with the worksite protection and the Work Group Supervisor.

**Rail Safety Worksite Hazard Assessment (RSWHA):**

is an assessment of the rail safety hazards to determine the method/level of protection requirement for a worksite.

**Rail Safety Worker (RSW):**

Is a person who has carried out, is carrying out or is about to carry out, rail safety work, and includes:

- d) a person who is employed or engaged by a rail operator to carry out rail safety work
- e) a person engaged by a person (other than by a rail operator) to carry out rail safety work
- f) a trainee
- g) a volunteer.

**Track Force Protection Coordinator (TFPC):**

is the person appointed to assess and implement worksite protection arrangements on site.

**Track Force Protection:**

Track force protection is a method of protecting work on track between rail traffic movements.

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Track force protection is a method of protecting work on track between rail traffic movements.

**Work Group Supervisor (WGS):**

Is the individual ultimately responsible for the supervision of the programmed activities within a Work Site.

**Work Group Supervisor Pre-Work Briefing:**

Is a formal briefing on the task related activities provided by the Work Group Supervisor to the work group an



## FURTHER INFORMATION

If you require any further information, please discuss with your supervisor.

## INFORMATION SOURCES

- Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB),  
Rail Occurrence Investigation, RO-2015-019,  
Final 24 August 2016
- Safety Critical Communications Guidelines,  
Rail Industry Safety and Standard Board