

# WELCOME

TRACK WORKER STRUCK BY A PASSENGER TRAIN: SHARED LEARNING

# LAVERTON INCIDENT PROTOCOLS, PROCEDURES AND SHORTCUTS

TOOLBOX 9



MetroSafe



## OBJECTIVE

To welcome and clarify the goal of the session.

## WELCOME

Today's session is the ninth of ten Toolbox Talks.

In this session we will focus on the significance of protocols and procedures which are an essential part of the MTM Safe Systems of Work. We will discuss these protocols in relation to the Laverton Incident.

Housekeeping rules – phones off, duration of session (approximately 25 minutes).

## WHY WE ARE HERE

This is the ninth of ten Toolbox Talks created to share learnings from the Laverton Incident.

Previous sessions:

1. The overview of the Laverton Incident
2. Planning Worksite Protection
3. Pre-Work Briefs
4. TFPC and WGS Accountabilities
5. Track Access Desk Role
6. Safe Systems of Work
7. Speak Up for Safety
8. Enhancing Safe Behaviour Model

# OUR SAFETY PLEDGE

## LAVERTON INCIDENT: PROTOCOLS, PROCEDURES AND SHORTCUTS

# OUR SAFETY PLEDGE

I WILL ALWAYS CONFORM TO THE  
PROTOCOLS AND PROCEDURES AS  
SET OUT IN THE METRO TRAINS  
MELBOURNE'S (MTM'S) SAFETY  
MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

ZERO HARM

## OBJECTIVE

To clarify and emphasise our Safety Pledge and ensure participant understanding.

## READ

**I will always conform to the protocols and procedures as set out in the Metro Trains Melbourne's (MTM's) Safety Management System.**

## DISCUSS

Procedures and protocols provide specific instructions for how to perform work activities. A Protocol defines a set of procedures or steps to be followed to accomplish a given task. These steps are based on industry standards and capture the MTM safety behaviours we have discussed in previous toolbox talks.

**Pose question to group:** How can applying protocols and procedures help manage risks better?

**Ensure you discuss:**

- Reiterate the following safety behaviours:
  - Speak up
  - Act on issues and ideas
  - Stop if it's unsafe.
- All participants understanding of what procedures and protocols are
- Link back to how participants can recognise hazards and speak up if there is a deviation from a set procedure or protocol
- Why is it challenging to follow procedure?

## INTRODUCTION

It is the responsibility of every RSW to follow the MTM Protocols and Procedures to ensure their safety and the safety of everyone around them.

The rail environment poses many hazards and risks for all RSWs. Protocols and procedures are documented to safeguard reliable rail operations and ensure hazards and risks are being managed on the

worksite. The consequences of not following these protocols and procedures correctly or simply taking shortcuts can sometimes be fatal.

This booklet provides clear information about the importance of accurately following operational and safeworking procedures and how it relates to the Laverton Incident.

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



## OBJECTIVE

To set the tone and reinforce the importance of following protocols and procedures in the rail industry.

## READ AND CLARIFY

The rail environment poses many hazards and risks for all RSWs. Protocols and procedures are documented to safeguard reliable rail operations and ensure hazards and risks are being managed on the worksite.

The consequences of not following these procedures correctly or simply taking shortcuts can sometimes be devastating.

## DISCUSS

Ask the group to **differentiate between protocols and procedures**.

Ensure understanding: Protocol defines a set of work-related procedures which determine how work activities should be carried out to ensure safety and maximum efficiency.

Pose questions to the group:

- How does having a protocol or procedure minimise risks?
- True or false: Risk perception is low for routine familiar tasks? Ask why.

Draw conclusions from the discussion.

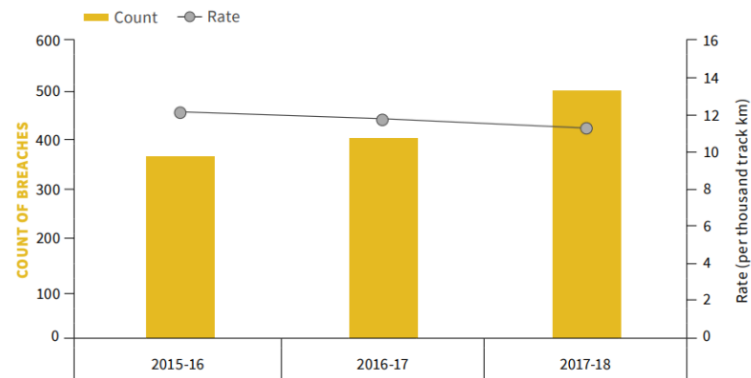
Ensure you discuss:

- Procedures have been identified to minimise risk, eliminate compromises and provide consistency to carry out all operations correctly and always in the same manner.
- Safety can become redundant over time with routine tasks. Unless there is a conscious effort by everyone to identify and report when a shortcut is taken, a near miss addressed before it becomes an incident.

# RELATED STATISTICS

Track-worker safety remains a major concern for ONRSR and industry. Occurrence data indicates a steady and alarming rate of track work procedure and rule breaches over the past three years.

TRACK WORK SAFEWORKING RULE AND PROCEDURE BREACHES, JULY 2015 TO JUNE 2018



In the 2017– 2018 financial year, approximately one in six breaches posed a significant level of threat, involving failures of a type that could have directly led to workers being struck if the circumstances were slightly different. In a small number of cases, an accident was averted only through the responsive action of an individual such as a train driver applying emergency brakes or a worker jumping from the path of an approaching train.

SOURCE: OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL RAIL SAFETY REGULATOR (2017), RAIL SAFETY REPORT 2017-2018, [https://www.onrsr.com.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0018/22626/17789-ONRSR-SAFETY-REPORT-SPREADS.PDF](https://www.onrsr.com.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/22626/17789-ONRSR-SAFETY-REPORT-SPREADS.PDF), PP. 30-31

## OBJECTIVE

To discuss incidents and occurrences of breaches in safety protocols and procedures in the rail network.

## READ

In the 2017 — 2018 financial year, approximately one in six breaches posed a significant level of threat, involving failures of a type that could have directly led to workers being struck if the circumstances were slightly different. In a small number of cases, an accident was averted only through the responsive action of an individual such as a train driver applying emergency brakes or a worker jumping from the path of an approaching train.

## DISCUSS

Over the past three years, occurrence data indicates a steady and alarming rate of track work procedure and rule breaches.

MTM’s goal is zero harm. To reach this goal we need to ask:

- How do procedures help people to work more safely?
- What are the accountabilities of the key stakeholders on site?
- What would you do if you noticed that procedure was not being followed?



# 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.

## OBJECTIVE

To provide the required background knowledge in regard to the Laverton Incident of 2015 and how it links to the importance of following protocols and procedures.

## READ

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, a section of track on the Altona Loop Line.

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

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Summarise:

1. Protocols and procedures are only as effective as the people involved and can fail in the face of poor judgement.
2. Several actions of the workgroups on site that day were contrary to established safety procedures. The increased risks associated with workgroup's activities led to this terrible accident.

### LAVERTON INCIDENT SUMMARY

### SHARED LEARNINGS – PROTOCOLS & PROCEDURES

1

All RSWs must follow MTM protocols and procedures to ensure there is consistency in practice and everyone in the team know what is expected from them and what they can expect from other members in the team.

2

All RSWs must speak up if they become aware of any deviations from the protocol or procedures. They must always avoid short-cuts and stay focused on working safely.

## OBJECTIVE

Introduce the concept of key learnings around the importance of following protocols and procedures in the rail industry.

## READ AND CLARIFY

Read out each point and then discuss the following before moving onto the next point:

1. **All RSWs must follow protocols and procedures to ensure there is consistency in practice and everyone in the team know what is expected from them and what they can expect from other members in the team.**

**Facilitator to discuss with the group:**

As a RSW, you have an accountability to:

- Ensure you have a clear understanding of relevant procedures and protocols in place to ensure safe operations.
- Ensure you feel safe to carry out the workgroup activities expected of you and ask questions at any time to clarify.

2. **If there are any deviations from the protocol or procedure, speak up. Avoid short-cuts and stay focused on working safely.**

- Ensure you emphasise deviations from procedures increase risks and impact the outcome of the workgroup's activities.
- Ensure you discuss the importance of being Fit for Duty prior to commencing work so you can focus completely on the work activity.
- Ensure you stress everyone is accountable to ensure they have reviewed and understand relevant procedures and protocols.

**Facilitator to ensure all RSWs are aware of the Emergency Evacuation Procedures, Position of Safety, and the Safety Critical Communication Protocols required when working in the rail corridor.**

# WHAT ARE PROTOCOLS & PROCEDURES?

Metro Trains Melbourne (MTM) has safeworking processes and procedures for a range of on-track activities within its Safety Management System.

Protocols and procedures provide a roadmap for day-to-day operations. They ensure compliance with laws and regulations, give guidance for decision making and streamline internal processes to ensure the safety and continuity of operations.

Protocol defines a set of procedures that describe details on how a work-related activity is carried out. These include specific responsibilities like what are the right steps to take, who should be doing the task and when. These details provide context to the activities and help clarify everyone's role.

From senior leaders to frontline staff, everyone at MTM has a role to play in ensuring these procedures are understood, communicated and work is carried out as intended. It is critical that all staff comply with these processes and procedures to ensure their own safety, and the safety of those around them.

## OBJECTIVE

Reinforce the considered nature and weight of the Safety Management System.

## READ AND DISCUSS

Metro Trains Melbourne (MTM) has safeworking processes and procedures for a range of on-track activities within its Safety Management System.

Protocol defines a set of procedures that describe details on how a work-related activity is carried out. These include specific responsibilities like what are the right steps to take, who should be doing the task and when. These details provide context to the activities and help clarify everyone's role.

### Who does Protocols and Procedures apply to?

From senior leaders to frontline staff, everyone at MTM has a role to play in ensuring these procedures are understood, communicated and work is carried out as intended. It is critical that all staff comply with these processes and procedures to ensure their own safety, and the safety of those around them.

## QUESTIONS TO THE PARTICIPANTS

- **What is the benefit of having Protocols and procedures?**

Ensure these points are covered: Protocols and procedures provide a roadmap for day-to-day operations. They ensure compliance with laws and regulations, give guidance for decision making and streamline internal processes to ensure the safety and continuity of operations. These details provide context to the activities and help clarify everyone's role.

- **Why should you follow procedure?**

Ensure these points are covered: RSWs who follow established procedures and protocols can be more confident that their actions are supported by management, based on industry regulations and factors in industry best practices. They also demonstrate safety behaviours that others can learn from.

### LAVERTON INCIDENT: PROTOCOLS, PROCEDURES AND SHORTCUTS

## WHEN SHOULD YOU FOLLOW PROTOCOLS & PROCEDURES?

Safety is a daily job and it is everyone's responsibility to follow procedures and protocols – all day, every day.

When everyone is following procedure, incidents and near misses are less likely to occur. Following procedure is equally important during non-standard situations, correcting previous errors and in response to incidents.

However, sometimes for reasons that are clear and on other occasions are not, the time taken to accurately follow procedure is not appropriate. Irrespective of the reason, a deliberate deviation from established rules or procedures is classified as taking a short cut and should be avoided under all circumstances when working on tracks.

So anytime you have the urge to take the easy way out or deciding whether to follow safety procedures, rationalising where you can cut corners often leaves you open to more risk. Hold yourself and others around you accountable for what needs to be done.

Following procedures ensures consistency in practice for individual staff and creates role model behaviours for others to shadow. By following procedure, you know what is expected of you and what you can expect from other members of your team.

ZERO HARM

## OBJECTIVE

Highlight how deviations from standard procedure can impact risk.

## READ AND CLARIFY

Safety is a daily job and it is everyone's responsibility to follow procedures and protocols – all day, every day.

However, sometimes for reasons that are clear and on other occasions are not, the time taken to accurately follow procedure is not appropriate. Irrespective of the reason, a deliberate deviation from established rules or procedures is classified as taking a shortcut and should be avoided under all circumstances when working on track.

Following procedures ensures consistency in practice for individual staff and creates role model behaviours for others to shadow. By following procedure, you know what is expected of you and what you can expect from other members of your team.

## POSE THESE QUESTIONS

- **When is it acceptable to take deviate from a procedure or protocol?**

When everyone is following procedure, incidents and near misses are less likely to occur. Following procedure is equally important during non-standard situations, correcting previous errors and in response to incidents.

- Discuss why shortcuts are taken? Ask: Do we become complacent?
- How do you hold yourself accountable to do what needs to be done?

Elaborate further

- So anytime you have the urge to take the easy way out or decide whether to follow safety procedures, rationalising where you can cut corners often leaves you open to more risk.
- Hold yourself and others around you accountable for what needs to be done.



## WHAT IS MY ROLE?

All RSWs are expected to have a thorough understanding of hazards and risks involved in doing their job through the different processes in place.

It is up to each individual to Speak Up for Safety and raise any concerning matters at any stage.

Every RSW has the responsibility to:

1. Access and review all procedure documents relevant to your job
2. Be aware of risks and speak up if something you are doing does not align with MTM standard protocols.
3. Strictly follow all procedures as listed in the procedures to consciously adopt safe-work practices.



## OBJECTIVE

Ensure RSWs understand their role and accountabilities in following MTM protocols and procedures.

## READ AND DISCUSS

All RSW are expected to have a thorough understanding of hazards and risks involved in doing their job through the different processes in place.

It is up to everyone to Speak Up for Safety and raise any concerning matters at any stage.

### Read the responsibilities and discuss

- Where would you find procedure documentation?
- How can you use procedures to minimise risk?

### 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 AND SAFETY PLEDGE



### OBJECTIVE

Summarise and reinforce pledge.

Advise participants that information about the incident is available.

### READ

Restate the pledge: **I will always conform to the protocols and procedures as set out in the Metro Trains Melbourne's (MTM's) Safety Management System.**

### DISCUSS

Leader commits to the pledge by providing a summary of the importance of following standard protocols and procedures to ensure safe and reliable rail operations.

### 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
- Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator (2018),  
Rail Safety Report 2017-2018

Metro**Safe**

