

Safety Alert

ARTC No. 102
Issued 02/11/2017

Safeworking Communication Protocols

General

The Hunter Valley had a near miss event in 2015 whereby the physical location of a workgroup via the utilisation of a Controlled Signal Blocking (CSB) authority was unclear. Subsequently, the Hunter Valley implemented additional controls to ensure the physical location was specified when requesting authority under CSB working.

Further, a recent incident on the Kalgoorlie to Parkes corridor has highlighted the need for extra steps to be taken by the Competent Rail Safety Worker (CRSW) on initial contact to Network Control, when identifying their location in order to request a work on track authority or method of protection. This has been identified as a failed defence in multiple incidents in recent times and extra steps in this notice are required to address this issue directly. The additional controls are put in place to reduce our Fatal Risk No 3 Struck by Rail Traffic.

All 3 rule books mandate that communication by the CRSW from a worksite is to include:

- Name
- Title / Safeworking designation and
- Location

Location is defined in the NSW Network Rules and Procedures Glossary as a place in the ARTC Network with a designated name, identification number, or kilometre location.

Location is defined in the Code of Practice (CoP) for the Defined Interstate Network Volume 2 Glossary as the designated name used to describe a place on the railway.

In a recent incident the CRSW obtained a Track Occupancy Authority (TOA) between two locations. The CRSW and the workgroup were actually located in the adjacent section. The CRSW was unaware of their actual location and failed to provide their physical location as per the ARTC Addendum to the COP, Section 23.1 Defining a location and Train ID.

“Defining a Location and Train ID

A worker shall identify their location in km and m in a section whilst trains are to be identified as being from one location to another location, i.e. Adelaide to Melbourne or Kalgoorlie to Tarcoola. Points shall be identified by means of an adjoining location corridor segment i.e. ‘Tarcoola end points at Malbooma.’

It has also been identified during a number of incident investigations / audits that for Work on Track Authorities / methods that do not require the compilation of a safeworking form e.g. TOA without a form, i.e. Verbal Track Occupancy Authority (VTOA) and CSB. For these authorities, often the physical location of the CRSW requesting access is omitted in the contact with Network Control.

To systematically address network wide controls in relation to learnings and actions from prior incidents in the Hunter Valley and Interstate Network, a Safe Notice and Train Notice has been issued, effective from 2nd November 2017 until further notice. The Notices state that in addition to the existing requirements, all CRSW's when calling the Network Controller to obtain access to the track, must specify their physical location by stating:

- Location name and KM , or
- KM and Signal Number

Examples:

- Barton 694.335km,
- 449.164km Signal number GJ144
- Yerong Creek 564.832km,
- 565.234km Signal number YC15
- Seymour 98.700km
- 98.780km Signal post number 36.

Network Controllers must where possible verify the physical location of the CRSW's KM location using for example the train control graph, workstation mimic panel or Network Information Books, and that it is located within the correct Section of track before authorising track workers to access the Rail Corridor.

Worksite Protection Plan

Additionally the location on the CRSW and the workgroup must be clearly marked by kilometrage on the Worksite Protection Plan at the time of conducting the briefing (noting that this location will change for moving worksites).

Further information

- All Safety Alerts issued can be [found here](#).
- For further information please contact
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