

SAFETY ALERT

ARTC NSW No. 16



Issued 16th. Aug. 2006

Working on track circuitry / signalling equipment between train movements:

There have been a few incidents of Signals Passed At Danger (SPAD) and train driver reports of signal irregularities in the ARTC NSW Rail Network due to track circuit / signal routine maintenance activity conducted between train movements.

The recent incident that had been investigated involved signal being returned to stop as a train approached (26 July 2006), when signal electrician was testing the track circuits without the correct work on track method.

The main contributors to these incidents have been:

- Incomplete consideration of all risks in the safety assessment prior to commencement of work
- Incorrect selection of 'work on track' protection method.
- Lack of precise communications between field personnel and train control"

Before working on or testing track circuitry /signal infrastructure:

- Determine the effect the work will have on the signalling system.
- Tell the Network Control Officer if there is any potential for the planned work to adversely affect the signalling system
- Choose the appropriate work on track method that will protect
 - the employees undertaking the work AND
 - the signalling system from expected / unexpected failure prior to requesting permission to perform work on track circuits and signalling equipment.

Reference:

ANWT 300, ANWT 318, ANGE 204, ANPR 721.