

Safety Notification

TO : Hi-rail Repairers

CC : Ian Newton; Ken Thornton; Denis Snowden; Plant Coordinators

FROM : Greg Whelan, Plant & Equipment Manager

DATE : 12/5/08

SUBJECT : *Hi-Rail Equipment*

Reference : TCR 4344

Following the investigation of a recent hi-rail incident and as a result of other recent hi-rail inspections, a number of safety critical items need to be addressed. These include:

1. Mechanical inspections
2. Loading of hi-rail vehicles & Twist compliance testing

1. Mechanical inspections

Mechanical safety checks during routine servicing are imperative to ensure the safety of the operating vehicle & personnel. Checking & replacing safety items such as split pins on castellated nuts is part of the normal inspection regime as per the documentation provided.

The following example of where a stub axle nut had worked loose over time was not picked up by the operator until the nut was totally missing resulting in a seriously unsafe condition although no incident resulted.





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This condition was initiated by a maintenance fault during a service as the split pin was not installed following removal of the stub axle.

Chassis cracks are still occurring on some of the older Canter vehicles and as previously advised, maintainers are to be vigilant in checking the front and rear chassis rails for any signs of crack propagation.

2. Loading of Hi-rail Vehicles & Twist Compliance Testing

The even distribution of load on hi-rail vehicles is to be maintained within the maximum rated GVM of the vehicle to ensure the safety of both the vehicle and occupants both on road and on track.

For maintenance inspections where a twist test is to be carried out, the vehicle must be in its Tare or unladen state. This is important to ensure even and accurate load distribution on the hi-rail equipment. The only loads that should remain are large fixed equipment installations eg cranes, welders etc that always stay in the same position.

Maintenance providers should request operational personnel to present vehicles in the Tare state for service to facilitate appropriate testing. Team Managers & hi-rail operators have been advised of this requirement.

When testing is conducted, it is important to ensure not only that the vehicle achieves compliant results, but that the loaded and unloaded weights on each hi-rail wheel are relatively well balanced all round the vehicle. Large disparities should result in the hi-rail suspension being altered and the test completed again.

Unloaded wheel weights shall also exceed 100kg in all cases to ensure a minimum load is maintained on each hi-rail wheel when track twist is encountered.

These minor controls will assist in ensuring that no single wheel is 'favoured' and hence a target for further unloading and potential flange climb when in service.

Your cooperation in maintaining the safety of our hi-rail fleet is appreciated.

Regards,

Greg Whelan
Plant & Equipment Manager