



Australian Rail Track Corporation Ltd

SAFETY ALERT

ARTC NSW No. 33



Issued 13/8/08

WORKING ON OR NEAR CULVERTS

An investigation into a recent incident, where a contract employee fell into a culvert while working with a tamper has highlighted risks involved while working at or near, worksites where there are culverts.

In this instance the worker had positioned themselves next to a culvert and began “eyeing the track”. After they had finished “eyeing the track”, the worker stood up and slipped on some ballast and fell into the culvert.

It is our normal process, that comprehensive “site specific” risk assessments (utilising the Pre Work Brief and TAKE FIVE process) take place, prior to commencing any task on or near the track. The site specific risk assessment is to be documented and communicated, via the pre-work brief.

The hazards associated with the task being undertaken, while working near or around the culvert, are to be clearly identified. The associated control methods for the identified hazards are to be documented and clearly communicated to all persons working on the site.

Some of the control measures may include:

- ***Clearly identifying culverts in the worksite***
- ***The allocation of a “spotter” whose role is to prevent the worker from moving towards the culvert inadvertently falling***
- ***Adequate lighting (if working at night)***
- ***Temporary or permanent barriers (as required)***
- ***Appropriate work instructions – eg. remain within the “four foot”.***

As always, it is most important, that whenever working on track, for example working on top or near a culvert, performing a task, such as “eyeing the track”, proper and adequate safe-working protection is implemented



ACTION TO BE TAKEN

- Advise all employees under your control of this Safety Alert.
- Place the Safety Alert on display/notice boards.
- The Safety Alert, its contents, intent and any issues arising to be discussed at Team Safety Meetings
- Ensure a “sign-off” (for example, a Team Safety Meeting record) is obtained to verify that employees have been briefed on this Safety Alert.
- Any issues arising from this Safety Alert to be directed to the OHS Co-ordinator NSW (D Snowden)