

Personnel Management

Rail Safety Worker Competence



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Rail Safety Worker Competence Procedure

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Personnel Management

Rail Safety Worker Competence



Table of Contents

1. Purpose.....	3
2. Scope.....	3
3. Rail Safety Workers.....	3
4. Competence.....	4
5. Competence Assessment.....	4
6. Certificates of Competency.....	5
7. Records of Competence.....	6

Personnel Management

Rail Safety Worker Competence



1. Purpose

The purpose of this Procedure is to describe the procedures to be applied by OTHR to meet the requirements under the Rail Safety National Law relating to the competence of Rail Safety Workers.

2. Scope

This Procedure applies to OTHR members/contractors who undertake rail safety work on behalf of OTHR in accordance with its rail safety accreditation requirements.

The procedure shall be applied to all Rail Safety Workers engaged in rail safety work on the OTHR Network.

3. Rail Safety Workers

Members/contractors who undertake rail safety work, as defined in Section 8 of the Rail Safety National Law, will be deemed to be rail safety workers, examples of which are provided below:

A rail safety worker is any worker undertaking the following.

- operating or despatching rolling stock e.g. track machine / Road Rail Vehicle operator, network controller;
- controlling signalling and or communications affecting the movement of rolling stock e.g. signaller;
- coupling or uncoupling rolling stock e.g. shunter;
- maintaining, inspecting or repairing rolling stock e.g. diesel maintainer, fitter;
- maintaining, inspecting or repairing rail infrastructure e.g. maintainer;
- maintaining, inspecting or repairing rail signalling and communications infrastructure e.g. signal fitter;
- certification of railway civil, signalling, telecommunications infrastructure and rolling stock e.g. engineers;
- decommissioning of railway civil, signalling, telecommunications infrastructure and rolling stock e.g. engineers;
- development, management and monitoring of railway safeworking systems e.g. safety systems developers, train control planners;
- managing or monitoring of passenger safety on or at any railway.

The process described in this procedure shall be in addition to any OTHR industry induction that workers are required to meet.

OTHR members/contractors are required to keep their manager informed of any change in circumstances which could affect relevant qualifications held and are required to ensure that training records are complete and accurate.

Personnel Management

Rail Safety Worker Competence



Performance management documentation is confidential documentation and is therefore treated as such.

4. Competence

Competence is the demonstrated ability to apply the necessary knowledge, skill and experience to the level required to maintain conformance. This also requires the maintenance of all Licences and Special Certifications to a current level.

OTHR will ensure that all members/contractors are competent to perform their role on the basis of skills achieved through education, training or experience and that they do not undertake tasks in which they are not qualified or competent.

Where operating processes require special certification, OTHR will ensure that these certificates are obtained and checked annually for their currency. OTHR is responsible for ensuring that re-certification occurs if the competency is still required.

Safety Management System data in the form of incident reports, audit reports, project planning meetings and management review meetings will be considered when determining competency issues which need to be addressed.

It is the responsibility of the Management Committee to review competency levels in OTHR. They must also initiate actions for correction where the skills shortfall would potentially impact its continuing effective operation.

This responsibility is exercised continuously throughout the year as circumstances dictate e.g.; new or changed job roles.

OTHR has identified four levels of competency required to meet its operational requirements as follows:

Category A - Work in a Controlled Environment on or about the line on Railway Infrastructure, on Repair, Maintenance or Upgrading of Railway Tracks, or any Rolling Stock or Associated Equipment.

Category B – Be within the Danger Zone without supervision for any authorized purpose. *The Danger Zone is everywhere within 3m horizontally from the nearest rail and any distance above or below this 3m unless a safe place exists or can be created.*

Category C - Work at a Railway Station or Other Place as a Station Master,

Operator of Train Signals, or Shunter of Trains, or Work which Otherwise Relates to the Movement of Trains

5. Competence Assessment

Training and Assessment for OTHR Rail Safety Worker Competence Training may include:

- Structured training provided by qualified trainers, using either OTHR or external trainers depending on required outcomes.

Personnel Management

Rail Safety Worker Competence



- Self-paced training managed by the worker.
- On the job training provided by competent personnel.
- Demonstrated recognition of prior learning.

If it is considered that a member has existing skills and knowledge to perform the work safely, a request for assessment can be made to the Team Manager who will arrange to carry out the assessment. The assessor will conduct an assessment and record the result.

If the member cannot demonstrate the required competency, this will be recorded, and an individual training plan will be developed. This plan may include additional training or an agreed timeframe to gain further experience.

If the member is able to demonstrate the required competency, records will be provided to the Administration Manager who will arrange for the details to be included in the volunteers personnel file and the OTHR Competency Register.

Where competencies are nearing expiry the Administration Manager will arrange for the relevant re-assessment to be undertaken.

6. Certificates of Competency

OTHR will only issue Certificates of Competency to members who have met the criteria for the category of work. They should be fit and healthy and possess knowledge, skills, responsibility and aptitude appropriate to the rail safety work to which the certification relates.

The OTHR Certificate of Competency will be in the form of an identity card bearing the members photograph, ID number, expiry date, highest qualification and other prescribed information. It will be issued following successful completion of training.

The Certificate of Competency will be re-issued at least every 5 years or when more qualifications are gained, or qualification are suspended or revoked.

If a member relinquishes membership, the Certificate of Competency must be returned to OTHR.

Only members / contractors holding a current Certificate of Competency will be permitted to undertake rail safety work and Operations on behalf of OTHR.

In accordance with the requirements of the *Rail Safety Act* and OTHR bylaws, a member must be between the ages of 16 & 85 to carry out rail safety work.

OTHR will ensure that the particulars of the Certificates are kept in a secure system by an approved officer.

OTHR will undertake regular audits of its records to review the issue and recording of Certificates of Competency to prevent any person from undertaking rail safety work if:

- that person is not in possession of a current Certificate, or
- there has been a change in the person's health and fitness status, or

Personnel Management

Rail Safety Worker Competence



- the person has breached current work procedures, or
- the person failed to comply with management instructions after a breach occurred or,
- membership lapses.

7. Records of Competence

For the purposes of section 117(6) (Assessment of competence) of the National Rail Safety Law, and Sec 30 of the Rail Safety National Law National Regulations OTHR must maintain records of the competence of Rail Safety Workers who carry out rail safety work and will include details of:

- a) the rail safety training undertaken by each Rail Safety Worker, including when the training was undertaken and its duration; and
- b) the qualifications and competencies of each Rail Safety Worker, including, if applicable:
 - (i) the units of competence attained by the worker; and
 - (ii) the level of qualification attained; and
 - (iii) if and when a re-assessment of competence is to be conducted; and
 - (iv) if and when re-training is due; and (v) the date any re-training is undertaken; and
 - (v) the name of the organisation who conducted the training or re-training; and
- (c) the name and qualifications of the person who assessed the competence of the Rail Safety Worker.
- (d) The means by which this is achieved will be by downloading the relevant documentation in the Rail Industry Worker Card portal Laing O'Rourke has access to.