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HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMISSION

RAILWAY SAFETY PUBLICATION OF ANNUAL REPORT ON RAILWAY SAFETY

**A Paper by MATTHEW FARRELL
Cleared by ALLAN SEFTON on 17 August 2004**

Issue

1. This paper introduces the Railway Safety Annual Report for 2003/04.

Timing

2. It is planned to publish the Annual Report on 21 September 2004.

Recommendation

3. The Commission is asked to note:
 - the contents of the report; and
 - the proposed publication date.

Background

4. Annual Reports on railway safety have been produced for over 150 years. Most recently, the HSE's Annual Report on Railway Safety' has been produced under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Health and Safety Commission (HSC) and the then Secretaries of State for the Environment and Transport (dated 10 October 1996). This requires HSE to make an annual report to the HSC and Secretary of State for Transport.
5. The Report is principally a source of statistical data derived from the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR), including information on key findings and trends. However, it also provides a mechanism for disseminating information about the work of HMRI and an opportunity for cascading messages on emerging issues and findings from accident investigations, which would not necessarily justify separate publication.
6. The new report is structured around the statistical data (ie fatalities, injuries, train incidents, train defects and enforcement) and is supported by: a summary of the year in brief including enforcements/ incidents; good trends/bad trends; key facts; and main messages that HSE wants to get across.

Argument

7. Good and bad indicators, identified from the statistics, are highlighted in Annex 1.

8. There was no major incident involving multiple fatalities during the year.
9. Overall, the message is one of improvements, with a reduction in the numbers of collisions, derailments, train incidents, SPADs, broken rails, track buckles, rolling stock failures, and cases of vandalism. This is especially encouraging as all these took place during time of change and transition for the industry.
10. There is little change in the number of injuries to railway employees, or level crossing incidents and no change in the number of assaults on railway staff.
11. Some statistical returns are provisional, and may need slight adjustment prior to release.
12. The key messages, identified in the Foreword, are:
 - there was no major rail incident during the reporting year;
 - the number of broken rails in 2003/04 fell for the fifth successive year, however due to periods of exceptionally hot weather in 2003 the number of track buckles increased;
 - the TPWS fitment programme was completed by the railway industry, on time by 31 December 2003;
 - HSE's Rail Delivery Programme (RDP) is proceeding on schedule, with a completion date for all projects of 31 March 2004;
13. The Foreword to the Report has been agreed by Allan Sefton in his capacity as the Director for Rail Safety.

Consultation

14. Internally in HMRI, RPC, and Press Office. A copy of the draft is also being sent, for information, to:
 - the Office of Rail Regulation;
 - the Strategic Railway Authority;
 - the Rail Accident Investigation Branch;
 - Network Rail;
 - the Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB); and
 - Railways International and General Branch DfT.
15. We are continuing to make minor changes before the report goes live on the internet.

Presentation

16. Publication and a press briefing are scheduled for 21 September. The briefing will be led by Allan Sefton as the Director for Railway Safety and will major on:
 - train incidents;
 - trackworker safety;
 - level crossings; and
 - HSE's Rail Delivery Programme (RDP).

Costs and Benefits

17. Not quantified.

Financial/Resource Implications for HSE

18. Catered for in existing budgets.

Environmental Implications

19. Not applicable.

Other Implications

20. None.

Action

21. The Commission is asked to note:

- the contents of the report; and
- the proposed publication date.

Good Indicators

- No fatal injuries resulting from train incidents.
- Broken rails on Network Rail infrastructure fell from 445 to 335.
- TPWS fitment programme completed on time by 31 December 2003.
- TPWS proving increasingly effective in reducing the consequences of SPADs.
- SPADs on Network Rail infrastructure fell from 401 to 378.
- 246 members of the public died as a result of trespass and suicide, down 11 on 2002/03.
- RIDDOR-reportable assaults on staff fell by 26%, from 354 to 263.

Bad indicators

- Track buckles on Network Rails infrastructure increased to 137, due primarily to periods of exceptionally hot weather in 2003.
- 20 members of the public killed using level crossings, up 7 on 2002/03.
- Railway staff fatalities increased to 9 from 7 in 2002/03.