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HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMISSION

Publication of the National ERTMS Programme (NEP) 2ND year report

A Paper by HSE Rail

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Issue

1. The NEP second year report is to be published on 18 May 2004 and overall reports good progress in a number of important areas in the development of ERTMS (European Rail Traffic Management System).

Timing

2. The report will be published on 18 May 2004.

Recommendation

3. That the Commission notes and welcomes the good progress that has been made.

Background

4. The HSC in accepting that a national automatic train protection system could not be fitted to the network to the timescales envisaged by Lord Cullen supported the setting up of a national implementation programme, led by the SRA with industry. However, the Commission has also made it clear that it would want to monitor this work closely. HSE's presence on the NEP as observers and the year end reports allows HSC to carry out its monitoring role.

Argument

5. The Executive Summary of the report is attached. Full copies of the report can be obtained via the Secretariat.

6. Overall, the report paints a good picture of progress in a number of important areas:

- The necessary new operating roles and principles are being developed;
- Work on the Cambrian early deployment site is progressing with a positive business case and funding for the project confirmed.
- The NEP have a much better picture of what is being done in Europe.
- A rational process has been developed for deciding the scope and timing of ERTMS implementation in the rest of the UK.

7. There is nothing in the report which moves the NEP away from the original aim of having ERTMS Level 2 on all high speed lines by 2015. However, the work to look at the scope and timing of national implementation is being carried out against a number of changes which have occurred since this target was set:

- a) Funding has become tighter and the DfT Rail Review has raised questions about future role and responsibilities.
- b) TPWS is fitted to all the network where we believe it to be justified, significantly reducing network risk of collision.
- c) NWR are working to produce and implement a programme of additional fitment of TPWS+ and justifiable locations.
- d) Nearly all the old, crash vulnerable rolling stock (MK Is) will be removed from the network in the near future.
- e) Work in Europe has shown a reluctance to move to ERTMS until a sound business case exists.
- f) As part of work surrounding the interim review of track access charges, NWR is looking at the whole nature of its signalling renewal programme.

8. In this broader context, HSC continues to have an important role in monitoring progress with development and delivery of this programme beyond the Cambrian early deployment site and the first implementation site towards eventual national roll-out.

Consultation

9. Within HSE Rail and with the Communications Directorate.

Presentation

10. In welcoming this report, this is an opportunity to show HSC's and HSE's independent role of monitoring and review being exercised sensibly and cooperatively whilst protecting the public interest. [A press release will be developed with Press Office.]

Costs and Benefits

11. The positive NPV (net present value) for the business case has, at the most pessimistic, dropped from £3.7 billion last year to only £1.2 billion in this year's report. A positive business case is essential to the successful delivery of this technology and the automatic train protection it will incorporate.

Financial/Resource Implications for HSE

12. The resources to carry out this monitoring work in HMRI and policy have been allocated within existing budgets for the current financial year and are relatively small. There are no additional medium or longer term resource implications anticipated at present.

Environmental Implications

13. None

Other Implications

14. The development of ERTMS is linked to other train protection issues such as TPWS effectiveness and the industry's implementation of a programme of TPWS+ fitment. A train protection project is being established under the Rail Delivery Programme and its remit will include a review of HSE's operational strategy on train protection.

Action

15. The Commission is asked to note the publication of this report.