


## Safety Alert

### SA 18-295 Using Lookout Working

	<p><b>Audience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All TfNSW employees and contractors who are rail safety workers</li> </ul>	<p><b>Contact:</b></p> <p>Nick Mountford – Director Safety, Quality, Environment and Risk, Asset Standards Authority Freight, Strategy and Planning Division</p>
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#### Background

On Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April, a workgroup were undertaking activities in the rail corridor at Wondabyne, on the Central Coast on NSW, on behalf of a TfNSW project.

The Protection Officer violated Sydney Trains Network Rule NWT 310 Lookout Working.

#### What happened?

The Protection Officer (PO) for the work group did not contact the Sydney Trains Signaller prior to commencing work inside the Danger Zone as required under Sydney Trains Network Rule NWT 310 Lookout Working.

An extract from NWT 310 reads (in part):

*Work in the Danger Zone **must not begin until the Protection Officer has spoken with the Signaller about the use of Lookout Working.***

*The Protection Officer must tell the Signaller:*

- their name and contact details*
- the type of work to be done*
- the intended duration*
- the location of the work.*

Whilst the preparation of the Worksite Protection Plan by the Protection Officer for the work group had apparently been prepared correctly, and showed it was safe to use Lookout Working, this key requirement noted above was not observed.

The initial investigation also reports that the Protection Officer was relying on a nearby active level crossing as additional warning of the approach of rail traffic. A level crossing warning is **not recognised** in the Sydney Trains RailSafe Network Rules as a form of warning that can be used under Lookout Working, and this is explained in this Safety Alert.

#### What are the lessons from this incident?

The rule changes for Lookout Working in December 2010 included the mandatory requirement for contact to be made with the Sydney Trains Signaller prior to commencing work in the Danger Zone. This requirement was made so that a workgroup would be in contact with Signaller for a number of reasons, including;

- If a form of emergency working is introduced that permits rail traffic to travel in the wrong-running direction, notification could be made,

- If an emergency situation or Condition Affecting the Network was in place, contact could be made with the work group to notify them
- If any out of course rail traffic such as wide load traffic was authorised to operate in the vicinity.

The use of the activation of warning equipment from a Type F level crossing is not an authorised form of activity under NWT 310. This is because not all rail traffic will activate the warning equipment correctly. Smaller vehicles like hi-rails may not activate the warning equipment and so this form of warning is not recognised under NWT 310 and NPR 711 Using Lookouts.

It is vital and non-negotiable that the requirements of the Sydney Trains RailSafe Network Rules and Procedures are observed by TfNSW workers and contractors performing work on the Sydney Trains network.

### **Actions Required**

TfNSW requires its workers, project partners and delivery chain suppliers to comply at all times with the Sydney Trains RailSafe Network Rules and Procedures.

In the case of NWT 310 Lookout Working, particular attention is drawn to the requirements stated above.

TfNSW project managers and directors are required to distribute this Safety Alert to their rail delivery partners and supply chain representatives and to ensure this is included at relevant workplace briefings, toolbox talks and other communication methods.

**Issued and authorised by the Director Safety, Quality, Environment and Risk**



Signature

Name: Nick Mountford, Director Safety, Quality, Environment and Risk  
Dated: 03 May 2018