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TERMS OF REFERENCE

Branch Operations Forum & Branch Operations Reference Group Terms of Reference

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1. Terms of reference

Purpose

The Branch Operations Forum (BOF) is established to provide the Central Branch of the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator (ONRSR) and representatives of the rail industry that operate in South Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory with the opportunity to exchange ideas and to discuss operational rail safety issues.

The BOF provides a forum to:

- discuss compliance issues (at the broader industry level across the Central Branch);
- discuss and provide input to the ONRSR's regulatory strategies to improve safety in the industry;
- review and provide input to safety improvement initiatives developed by the ONRSR;
- provide a link with other rail industry consultative committees such as the ONRSR's CEO Industry Reference Group and the Rail Industry Safety and Standards Board's (RISSB) Safety Managers Group.

To assist and facilitate the planning for the BOF a Branch Operations Reference Group (BORG) is also established to provide advice and input to the Central Branch on the content and effectiveness of BOF activities.

The BOF is not a decision making forum and is not intended to be the forum to discuss or consider individual operator issues or industrial matters.

2. Membership

The BOF will have an open membership, established by invitation based on the content of the BOF activity. Membership will typically be open to:

- all rail transport operators that are accredited for railway operations within the geographic areas of the Central Branch. Attendance from each operator may be limited to 2 persons;
- the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB);
- Rail Tram and Bus Industry Union (RTBU); and
- staff of the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator;

The BORG comprises a minimum of 7 members forming a cross section of Rail Transport Operators operating within Central Branch, and the ONRSR (SA Branch). Membership is by invitation from the Central Branch Director and currently comprises representative from the following operators:

1. Bowmans Intermodal
2. Great Southern Rail
3. The Rail Commissioner
4. Genesee & Wyoming Aust
5. Australian Rail Track Corporation
6. Pacific National
7. Flinders Ports

Ideally, the representative from the above operators should be someone who is based in, or is principally involved in operations within Central Branch.

3. Replacement and duration of membership

Membership of the BORG is at the discretion of the ONRSR Central Branch Director and will normally be for a term of two years. There is no maximum term for membership of the BOF?.

At the end of each two-year term the Branch Director will review the make-up of the BORG and will then invite nominations from the Operators that are considered to best represent a cross-section of operations within Central Branch.

When a vacancy occurs before the end of the appointed term, a replacement may be appointed for the remainder of that term.

4. Meetings

A BOF activity will be undertaken at least once per year, typically in September/October of each year. Other activities may be undertaken based on the recommendation of the BORG and at the discretion of the Central Branch Director. BOF activities may take the form of:

- a whole day seminar;
- workshops; or
- short information sessions on specific content.

The BORG will be consulted in order to establish agenda items and papers for the principal BOF activity (and other associated activities) for the year.

The BORG will meet once a year in March. This initial meeting will establish:

- matters that need to be considered through the BOF during the calendar year;
- primary BOF activity/activities to be undertaken during the calendar year; and
- produce a schedule of BORG meetings considered appropriate for the coming year.

BORG meetings will be limited to three hours.

Meeting agendas and papers

An agenda and any papers will be distributed prior to each BORG meeting or BOF activity.

A standard BORG meeting agenda will be established although any member can raise additional agenda items.

Following any meeting, the minutes will be drafted and distributed to all members for comment normally within two weeks of the meeting. Minutes will be published on the ONRSR website, under Events and Forums, SA Branch operations forum, once reviewed by forum members and approved by the Chairperson.

Decision making

The BORG is not a decision making body and therefore does not have the power to direct the activities, policies or procedures of the ONRSR. While the ONRSR will carefully consider any feedback from industry stakeholders, it will not be bound to any particular course of action by the BORG's discussion.

Conduct of members

The membership of the BORG represents a range of views, sometimes potentially conflicting. Members are expected to participate in a constructive manner and consider the views of all parties when difference of opinion exists.

5. Confidentiality and privacy

On occasion those attending BORG meetings will acquire information not generally available to persons outside of the ONRSR. This information may relate to the ONRSR or other organisations or individuals with whom the ONRSR has dealings.

Commercially valuable, political or financial information is a typical example. Such information is either the property of the ONRSR or has been provided on a confidential basis.

All relevant documents will be clearly marked as confidential and for the use of reference group members only. It is improper to disclose such information to any other party without proper authorisation or to use the information for personal advantage.

The content of BOF activities are intended to be of a public nature and accessible to all rail industry participants involved or interested in Central Branch rail safety matters.

6. Roles and Responsibilities (if applicable)

Branch Director – Central Branch

- Chair's meetings in accordance with these guidelines;
- Receives agenda items, arrange preparation and distribution of agenda, working papers and minutes;
- Ensures as far as possible that agendas are followed and that meetings are conducted in an orderly manner;
- Monitors and coordinates overall BORG and BOF activities;
- Facilitates, as far as is practicable, the conduct of BOF activities; and
- Appoints a secretary to take minutes for the Committee.

BORG Members

- Attend BORG meetings as per the agreed forum meeting schedule;
- Arrange for a deputy to attend in their absence;

- Work within the terms of reference to achieve the purpose of the meeting;
- Actively participate in meeting discussions;
- Inform and consult with the relevant sections of the industry on priority areas, strategies and solutions proposed by the BORG;
- Promote the role of the reference group and BOF activities within industry; and
- Assist in the planning and delivery of BOF activities to fulfil the purpose of the BOF.

Other invited participants

On occasion, with the permission of the Chairperson, the reference group may invite relevant person/s to attend meetings. The role of these participants may include:

- Contributing to discussion of particular issues of which they have specific knowledge, skills, expertise or experience;
- Promoting a better understanding of ONRSR activities and priorities; and
- Promoting links between the BORG and other relevant industry or government agencies.