

Health assessments

Transport agency contractors

This information explains the health assessment requirements for transport agency contractors who undertake rail safety work.

A contractor is a person employed by an external company which does work or provides services to the transport agency. Contractors who perform rail safety work must meet the health requirements set out in the *National Standard for Health Assessment of Rail Safety Workers* (2017) before they undertake work for the transport agency.

Who is a rail safety worker?

The Rail Safety National Law (NSW) defines a rail safety worker (RSW) as someone who is involved in:

- the operation or movement of a train
- construction and maintenance of infrastructure
- any other work that the transport agency considers to fall within the definition in the Act.

Health assessment categories

A risk management approach is used to determine the health assessment category for different types of rail safety work.

Category 1

Applies to RSW who do safety critical work where sudden incapacity or collapse could lead to a serious safety incident. The assessment includes a comprehensive physical and psychological assessment, a cardiac risk level, ECG and pathology tests.

Category 2

Applies to RSW who do safety critical work where sudden incapacity will not affect the safety of the public or rail network. The assessment includes a comprehensive physical and psychological assessment.

Category 3

Applies to RSW required to protect their own safety where ill health does not directly affect the rail network. The assessment covers vision, hearing, mobility and serious medical conditions.

All contractor assessments include an AS/NZS4308:2008 urine drug test and an alcohol breath test. Contractors who return a positive urine drug test or an alcohol breath test reading greater than zero, or where there is evidence of specimen tempering or substitution, will be certified temporarily unfit until such time as they have successfully completed the transport agency's drug and alcohol rehabilitation program for contractors. Details of the program requirements are available from the Railsafe website at <http://railsafe.org.au>

Note that the health assessment outcome cannot be withheld from the transport agency to avoid the consequences of not passing a medical assessment and/or returning a positive drug or alcohol test.

How often are contractor assessments conducted?

Category 1 and 2 health assessments are conducted:

- at commencement, then
- every 5 years to age 50
- every 2 years to age 60
- every year thereafter.

Category 3 health assessments are conducted:

- every 5 years.



Arranging a health assessment

Health assessment forms

Contractors must complete the correct form, including the part A request page, and take the form to their health assessment. The transport agency's authorised health provider completes the rest of the form at the time of assessment. If you do know the health assessment category, colour vision or hearing requirement of the role that you will be performing contact your employer or TfNSW contract manager.

Forms are available from the RailSafe website at <http://railsafe.org.au>

Authorised health professionals (AHPs)

Contractor health assessments must only be conducted by a transport agency's authorised health professionals. AHPs are trained to conduct rail safety health assessments. Not all medical practitioners are authorised to conduct health assessments for transport agency.

A list of AHPs is available from <https://www.riv.net.au/authorised-health-professionals/>

Pathology testing

Pathology testing is required for category 1 rail safety work only. Contractors can attend any pathology centre but should do this at least three days before the date of their assessment.

Payment

Contractors are responsible for the cost of their assessment. Transport agency **does not** pay for contractor health assessments.

Health assessment results

Health assessment records are held by the AHP. The AHP advises transport agency of a contractor's fitness for duty only.

Medical information obtained from a health assessment is confidential and can only be accessed by the Chief Health Officer or nominated representative. The transport agency receives a copy of the assessment outcome, including any positive drug or alcohol test result. Apart from this, medical information may only be released with the contractor's consent or to comply with legal requirements.

Who can I contact for further information?

Any transport agency's authorised health professional (AHP) can provide advice. A listing of AHPs is accessible from <https://www.riv.net.au/authorised-health-professionals/>