

Lessons Learnt

This information has been prepared to inform Sydney Trains' employees, contractors and TfNSW on general requirements to adhere to both the Sydney Trains Network Rules and Procedures and all applicable possession related procedures for the placement of possession protection during Local Possession Authorities.

Background

Two recent possession incidents occurred during a Local Possession Authority (LPA) on the 10th March 2020 and the 26th March 2020 respectively. Both incidents occurred as a result of trains being allowed to enter the LPA after the possessions had been granted.

There was a potential for serious consequences.

A Systemic Investigation into these incidents is currently underway.

Contributing Factors.

The first incident occurred at 0110 hours on 10 March 2020 where the ATRICS Automatic Route Setting function set the route for run 121x to incorrectly enter Track Possession No.4 (STN 0404-2020). Run 121x travelled from the Up Main crossing over SY 667 points to the Up Suburban line. SY667 points were not set in the normal position to protect the possession.

The train was immediately detected by Network Control and stopped. There were no Protection staff in the immediate area.

On 25TH March 2020, at 2307 hours Track Possession 3 (STN 489-2020) Ashfield to Homebush was authorised on the Up and Down Local lines and from Illawarra Junction to Flemington on the Up and Down Suburban lines. At 2310 hours the Train Service Delivery Manager (TSDM) was assured that blocking facilities had been applied to protect the possession. At 2311 hours the Area Controller Strathfield panel noticed train run 170v was travelling in the possession area on the Up Suburban line through Ashfield.

Train run 170v was immediately stopped with no Protection staff in the immediate area.

The above 2 incidents highlights the potential risk involved when placing protection and what could have been a major incident. This is a valuable lesson and we need to learn from this by constantly complying with both the Networks Rules and Procedures and ASDC business rules in terms of two person teams when placing protection and for the second person who is not actually placing the protection being hyper vigilant and watching out for approaching rail traffic thereby keeping your fellow team member informed and safe.

The Final Word

Each and every person who manages or places possession protection has a responsibility to work in a safe manner and to be aware of, and comply with all applicable rules and procedures. Possession Protection Teams must always watch each other's back when on track placing protection, be visually aware of your surroundings, noting safe egress and easily accessible safe places. Possession protection briefings must highlight the above lessons learnt content.

Possession Protection Coordinators/ Possession Protection Officers are to please ensure that this Notice is highlighted and discussed with all teams managing and placing possession protection on behalf of AS&DC.



Peter Beardsley
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