

Reinforce compliance requirements for the development of the Possession Protection Constraint's and Safety Critical Communications.

This information has been prepared to remind Asset Scheduling and Delivery Coordination Staff of full compliance to procedures in relation to the development and approval of Possession Protection Constraints registers and also to Network Rules and Procedures when carrying out Safety Critical Communications.


Background

Since the beginning of November, there have been three recorded incidents where configuration possession protection has allegedly been left in place at the end of possessions.

Highlighted Incidents

1. 18-11-2018 – Configuration 8

- At possession handback, 621 points at Central could not be tested due to associated signalling equipment booked out of use. A point clip was subsequently located on the set of points after handback.


 **NOTE:** Review of voice recordings and constraints register confirmed that the correct Possession Protection was originally placed and removed from 621B end. Point clip was subsequently found on 621A end placed by persons unknown.

2. 23-11-2018 - Mid Week – Central- Homebush - Sydenham – Bankstown.

- 660 points at Macdonaldtown failed to go reverse. After possession handback it was found a point clip was left in place after the points failed to operate. Currently being investigated by Central District Possession Team

3. 03-12-2018 Configuration 3.

- After a point clip was removed from 258 points near Cleveland Street Bridge on the Up Main track, the Signaller failed to obtain reverse detection.

 **NOTE:** ASDC protection was placed and removed on 258B on the Up Main as per Constraints. Cause of the failed detection was a point clip found by Network Maintenance Response team on 258A end placed by persons unknown.

Requirement

Although the above 3 incidents where point clips were left on track were attributed as “Poor Possession Management” only item 2 above can be attributed to ASDC. This incident is currently being investigated.

However, during the investigations it was found that a Possession Protection Constraints register was not set up correctly and the Safety Critical Communication exchanged between the Possession Coordinator and the Protection Officer did not comply to:

- Application of Possession Protection.
- Verification and Approval of the Possession Constraints Register.
- NGE 204 Network Communication
- NPR 721 Spoken and Written Communications

Findings

While reviewing the Possession Constraints Register the following issues were observed:

- The Constraints were not fully set up correctly.
- Due to the complexity of the possession, the constraints were confusing
- Constraints were not reviewed and approved

While listening to voice recordings for Safety Critical Communications between the Possession Protection Coordinator (PPC) and the in-field Protection Officer the following requirements were not used or complied with:

- The PO did not identify himself, confirm his correct location, identify the correct track or the correct turnout number as per the possession constraints register.
- The verbal discussion was not professional, familiarity between the PC and PO contributed to the use of shortened “nicknames” and short cuts to communications.
- Both PPC and PO talked over the top of each other
- The PPC did not enforce correct Safety Critical Communications.

The Final Word

Each and every person setting up Constraints Registers or coordinating the placement or removal of configuration possession protection has a responsibility to comply with all applicable rules and procedures.

Possession Protection Constraints Registers

During possession planning Possession Protection Constraints Registers (PPCR) are developed to ensure the establishment of a protected possession area. The PPCR must be developed, verified as correct, printed and “approved” at least 1 week prior to the Possession. The signed copy must be loaded to PACT. Correct and Approved Possession Protection Constraints are a key requirement to ensure a safe possession area.

If your work load will affected the review and approval of the PPCR then your line manager must arrange for assistance.

All attempts must be undertaken by protection teams to contact the appropriate signaller to ensure that points which had point clips installed are tested. Where points are unable to be tested, the PPO is to be notified and an entry made in both the PACT PPO Diary and constraints register. Arrangements should be made for testing at the earliest opportunity. This point must be reinforced with Protection Teams.

Where a protection team identifies that point clip protection has already been removed, then the PPO must be notified immediately and recorded in the PPO Diary. Following appropriate risk mitigation the corresponding end of points must be checked by the protection team to ensure that no point clip has been placed on the corresponding point end. This point must be reinforced with Protection Teams.

Safety Critical Communication protocols

The Protection Coordinator must lead by example by communicating in a professional manner and fully demonstrate compliance by using Safety Critical Communication protocols. State your title, name, location, what you are doing, turnout / signal number as per constraints using phonetic alphabet if required.

If a Protection Officer fails to comply with Safety Critical Communication protocols then the Protection Coordinator must immediately address this issue by simply saying. “This is a recorded phone we must comply to Safety Critical Communications protocols. Could you please re-start your message”.

Managers please ensure that these instructions are provided your Teams.

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