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Preface

This standard was prepared by the Recruitment and Selection of Rail Traffic Drivers Development Group, overseen by the RISSB Safety and Operations Standing Committee.

Objective

The objective of this Standard is to provide a consistent approach to the Recruitment and Selection of Rail Traffic Drivers within the Australian and New Zealand railway industry, supporting a focus harmonisation of nation rail skills.

Compliance

There are four types of provisions contained within Australian Standards developed by RISSB:

- (a) Requirements.
- (b) Recommendations.
- (c) Permissions.
- (d) Constraints.

Requirements – it is mandatory to follow all requirements to claim full compliance with the Standard. Requirements are identified within the text by the term ‘shall.’

Recommendations – do not mention or exclude other possibilities but do offer the one that is preferred.

Recommendations are identified within the text by the term ‘should.’

Recommendations recognize that there could be limitations to the universal application of the control, i.e. the identified control is not able to be applied or other controls are more appropriate or better.

Permissions – conveys consent by providing an allowable option. Permissions are identified within the text by the term ‘may.’

Constraints – provided by an external source such as legislation. Constraints are identified within the text by the term ‘must.’

For compliance purposes, where a recommended control is not applied as written in the standard it could be incumbent on the adopter of the standard to demonstrate their actual method of controlling the risk as part of their WHS or Rail Safety National Law obligations. Similarly, it could also be incumbent on an adopter of the standard to demonstrate their method of controlling the risk to contracting entities or interfacing organisations where the risk may be shared.

RISSB Standards address known hazards within the railway industry. Hazards, and clauses within this Standard that address those hazards, are listed in Appendix A.

Appendices in RISSB Standards may be designated either “normative” or “informative.” A “normative” appendix is an integral part of a Standard and compliance with it is a requirement, whereas an “informative” appendix is only for information and guidance.

Table of Contents

Section 1	Scope and general	4
1.1	Scope	4
1.2	Normative references.....	4
1.3	Defined terms and abbreviations.....	4
Section 2	The recruitment process	6
Section 3	Preparing and planning	6
Section 4	Selection criteria	7
4.1	Risk based training needs analysis	7
4.2	Developing selection criteria.....	7
4.3	Medical requirements	7
Section 5	The assessment process	7
5.1	Planning the assessment process.....	7
5.2	Initial candidate screening	7
5.3	The assessment activities	8
5.4	Preparing candidates for assessment	8
5.5	Qualifications to design, administer and analyse assessment results	8
Section 6	The selection process	9
1.4	Matching assessment results to the selection criteria.....	9
6.1	Assessing and selecting candidates with previous RTD experience.....	9
6.2	Re-assessment for unsuccessful candidates	10
Section 7	Drugs screening and medical fitness	10
Section 8	Audit of the assessment and selection process	10
8.1	Application of audit	10
8.2	RTD information to be collected for audit purposes.....	11
Section 9	Continuous improvement of the recruitment process	11
Section 10	Records	12
10.1	Retention of records.....	12
10.2	Personal data protection.....	12
Appendix A	Hazard table (ARRM)	13
Appendix B	General Rail Traffic Driver selection criteria (informative)	14
Appendix C	Typical assessment activities (informative)	15
Appendix D	Bibliography (Informative)	16

Section 1 Scope and general

1.1 Scope

This Standard describes requirements for the recruitment and selection process of rail traffic drivers (RTD) to drive passenger, freight, heavy haul, and track vehicle operations on the Australian railway network.

This Standard includes the requirements for:

- (a) the assessment processes;
- (b) drug screening and medical fitness; and
- (c) process audit and continuous improvement.

This Standard is not specifically intended to cover urban on-street tramway, or light rail networks, or heritage railways operating on a private reservation, but items from this Standard may be applied to such systems as deemed appropriate by the relevant rail transport operator (RTO).

1.2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that *some* or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document:

- National Transport Commission (2017). *National Standard for Health Assessment of Rail Safety Workers* (3rd ed.)

NOTE:

Documents for informative purposes are listed in a Bibliography at the back of the Standard.

1.3 Defined terms and abbreviations

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply:

1.3.1

assessment centre

an internal or external service providing a collection of different activities that are administered by trained assessors and used for assessing the suitability of candidates for a specific role

1.3.2

assessment activity

a standardized task, test or questionnaire used to assess a candidate's performance, perceptions, or experience against a set of selection criteria (e.g., a cognitive test, personality questionnaire, structured behavioural interview)

1.3.3

assessor

someone trained and competent to administer one or more assessment activities

1.3.4

candidate

someone participating in a recruitment process

1.3.5

non-technical skills

are generic skills that underpin and enhance technical skills

1.3.6**performance criteria**

the psychological and behavioural attributes that determine safe and effective work performance. performance criteria are typically developed from a task analysis that considers both task and contextual performance

1.3.7**rail traffic driver (RTD)**

is a role within the Australian railway industry. the main responsibility of an RTD is to drive trains on the Australian railway network

1.3.8**rail transport operator (RTO)**

an organisation that has an agreement with a rail infrastructure manager (RIM) to enter and use a rail network (i.e. a rail infrastructure manager; a rolling stock operator; or a person who is both a rail infrastructure manager and a rolling stock operator)

1.3.9**risk based training needs analysis (RBTNA)**

structured process that identifies business requirements (such as recruitment criteria and training needs) for technical, non-technical skills and observable behaviours, the systems and tools used in performing the tasks, the context in which the role is performed, and the risks associated with every task and activity as identified

1.3.10**recruitment process**

the end-to-end management of candidate attraction, application, assessment, selection, validation (e.g., reference/police checks), job offer and onboarding

1.3.11**screening**

an initial assessment activity (typically conducted on-line or via telephone) that occurs soon after the candidate applies for a role. it is used to identify and remove candidates from the recruitment process who fail to meet specific selection criteria (e.g., no criminal record, permanent residency status, sufficient English literacy)

1.3.12**selection criteria**

the minimum assessment activity score or result that the candidate needs to achieve to be considered suitable against a related performance criteria (sometimes called the 'cut-off value')

1.3.13**technical skills**

comprise the practical application of specific procedures, techniques, roles and responsibilities of the RTD role

Section 2 The recruitment process

An effective recruitment process is critical for attracting, assessing, and selecting candidates who can successfully complete initial RTD training, then continuing to meet the safety and performance requirements of the role once employed.

A typical RTD recruitment process consists of five stages:

- (a) Develop the selection criteria for the RTD role.
- (a) Attract suitable applicants; either internally or external to the RTO via for local and online advertisement agencies.
- (b) Assess candidates against the selection criteria (e.g., via initial screening and an assessment centre).
- (c) Select candidates who meet the selection criteria.
- (d) Conduct pre-employment checks (e.g., police, medical and reference).

This Standard addresses stages (a), (c) and (d). Guidance relating to pre-employment medical checks can be found in the National Standards for Health Assessment of Rail Safety Workers.

The RTO shall ensure that their recruitment process—

- (a) does not illegally discriminate against applicants (e.g., based on age, race, or gender);
- (b) is consistent with the relevant diversity and inclusion provisions; and
- (c) will, as far as reasonably practicable, ensure that only suitable RTD candidates are selected (i.e., they meet specific selection criteria).

Section 3 Preparing and planning

The RTO shall use valid, reliable and unbiased assessment methods and activities.

The design of a recruitment process should be directed by eight activities (as listed below) to ensure the recruitment process delivers the required number of suitable RTD candidates:

- (a) Undertake a job analysis or a risk-based training needs analysis (RBTNA) to identify performance criteria, including the key knowledge, skills and attributes required for safe and effective RTD performance. At a minimum, RTOs should review a current position description or related information to determine the relevant RTD performance criteria for the specific operational context.
- (b) Document and endorse this analysis (or position description) with subject matter experts (e.g., trainers, rail safety staff, driver supervisors or managers).
- (c) Design selection criteria for the specific operational context (see Section 4).
- (d) Design an assessment process by selecting or developing valid and reliable assessment methods and activities that measure the knowledge, skills and attributes endorsed by subject matter experts.
- (e) Trial the assessment process (where practical) with a target group of experienced RTDs.
- (f) With the input from the subject matter experts, validate the assessment process by analysing the relationship between assessment activity scores and meaningful measures of RTD training and/or job performance (e.g., an on-the-job or train simulator assessment).
- (g) Update and refine the recruitment and assessment process based on the results from the validation exercise.

- (h) Continually monitor, review, and improve the recruitment and assessment process.

Section 4 Selection criteria

4.1 Risk based training needs analysis

The RTO shall develop a comprehensive and relevant list of technical and non-technical skills by undertaking an RBTNA applicable to their operating environment and the context of the RTD role.

The results of this RBTNA shall be used to determine the selection criteria and the assessment activities most suited to measuring these criteria during the assessment process.

4.2 Developing selection criteria

The RTO shall derive the selection criteria to select suitable candidates for the RTD role from:

- (a) the environmental and operational demands on the RTD role (e.g., workload, shift work, on-time running demands, network congestion);
- (b) the technical skills specific for the operating environment; and
- (c) non-technical skills and psychological attributes (i.e. cognitive and emotional) needed to successfully complete initial RTD training and perform safely and effectively post training and assessment in a largely unsupervised environment.

Criteria in Appendix B shall be included in the RTO's selection criteria.

4.3 Medical requirements

Candidates shall meet specific medical standards for employment as a RTD, as defined by the National Standards for Health Assessment of Rail Safety Workers.

Section 5 The assessment process

5.1 Planning the assessment process

The RTO shall balance the need for validity, reliability, and fairness within the requirement to implement recruitment processes. This should be achieved in two stages:

- (a) Initial candidate screening.
- (b) Use of an assessment centre or suitable assessment activities.

The RTO should seek independent advice from a suitably qualified and experienced expert in RTD assessment and selection before designing and implementing large-scale recruitment and assessment processes.

Assessment methods shall be selected to assess the selection criteria for each stage and determine a measure of performance.

5.2 Initial candidate screening

The initial screening stage should be designed to quickly and accurately reduce the size of the initial applicant pool to a more manageable number by assessing applicants against key selection criteria.

The RTO should administer objective performance-based screening activities to achieve initial screening of candidates. Performance-based measures provide an objective and cost-effective way to screen candidates who fail to meet the required selection criteria.

The RTO should include supervised screening tests where required.

5.3 The assessment activities

The RTO should avoid relying exclusively on one assessment method or tool and seek a broader range of assessment measures that cover the full RTD selection criteria.

The RTO shall ensure the assessment methods are:

- (a) **Valid** – The assessment should measure what it is supposed to measure. For example, if the assessment is designed to test practical skills, then it should not be purely theoretical.
- (b) **Reliable** – The assessment should yield consistent results over time. This means that if the same candidate were to take the same assessment multiple times, their scores should be relatively similar.
- (c) **Unbiased** – The assessment should not favor any particular group of students. It should be fair and equitable to all candidates, regardless of their background or personal characteristics.

COMMENTARY C5.3

A typical assessment process should combine several standardized assessment activities together in a way that is designed to assess specific selection criteria accurately and consistently. These can be used as stand-alone activities or combined in meaningful ways to assess a broad range of RTD selection criteria. A list of typical assessment activities is included in Appendix C.

5.4 Preparing candidates for assessment

The success of any assessment activity can be improved by giving candidates detailed instructions and sufficient preparation time before starting the activity. As a minimum, the RTO shall provide the candidates with:

- (a) an overview of the RTD role and initial training program with a focus on the selection criteria and typical RTD operating environment;
- (d) a description of the assessment activities and how they relate to the RTD selection criteria;
- (e) where practical, an opportunity to familiarize themselves with each assessment activity beforehand (e.g., by practicing a sample of questions);
- (f) advice on preparing for the assessment process beforehand;
- (g) concise administrative and logistical instructions about the assessment process (e.g., schedule of activities); and
- (h) standardized assessor instructions and processes for test administration.

5.5 Qualifications to design, administer and analyse assessment results

The assessment process shall be carried out in accordance with this Standard regardless of whether it is designed, implemented and the results analyzed by the RTO or an external provider.

The RTO shall appoint a person or persons with the necessary qualifications, expertise, and experience to design and/or administer the various assessment activities, including the ability to analyse and interpret the assessment results using contemporary statistical techniques (e.g., for validation purposes and establishing benchmarks).

The person should be acquainted with the specific RTD role and selection criteria. The RTO should seek advice from a recognized industry body on this requirement.

Section 6 The selection process

1.4 Matching assessment results to the selection criteria

The RTO shall determine the selection criteria benchmark for assessments as RTD candidates are selected, or rejected, based on whether their assessment results meet, or fail to meet, the selection criteria benchmark.

The selection criteria benchmark shall be statistically related to the RTD performance criteria. The selection criteria shall be determined through a performance-related validation process.

No single assessment criteria result should hold heavier weight than another, unless there is evidence that a particular selection criterion has a disproportionate influence on RTD performance.

Candidates who have been selected or rejected should receive feedback on their results from someone suitably qualified to do so. Feedback should be provided on request from candidates.

6.1 Assessing and selecting candidates with previous RTD experience

Consideration may be given for the recognition of prior learning (RPL) for RTD candidates with existing skills, knowledge, or experience relevant to the role. This can help to reduce duplication of training and assessment and increase the accessibility and flexibility of the recruitment and selection process.

In determining how best to modify the standard assessment and selection process, the RTO should consider the following factors:

- (a) The amount of time spent driving as a RTD after initial training and certification
- (b) The RTD's safety record, confirmed by the current and previous employer
- (c) Recent competence assessment and monitoring records confirmed by the current and previous employer
- (d) The degree of difference between the RTD's previous driving experience and the RTO's operating environment
- (e) The period since the RTD last worked as an RTD and the reason for ceasing RTD work
- (f) The technical skills needed to perform the RTD role (e.g., door operation, braking, fault finding)

The RTO should request relevant driving performance information from the RTO named as a previous employer. RTOs should co-operate with each other when receiving a request for such information.

When requested, an RTO should provide information on the RTD, including;

- (g) results of any assessment methods used for selection;
- (h) recent records that demonstrate competency;
- (i) demonstrated safety performance;
- (j) records of any special monitoring arrangements in place at the time of leaving the RTO;
- (k) route and rail traffic competence current at the time of leaving the RTO; and
- (l) temporary or permanent restrictions or exclusions because of a safety incident, medical reasons, or other cause. The information provided shall be limited to restriction or exclusion.

The information provided by a current or previous employer should be, as far as is reasonably practical, sufficient for the recruiting RTO to confirm the accuracy of the information provided by the candidate and to fill in any gaps.

While an applicant can hold qualification as an RTD, the RTO shall confirm competence applicable to their operating environment, through defined training and assessment methods before the candidate progresses through the selection and recruitment process.

As described in Section 3.1 Designing a 'fit-for-purpose' recruitment process, the RTO should document and validate the assessment and selection process for experienced RTD candidates, including the rationale for any difference from the standard assessment process.

An RTO should not use out-of-date competence records as a justification for rejecting an experienced RTD.

RTOs should utilize train simulators in the RPL assessment and selection process to confirm and assess knowledge, skills and attributes in experienced RTDs.

6.2 Re-assessment for unsuccessful candidates

The RTOs shall determine the requirements of re-assessing a candidate who has been unsuccessful in the assessment process.

The reassessment should be carried out within a defined period determined by the RTO. The RTO should ensure there are appropriate time periods between original assessment and the re-assessments to allow for the candidate to prepare.

When a candidate is re-assessed within the defined period, the process shall cover only the elements which the candidate failed within the first assessment.

Section 7 Drugs screening and medical fitness

After progressing through the selection process but prior to appointment, RTD shall undergo drug screening and medical fitness tests.

Drugs screening shall test for illicit or improper use of prescribed drugs and be carried out in accordance with National Standard for Health Assessment of Rail Safety Workers.

A full medical examination shall be carried out, unless there is documentary evidence to support prior attainment of the required medical fitness standards within the periodicity of examinations as required by National Standard for Health Assessment of Rail Safety Workers.

Section 8 Audit of the assessment and selection process

8.1 Application of audit

The process of RTD assessment and selection shall be systematically evaluated to ensure reliability and consistency of the process, including compliance with the assessment procedures. The audit program should involve people independent of the provider of the assessment activities.

To ensure the audit meets its purpose, the scope of the audit should allow for review of specific audit criteria, such as:

- (a) the use of contemporary evidence-based assessment and selection methods and tools;
- (b) candidate and assessor preparation;
- (c) training and certification of assessors;

- (d) administration of assessment activities, including
 - (i) adequacy of the premises where they are conducted;
 - (ii) scoring and recording of results; and
 - (iii) processes for making and recording decisions based on the results of the assessment methods used.
- (e) Confidentiality and security of selection materials and records; and
- (f) storing and recording of results.

8.2 RTD information to be collected for audit purposes

RTD data collected during initial training, on-the-job performance, and from incident investigations shall be captured in an appropriate document management system for the purposes of assessing the validity of the recruitment and selection process. This shall be done in accordance with Section 10 of this Standard.

Trends related to a recruitment cohort can indicate a systematic issue related to the recruitment process.

Section 9 Continuous improvement of the recruitment process

The RTOs shall regularly review the recruitment process including the assessment and selection methods, to identify improvement opportunities.

The RTOs shall consider the following elements within the process review:

- (a) The impact of any safety, environmental, systems, human factors, or operational changes on the RTD role
- (b) Any corresponding changes to the knowledge, skills and attributes required to safely perform the RTD role and related selection criteria
- (c) The requirements to conduct or update an RBTNA
- (d) New developments in RTD research and assessment methodology
- (e) The reliability, validity and fairness of the assessment methods used
- (f) Appointing persons qualified to judge the reliability and validity of the process

Changes to the RTO's operating environment that could possibly trigger a review of the RTD recruitment assessment process can include, but are not limited to:

- (g) the introduction of different working practices such as a change to RTD crewing configuration or changes in network operations and territories;
- (h) safety/safe working changes that relate to operations or the operating environment;
- (i) rolling stock fleet changes including new or upgrade equipment; and/or
- (j) technical changes, such as high-speed operation or new signalling systems affecting the interface between the RTD and the signalling system.

Section 10 Records

10.1 Retention of records

The RTO shall retain RTD records for future reference including verification of competency, competency management and maintenance and to respond to requests for information from other RTOs or statutory authorities (e.g., ATSB).

The type of information an RTO shall retain includes:

- (a) results of psychometric assessments;
- (b) competence assessment records; the most recent competency records that demonstrate the RTD's competence;
- (c) route and rail traffic knowledge;
- (d) training records;
- (e) employment performance of the RTD, and
- (f) occupational medical records of the RTD.

10.2 Personal data protection

The RTOs should obtain expert advice regarding privacy, personal data protection, liabilities arising from the provision of references, or any aspect of employment law, as these matters are not within the scope of this Standard.

Appendix A Hazard table (ARRM)

Hazard Number	Source	Related Factors	Applicable Section
7.1 Derailment and Collision	7.1.1. Human Factors	7.1.1.3 Miss-communication 7.1.1.11 Lack of fitness for duty 7.1.1.12 Loss of situational awareness 7.1.1.16 Drug and or Alcohol Usage	3, 4, 5, 6, 7,
7.2 Harm to Persons	7.2.1 Human Factors	7.2.1.3 Miss-communication 7.2.1.12 Loss of situational awareness 7.2.1.11 Lack of fitness for duty 7.2.1.17 Drug and or Alcohol Usage	3, 4, 5, 6, 7,
7.3 Damage to Rolling Stock and or Infrastructure	7.3.1 Human Factors	7.3.1.3 Miss-communication. 7.3.1.12 Loss of situational awareness 7.3.1.11 Lack of fitness for duty 7.3.1.16 Drug and or Alcohol Usage	3, 4, 5, 6,7,
7.4 Harm to the Environment	7.4.1 Human Factors	7.4.1.3 Miss-communication 7.4.1.12 Loss of situational awareness 7.4.1.11 Lack of fitness for duty 7.4.1.16 Drug and or Alcohol Usage	3, 4, 5, 6, 9,
8.1 Derailment and or Collision	8.1.1 Human Error, Design Failure, Health Failure, Organizational SMS Failure, Environmental Impact, Security Breach, Vandalism and or Threat	8.1.1.3 Operator procedural breach 8.1.1.7 Network Rules and or Procedure breach	3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9.1,10,
8.3 Third Party Property Damage	8.3.1 Human Error, Design Failure, Health Failure, Organizational SMS Failure, Environmental Impact, Security Breach, and or Threat	8.3.1.5 Operator Procedural Breach 8.3.1.9 Network Rules and or procedure breach	3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9,10,

Appendix B General Rail Traffic Driver selection criteria (informative)

Selection Criteria	Sub Selection Criteria and Definitions
Attentional control	Can effectively allocate and switch attention between relevant cues (e.g., visual, auditory, thoughts and emotions) during the performance of both high and low workload tasks
Emotional stability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a low sensitivity to stressful, threatening or ambiguous situations • Can effectively reduce the strength and duration of strong negative emotions such as anxiety, fear and anger
Working memory	Can effectively recall, maintain and update critical performance-related information (e.g., working instructions, signal aspects)
Verbal ability	Can comprehend and express themselves effectively during both written and verbal communication tasks
Planning and decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathers all relevant information and makes an informed decision within appropriate time frames • Avoids acting rashly or impulsively (e.g., by taking short-cuts), particularly in ambiguous situations or when under time pressure • Balances the need for timing and accuracy, commensurate with the task

NOTE:

This list is not exhaustive; it does however focus on critical criteria that distinguishes effective from ineffective RTDs.

Appendix C Typical assessment activities (informative)

Tool	Outcomes
B1 Job analysis	To determine the knowledge, skills and attributes required to perform in a role. This can assist in building the job profile that can be used to identify selection criteria.
B2 Structured interview	Interviewing is the most commonly used assessment activity. It is important that a structured behavioural interview is used to ensure that a high level of validity and reliability is attained.
B3 Standardized assessment activity	It is important that all assessment activities are valid and reliable. That is, they measure what they claim to measure (valid) and do so consistently over multiple assessment events (reliable). In addition, the assessment activity needs to relate to specific performance criterion (criterion-related validity). There are numerous assessment activities available, including structured interviews, psychometric tests, work samples or scenarios, job knowledge tests and simulated activities.
B4 Reference checks	Are used to corroborate candidate information provided during the recruitment process, this includes the following information: employment dates a candidate claims against the key selection criteria the candidate's current or previous work performance.
B5 Employment history checks	Are used to identify any temporary or permanent restrictions or exclusions because of a safety incident, medical reasons, or other cause. The information provided shall be limited to restriction or exclusion relevant to the role.

Appendix D Bibliography (Informative)

The following referenced documents are used by this Standard for information only:

- *Rail Safety National Law (South Australia) Act 2012*
- *National Rail Skills Hub*. <https://www.railskillshub.gov.au/>

DRAFT FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION