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Published by

RSSB
Block 2 Angel Square,
1 Torrens Street
London EC1V 1NY

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RIS

RIS-3776-TOM

Rail Industry Standard on the Use of Mobile Telephonic Equipment in Driving Cabs

Issue One **December 2009**
Rail Industry Standard

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Issue Record

Issue	Date	Comments
One	December 2009	Original document

Superseded or replaced documents

This Rail Industry Standard does not supersede or replace any other Railway Group documents.

Supply

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Rail Industry Standard on the Use of Mobile Telephonic Equipment in Driving Cabs

Part 1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this document

- 1.1.1 This document provides a voluntary standard on the use of mobile telephonic equipment in driving cabs, for the rail industry to use if it so chooses. It applies to drivers when in charge of a train and other personnel authorised to be present in a driving cab from which the train is being driven.
- 1.1.2 This document has been published at the request of railway undertakings to bring about a consistent approach to the use of mobile telephonic equipment in driving cabs. This followed widespread concern at the fatal consequences of a collision at Chatsworth, California, USA, in September 2008 believed to have been caused by the driver of one train failing to respond to a signal while sending text messages on his mobile telephone. A cross-industry response was discussed by the RSSB Board in October 2008 and this led to three activities:
 - a) Current policy documents from all train and freight operating companies were reviewed regarding managing mobile phone use in driving cabs
 - b) A review of published evidence regarding the distracting effect of mobile phone use on driving was undertaken. Findings showed that a significant amount of research has examined the relationship between the use of mobile telephones and road driving performance. It is clear that there are comparable risks in a rail context when using a mobile phone that can impair many of the abilities essential for safe train driving. The effects which have been observed are:
 - i. reduced perceptual visual field
 - ii. detection of fewer hazards
 - iii. slower reaction time
 - iv. reduced checking of instrumentation
 - v. reduced situational awareness and increased tendency to make errors of all typesImpairments of this nature are likely to increase significantly the risk of safety of the line incidents such as SPADs and this risk needs to be controlled
 - c) Finally, a stakeholder workshop was held to discuss company policies, the results of the human factors research and to examine scenarios in which it could be acceptable or unacceptable to use mobile phones.
- 1.1.3 It was also accepted that there is a wider problem arising from the rapid evolution of other types of mobile telephonic equipment (including devices providing internet access), so that whatever policies duty holders produce should include the potential for distraction from growing numbers of devices.
- 1.1.4 The result of these activities was considered by Operations Focus Group (OFG) in March 2009, following which a proposal to publish a Rail Industry Standard was endorsed.
- 1.1.5 The HM Railway Inspectorate & Safety Policy Directorate of the ORR published guidance to inspectors regarding the use of mobile phones by train drivers in January 2009.
- 1.1.6 While accepting the need to control the distraction risk from mobile telephonic equipment in train driving cabs, it is recognised that there can be safety benefits in providing an alternative means of communication, whether in emergency situations or when other communications system have failed. The Rule Book