



ASSOCIATION OF TOURIST & HERITAGE RAIL AUSTRALIA

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ATHRA ALERT #39 – August 2008 Are Your Carriage Doors Child Safe?

The Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB) in the United Kingdom has recently issued a report on an incident on the Nene Valley Railway (NVR) in England. The report (http://www.raib.gov.uk/cms_resources/080717_R152008_Orton.pdf) gives details of the incident in which a child fell from the carriage of a moving train. While the exact circumstances remain unclear, it appears that the two year child used the downward opening door handles to lift herself from the floor of the train and accidentally open the outward swinging door. Although the type of carriage used on the NVR is not used in Australia, it highlights the need to review carriage doors from the perspective of a small child.

Key Message:

Children see things from a different perspective to adults. Small children in particular, are inquisitive and operate door handles etc from a different direction to adults. What may be intentional difficult for an adult to operate may not be for a child if this difference is not taken into account.

Recommended Actions:

- Make the RAIB report available to your rollingstock staff.
- Review the operation of all carriage door handles for safety in relation to potential operation by children.