



# ASSOCIATION OF TOURIST & HERITAGE RAIL AUSTRALIA

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## **ATHRA ALERT #53 – February 2011 UK RAIB Bulletin – Foxfield Light Railway**

The Rail Accident Investigations Branch (RAIB) in the UK has released a bulletin regarding the serious injury of a guard on the Foxfield Light Railway, 24 October 2010. The worker attempted to board the brake van of a slowly moving train. He slipped from the foot step and was dragged a few metres before releasing his hold on a handrail and falling. He suffered a fractured and dislocated shoulder. The Bulletin can be viewed using this link:

[http://www.raib.gov.uk/cms\\_resources.cfm?file=/Bulletin%20%28Foxfield%29%2001-2011.pdf](http://www.raib.gov.uk/cms_resources.cfm?file=/Bulletin%20%28Foxfield%29%2001-2011.pdf)

The investigations found that there were a number of discrepancies between the stated requirements of the railway's SMS and Rules and the actual practices in effect. These included:

- Boarding and alighting moving trains by staff of the railway was not permitted under the railway's rules.
- Boarding and alighting moving trains was not actively discouraged by the railway's management.
- There was no evidence that railway staff had been issued with the rule book.
- The competency of railway staff had not been assessed in accordance with the railway's SMS.
- Post-accident testing of drugs and alcohol was not undertaken as required by the railway's SMS.

**The UK Office of Rail Regulation issued an Improvement Notice that prevented all rail operations until such time that evidence is presented that demonstrates that the railway's safety critical staff have been assessed as competent in their duties.**

The RAIB Bulletin recommends that railways that are reliant on the services of volunteers must ensure that there are suitable arrangements in place to encourage safe behaviour and compliance with the published rules.

### **Recommended Actions:**

- Make the RAIB Bulletin available to your Board of Management and to your workers who are involved in rail operations to raise awareness of the consequences of the issues involved.
- Ensure the controls in your Safety Management System for competency assessment and post-incident drug and alcohol testing are being followed.
- Ensure that your rule book and SMS address the hazards of shunting and any restrictions or prohibitions related to shunting and riding on vehicles that are applicable in your state.
- Have processes for actively encouraging a positive safety culture and ensuring that unsafe practices by any Rail Safety Worker are not condoned.