

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Special Commission of Inquiry (SCOI) into the Waterfall Rail Accident released its Final Report on 17 January 2005. In accordance with the Commission's recommendations, the NSW Government agreed that the Independent Transport Safety and Reliability Regulator (ITSRR) should report quarterly on implementation progress. This is the ninth Quarterly Report. It outlines progress made between 1 January and 31 March 2007.

Implementation Summary

Further progress was made during the quarter with 1 recommendation nominated for closure by RailCorp and a further 8 verified and closed by ITSRR.

ITSRR verified and closed 8 (5%) recommendations (5 RailCorp and 3 ITSRR) in the following areas:

- Development of consistent rollingstock standards;
- Annual revision of train maintenance plans;
- Establishment of a comprehensive safety document management system for RailCorp;
- Standard communications procedures in network rules; and
- Quality control measures for medical examinations.

At the end of the reporting period, the cumulative implementation progress to date for all 177 recommendations (including 127 recommendations and 50 sub-elements) was as follows:

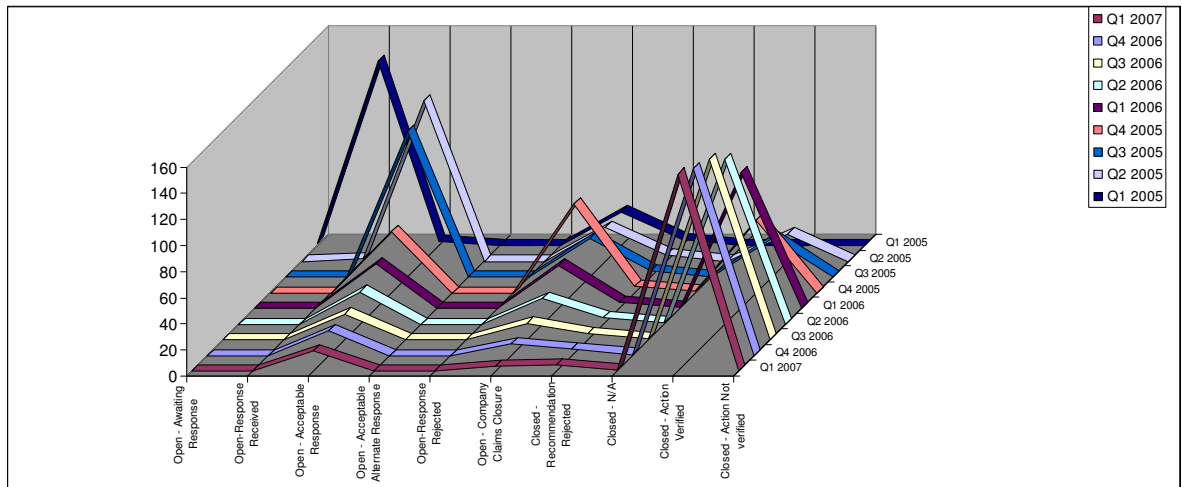
- 157 (89%) recommendations verified and closed¹;
- 4 recommendations (2%) claimed for closure by RailCorp are being verified by ITSRR;

- 1 (0.5%) recommendation previously claimed for closure by agencies has been given a revised status - open-acceptable response;
- 1 (0.5%) recommendation (the introduction of national communications technical standards) will be implemented by 2010; and
- 14 (8%) recommendations referred to the National Transport Commission (NTC) have revised implementation timeframes based on advice from the NTC.

This brings the total number of recommendations currently closed or claimed by agencies to be closed (and being verified by ITSRR) to 161 or 91% of all recommendations.

The current status of all of the safety actions, compared to that in previous quarters, is summarised below:

GRAPH 1: PROGRESSIVE STATUS OF ALL RECOMMENDATIONS BY QUARTER



As time progresses, it is expected that the peak will shift along the x-axis until all recommendations are closed.

¹ including 5 that were rejected by the NSW Government and 1 which is no longer applicable

Quarterly Progress

Recommendations Verified and Closed

In the reporting period, ITSRR verified and closed 8 recommendations. Five of these were the responsibility of RailCorp. They were:

- Identification of an appropriate supervisory position responsible for certifying that train defects are rectified and the implementation of procedures to support this role (Recommendation 50);
- Annual revision of maintenance plans on all trains (Recommendation 52);
and
- Establishment of a safety document management system that ensures the distribution of electronic versions of safety documentation to relevant staff and procedures so that all operational staff can access safety documentation at appropriate times (Recommendation 58, 59 & 61).

Three recommendations were the responsibility of ITSRR:

- All new rolling stock should be designed to be compatible with at least level 2 automatic train protection (Recommendation 33);
- Implementation of standard communications procedures in Network Rules including appropriate training by operators (Recommendation 39); and
- Inclusion of quality control guidance material for medical examinations in the revised National Standard for Health Assessment (Recommendation 57(d)).

Slippage

During the reporting period, one recommendation was not implemented by the scheduled date. This recommendation concerns the creation of an appropriate position within RailCorp that has responsibility for ensuring each train driver's training needs are being met and any safety concerns are properly addressed (Recommendation 71). It was originally scheduled for implementation by 30 September 2006. RailCorp has adopted the concept of Team Leaders and created these positions in its establishment, however the filling of these positions has been delayed by ongoing negotiations and consultation with service unions. In ITSRR's view, the delay in implementing this recommendation does not pose immediate or significant safety risks to the NSW travelling public.