Work health and safety procedure

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Objective reference A13124341 12 August 2016

Plant operator training and assessment

Ensuring plant operators are properly trained and competent to operate the plant.

Note: This is a reformatted version of the procedure last published in March 2013 with some minor changes (refer to the change history). The procedure is under review.
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Introduction

Purpose

Roads and Maritime Services is committed to the health and wellbeing of all its workers\(^1\) and others. A safe and healthy workplace is the right of every worker.

The purpose of this procedure is to provide advice on the training and assessment of plant operators and contractors. This procedure applies throughout Roads and Maritime where construction plant is operated.

It is intended that as an outcome of this procedure:

- Roads and Maritime will provide appropriate training, instruction, information and supervision, in relation to operating plant items
- A safe system of work for any worker or other person (including members of the general public) will be established, to ensure that
  - Plant will only be operated by trained, competent and licensed\(^2\) operators
  - Consistent standards will be applied to the training and assessment of plant operators within Roads and Maritime
  - Plant items used on sites\(^3\) are categorised by risk.

Scope

This procedure sets out Roads and Maritime’s internal system for the training and assessment of its plant operators and therefore applies to all plant operators as well as trainers and assessors of plant operators.

All industry partners are required to have in place at least an equivalent procedure for managing risks associated with persons operating plant items.

Roads and Maritime acknowledges through this procedure the national system of licensing plant operators of high risk work items and will comply with this system for all workers (Appendix A).

General requirements

Workers should be able to conduct their work without a risk to their own or others’ health and safety. For their part, they need to take necessary precautions to prevent and effectively manage any potential hazards and risks whilst working with plant items.

Roads and Maritime must consult with workers about working with plant items. If potential workplace hazards are identified, then appropriate control measures must be used to eliminate or minimise the exposure to these hazards.

\(^1\) See Definition, worker

\(^2\) Where legislation requires operators to be licensed.

\(^3\) See Definitions, worksite
This procedure documents and explains the:

- Training and certification requirements for plant operators and plant trainers/assessors
- Verifying plant operators’ competency
- Assigning risk categories to plant items
- Roads and Maritime-specific resource information.

1 Certification requirements

Plant operators

Operators of plant used on public roads must have, as a minimum, a current “C class” driver licence prior to operating the plant on the roads.

Operators of high and medium risk plant items must maintain a logbook and carry with them, when operating plant, relevant plant operator certification such as high-risk work (HRW) licences and Roads and Maritime plant safety certificates.

Table A documents the certification process for plant operators. The flowchart documents the steps that all Roads and Maritime plant operators must follow, especially first time operators of mobile plant. Additionally, all plant items are divided into three categories of risk (low, medium and high), which determines the level of training and assessment/re-assessment required.

Plant trainers and assessors

Table B documents the requirements for those involved in the assessment and certification of Roads and Maritime plant operators.
Table A: Training and assessment requirements for plant operators

**Training of mobile plant operators**
Operators to be trained must complete plant-specific training either:
- Internally, with competent supervisors or RMS plant trainers
- Externally, with an RTO.
RMS trainers and assessors can be used for external training if aligned with an RTO.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First time operators</th>
<th>Experienced operators</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(No previous experience or tickets to operate moving plant)</td>
<td>(Current HRW licence or RMS moving plant ticket of similar class or demonstrated experience)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Training and assessment conducted by external RTO – issuing appropriate statement e.g. HRW licence or Unit of Competency</td>
<td>• Training conducted by internal RMS trainers + experience under the supervision of RMS competent persons or alternative external training provision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mobile-Plant Operator Training Plan commenced (Form 310)</td>
<td>• Mobile-Plant Operator Training Plan commenced (Form 310)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• RMS logbook issued.</td>
<td>• Maintain RMS logbook.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Initial assessment**
You will be assessed on your competence to operate a particular plant item by an assessor who is qualified to make a judgement about your competence. The qualifications required of assessor and the nature of the assessment depends on the risk category of the plant item.

**Low risk plant**
Assessment involves:
- Practical demonstration of skills
- Assessment using a checklist.

**Medium risk plant**
Assessment involves:
- Renew of log book
- Practical demonstration of skills
- Written assessment.

**High risk plant**
Training and assessment for:
- HRW items must meet stds req’d to issue HRW licence.
- Other high risk items: assessment similar to medium risk assessment with higher accuracy required.

**Certificate issued** (training and assessment requirements met)

**Re-assessment (every 5 years)**
Re-assessment stands determined by plant item risk category.

**Low risk plant**
Re-assessment:
- Is conducted by competent person who consults with team leader where req’d
- Uses std checklist to determine competency
- Does not require logbook for low risk items

**Medium risk plant**
Re-assessment:
- Reviews log book
- Is conducted by assessor or competent person
- Includes practical assessment (where logbook indicates limited ongoing performance of work)

**High risk plant**
Re-assessment:
- Reviews log book
- Is conducted by an assessor
- Includes practical assessment (where logbook indicates limited ongoing performance of work).
### Table B: Plant trainer/assessor certification requirements

**Training:** To conduct plant-specific training you must have both:
- Training modules from TAE 40110 Certificate IV Training and Assessment or equivalent
- Relevant plant certificate (or use ‘competent person’ to assist)

You can determine training hours for each trainee plant operator, depending on their needs and progress. Training details must be recorded in the trainee’s log book.

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**Initial assessment**

You will be assessed on your competence to operate a particular plant item by an assessor who is qualified to make a judgement about your competence. The qualifications required of assessor and the nature of the assessment depends on the risk category of the plant item.

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**Low risk plant**

Assessor reqts:
- Relevant plant safety certificate (or involve competent person).

**Medium risk plant**

Assessor reqts:
- Assess modules from TAE Cert IV or equiv
- Relevant plant safety certificate (or involve competent person)
- Current industry experience

**High risk plant**

Trainer and assessor reqts:
- TAE assessment units or equiv
- Relevant plant certificate (or involve competent person)
- Current industry experience
- SafeWork NSW accreditation and RTO partnership arrangement for plant items requiring HRW licences.

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**Certificate issued (training and assessment requirements met)**

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**Re-assessment (every 5 years)**

Re-assessment standards determined by plant item risk category.

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**Low risk plant**

- Assessor must be competent person (can be trainee plant operator’s supervisor)
- Assessor takes advice from the team leader, where required
- Assessment conducted using a checklist

**Medium risk plant**

- Assessor must be (or involve) competent person (can be plant operator’s supervisor)
- No formal quals required
- Assessor takes advice from the team leader, where required
- Review operator’s logbook
- Practical assessment (where logbook indicates limited ongoing performance of work)

**High risk plant**

- Assessor must have:
  - TAE assessment units or equivalent
  - Relevant plant certificate
  - Current industry experience
- If no relevant plant certificate, competent person must assist
- Review operator’s logbook
- Practical assessment (where logbook indicates limited ongoing performance of work).
2 Verification of competence (VoC)

What does the VoC process involve?

The verification process is intended to be a simple and quick check of an operator’s ability to safely operate the plant. The benefits of checking an operator’s competency prior to work commencing on the site include:

- Reduced likelihood of occurrences and injuries from unsafe operation of plant
- Improved ability to meet deadlines owing to greater certainty that plant operators are able to operate plant in accordance with skills documented by certificates and log books.

Who does VoC apply to?

This process applies to any plant operator. It includes Roads and Maritime employees, labour-hire workers and contractors. This is to ensure that operators whose experience and abilities are unknown have their competency confirmed through observation, prior to them working on a site.

How is VoC undertaken?

Verification of an industry partner plant operator’s competency is conducted by the supervisor or team leader on the worksite. The operator must be provided a site induction, and then the supervisor will observe a short demonstration of the operator’s competency and document the observations using Form 311: Plant operator verification report.

Workers who meet the requirements of this procedure will provide verification by display of the appropriate current plant operator certificates. Workers with limited time on a plant item (excluding trainees) should be verified by the supervisor or team leader on the worksite.

3 Assigning plant items to risk categories

Plant is to be assigned a risk category of low, medium or high. The purpose of assigning a risk category is to assess the risks associated with particular plant items used in construction. The risk category will determine the training and assessment requirements for trainee operators, trainers and assessors. In this way, a risk management approach is applied that will align appropriate levels of training and assessment according to the levels of risk associated with plant items.

When should plant items be risk categorised?

- New construction plant items are introduced into the workplace
- A reassessment of a current plant item is required because of a change in the way it is operated.

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Who assesses the plant item?

A plant item will be assessed by a panel of people with an understanding of how that plant item functions and would be operated at worksites. The panel will include plant operators, plant supervisors/managers, trainers and assessors. They will undertake a risk assessment that will apply to that plant item throughout Roads and Maritime.

What does the assessment involve?

The risk assessment process for a particular plant item will consider things such as:

- Is it subject to High Risk Work certification?
- Is it mobile during operation?
- Does it have fast moving parts or sharp edges?
- Is it prone to failure?
- Does the operation involve repetitive movements?
- Is it physically demanding to use?
- What sort of skills does an operator need to operate it safely and how much training is needed for safe operation?
- What sort of things can it do?
- What could go wrong?
- What does the operator have to think about during operation of the item, for example load, coordinating movement?

Once the panel has assessed the risks associated with a particular plant item, a risk category is assigned. This determines the level of training and assessment that is required. Plant items and their risk categories are detailed on the Plant operator licensing and assessment page on ROMS.

4 Suspension or cancellation of a plant certificate

A plant operator may have their plant certificate suspended or cancelled when they have failed to take reasonable care to carry out the work safely and competently.

The decision to suspend or cancel a plant operator’s certificate is determined by senior Roads and Maritime management in consultation with the appropriate Human Resources and/or Industrial Relations representatives. If a certificate is cancelled or suspended, Roads and Maritime may disqualify the operator from applying for a further plant certificate of the same class or any certificate that involves skills that are the same or similar to those required for the suspended/cancelled plant certificate.

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5 See Definitions
# Roles and responsibilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
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</table>
| **Roads and Maritime** (through its managers from the executive to the front line) must: | - Comply with legislative requirements and ensure that systems are in place to manage potential WHS risks arising from the use of plant items  
  - Ensure that WHS responsibilities are appropriately defined and that adequate resources (including financial and time) are provided to ensure effective hazard and risk management for Roads and Maritime workers and others  
  - Review this procedure and associated WHS material to ensure they reflect current knowledge of safe plant operation. |
| **Managers and supervisors must:**        | - Identify hazards, assess risks and implement controls in relation to plant operation  
  - Consult with workers on decisions that may affect their health and safety at work  
  - Ensure that plant is suitable for the work being undertaken and is in a safe condition  
  - Eliminate or control damage to plant  
  - Allow only certified plant operators to use plant items  
  - Ensure that instruction, information, training and supervision are provided to trainee plant operators  
  - Appoint plant trainers and assessors according to the requirements of this procedure and associated WHS documents  
  - Verify the abilities of plant operators whose experience has been gained outside Roads and Maritime, even though those operators may have appropriate High Risk Work licences or other certifications  
  - Oversee and monitor plant operators to ensure safe operation of plant, according to local conditions. |
| **Plant operators must:**                 | - Comply with Roads and Maritime’s safe systems of work  
  - Undertake training and assessment as required and comply with directions from trainers and assessors  
  - Participate in verification of competence activities according to the requirements of this procedure  
  - Record details of plant operation in their log books as directed  
  - Use plant equipment according to manufacturer’s directions and only for the purpose for which it was intended. |
## Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>The process of determining competency of a trainee operator to operate a specified item of plant against an assessment standard (internal or external). The assessment process can involve administering formal assessments, examining evidence of competency, such as log books, observing an operator’s ability to operate a plant item safely, discussing an operator’s performance with a supervisor. It may also include any other means by which an assessor can determine a trainee operator’s competency.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Certification</td>
<td>The process of issuing a plant safety certificate once an operator has successfully completed an assessment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Competent person</td>
<td>A person ‘who has acquired through training, qualification or experience, or a combination of them, the knowledge and skills to carry out that task’.</td>
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<tr>
<td>High Risk Work Licence</td>
<td>Nationally accredited licence for certain high risk plant items eg forklifts, cranes. Licence obtained through registered training organisation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Logbook</td>
<td>Refers to the Roads and Maritime operator logbook that is used to provide a record of the operator’s training and supervised experience. It is used to assess the operator’s competency.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>A person responsible for planning and directing the work of a worker or group of workers, monitoring their work, and taking corrective action.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operate</td>
<td>Means to drive or use equipment, as the manufacturer intended, and to carry out construction and related work. This does not include driving, moving or running equipment for the purpose of maintenance, testing and repair.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operator</td>
<td>A person who is certified to operate a plant item for which they have the appropriate certificate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plant</td>
<td>Any machinery, equipment or appliance. Within the context of this procedure, plant refers to construction plant.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plant assessor</td>
<td>A person approved by Roads and Maritime and relevant external bodies to assess the competency of workers, to the required standards for the purposes of issuing a certificate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plant trainer</td>
<td>A person approved by Roads and Maritime to train workers to a standard of safe operation for the specified items of equipment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ROMS</td>
<td>Online management system maintained by Asset Maintenance Division’s Regional Maintenance Delivery branch (RMD). ROMS is the platform for controlling and distributing the documents that make up RMD's management systems.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supervision</td>
<td>Overseeing a trainee plant operator or NHRW (National High Risk Work) certified operator whose abilities are being verified on site. It includes directing, demonstrating, monitoring and observing the operator’s performance to ensure that an appropriate level of safe operation and ability is evident, including the ability to respond appropriately to emergency situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>Refers to Roads and Maritime staff in supervisory positions with responsibility and authority over work involving construction plant operation. The definition includes team leaders, gangers and works supervisors.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trainee operator</td>
<td>A person who is undergoing training on a plant item.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worker</td>
<td>Any person who carries out work in any capacity at a Roads and Maritime workplace – Roads and Maritime employees (including labour hire, apprentices and trainees); professional services contractors and consultants; contractors, subcontractors and their employees; outworkers; students gaining work experience and volunteers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VoC</td>
<td>Verification of competence.</td>
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## References

The following documents are available through the *Plant operator training and assessment* page on ROMS⁷:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Doc no</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TRG-03</td>
<td>Operating mobile plant – training requirements guide for high risk activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form 310</td>
<td>Mobile Plant Operator Training Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form 311</td>
<td>Plant Operator Verification Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guide to obtaining your plant operator safety certificate</td>
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<td>Plant operator assessment guides</td>
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## Document control

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<tr>
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<td>File name</td>
<td>procedure-pn066p14.pdf</td>
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<td>Home (<a href="http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au">www.rms.nsw.gov.au</a>) → Safety → Work Health &amp; Safety → OneRMS safety management system → Procedures, forms and guidance</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Publication no.</td>
<td>RMS 16.416</td>
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<td>Template</td>
<td>Objective ID: A10508605</td>
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## Change history

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description of change</th>
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<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>12/08/2016</td>
<td>Applied latest template and Roads and Maritime style guidelines</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Made various terminology changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Changed references to “abilities” to “competency”.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>More specific use of the term “Verification of Competence (VoC)”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>05/03/2013</td>
<td>No change history information available</td>
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## Feedback

Contact WHS Branch with feedback on this document at: onermssms@rms.nsw.gov.au

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