

Terms of Reference

Road-Rail Issues Working Group

Purpose

The purpose of these Terms of Reference is to specify the objectives, roles and responsibilities of a working group on issues affecting the road-rail interface.

Introduction

A Level-Crossings working group was convened by NZTA and met annually. The group had a narrow focus on ALCAM and level crossing safety. A separate steering group was formed by NZTA to oversee a review of level crossing guidance for pedestrian and cyclist facilities.

The Research and Guidelines Steering Group agreed that a broader reference group was needed to address the increasing number of issues related to the road-rail interface.

These issues include ensuring that member authorities have adequate foreknowledge of proposed upgrade works to allow road asset managers to plan for them, and a providing a mechanism for planning road-rail interface works that recognises the tripartite investment partnership that will apply between KiwiRail, NZTA and local authorities.

The FAR review has changed the basis of the relationships on maintenance and upgrades of level crossings. Local authorities now have a direct financial stake in these works, but minimal information on which to plan and budget for them.

There are also associated issues with ALCAM and the sight lines and minimum distances defined within it. These are completely different from equivalent road standards.

The options for responding to these wider issues were to broaden the terms of reference and membership of the NZTA working group or to create a new entity. Although nominally a RCA Forum working group, the existing group sat outside the RCA Forum. It decided it did not wish to broaden its scope and membership.

The preferred alternative was to establish a new and more active working group with a broader scope than the existing group.

A RCA Forum working group on road-rail issues would follow the established model for collaboration by member authorities in response to changing needs within the sector, to ensure solutions are agreed, owned and implemented consistently by the sector.

Objective

The objective of the Working Group is to:

- Identify best practice and make this available to practitioners;
- develop or steer development of guideline documents; and
- promote appropriate regulatory responses.

Responsibilities

The Working Group is responsible for:

- (a) reviewing guidance and direction for the provision of adequate and timely asset information to allow for works involving the upgrade of the road-rail interface to be provided for in asset management plans; and
- (b) reviewing the operation and management of the road-rail interface; and
- (c) providing sector feedback on priorities for changes to rules or current practice relating to the road-rail interface.

Tasks

To achieve its objectives, the Working Group will:

- oversee any trials of new solutions proposed for adoption;
- provide advice and input on the form and content of guidelines;
- actively contribute to reaching sector consensus;
- provide advice and input on the implementation of guidelines and research;
- review regulations, guidelines and practice in light of published research;
- ensure costs and benefits are appropriately considered;
- consider legal implications;
- approve guidelines and recommend their adoption as necessary.

Issues to be considered

Issues to be considered by the Working Group include, but are not limited to:

- forward planning of works
- protocols for sharing planning information
- outcome of Coroner's review of ALCAM
- alignment of ALCAM and road sight lines and distances

Representation

The Working Group should reflect a broad range of experience.

Meetings

Meetings of the Working Group will be held at intervals based on the needs of the project and the sector. Working group members will be asked to meet incidental costs of membership. Budget to assist with costs of travel will be provided, but it is generally assumed that each member will cover a reasonable level of such costs.

Term

It is expected that the Working Group will require a term of three years to address the issues to be considered.

Convener

It is expected that the Working Group would nominate and agree a convener.

Administration

The Research and Guidelines Steering Group will provide administrative support as necessary.

Reporting

The Working Group will report to the Research and Guidelines Steering Group.