

Protocol for Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) Inspection Program

A. Purpose

DRPT's routine inspection program is an ongoing, cooperative effort with Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) to assess the safety and security of operations and maintenance practices and to verify compliance on an ongoing basis. The program allows DRPT to:

- Evaluate topics of heightened risk based on recent information, trends, or safety events
- Identify potential problem areas requiring further investigation and solution development
- Assist HRT by providing independent evaluations of procedural and rules compliance
- Gain a consistent involvement in HRT operations, maintenance, and safety programs

B. Scope

Inspections will typically last one to two days and involve multiple topics and types of observations or reviews, some of them simultaneous. Inspections will be based on both a regular rotation of subject matter areas and areas of heightened risk based on recent information, trends, or safety events. The evaluation of safety risks is based on HRT data presented at agency meetings and/or regularly submitted to DRPT. Such metrics may include individual occurrences or a trend (in location or overall number) related to:

- Injuries (customers, employees, and the public)
- Reportable accidents/events
- Probable causes and contributing factors
- Status of existing corrective action plans (CAPs)
- Maintenance defects
- On-time performance of maintenance
- Rule compliance results provided by HRT
- Hazard logs
- Crime statistics
- Reports/complaints from patrons or employees
- Changes to management, operations, or maintenance

Inspections may be announced or unannounced. For announced inspections, DRPT may provide first notice to HRT up to 24 hours before the inspection occurs. If DRPT anticipates that the inspection will require the specific scheduling of personnel or preparation on HRT's part, it will provide further advance notice with the potential for rescheduling certain inspection activities depending on personnel availability. For unannounced inspections, DRPT personnel will arrive on property without advanced notice to HRT. In most cases, the inspections will not require significant HRT personnel resources. The inspection program is mostly intended to observe conditions and activities as they are already occurring. There will occasionally be some sessions involving interviews or records reviews that may require some time dedicated to DRPT's inspection.

C. Methodology for Rules Compliance Checks

1. Stationary Rule Checks

Stationary rule checks give DRPT a picture of how safety-critical personnel perform related to any single rule or group of rules. Fixed location testing is particularly effective for observing multiple instances or multiple employees' compliance with the same rules or procedures. The multiple employees observed might be a series of operators passing the fixed location, a group of wayside or roadway workers at a fixed location, or a similar situation.

In order to ensure thorough rules and procedures tests, stationary/fixed location tests should incorporate at least three consecutive train movements or personnel through a speed restriction, work zone, station, terminal, or similar area being observed for the same rules.

2. Moving Rule Checks

Moving rule checks are typically conducted from aboard the first car of a train, with visibility out the front windows (if tinting allows). These types of compliance checks are effective in assessing one operator on all applicable and visible safety-related rules. DRPT representatives will record any apparent rule violations, the location or time of occurrence during the ride, and the number of the lead car of the train. In order to ensure thorough rules and procedures examination, moving compliance tests should incorporate at least 10 minutes of travel with the same operator.

Sometimes, checks may be conducted aboard moving trains for very short periods but on multiple trains. This may be done to satisfy the principles behind a stationary observation of multiple operators' compliance with a specific rule or set of rules. For example, a DRPT representative may repeatedly ride trains in opposing directions only between two consecutive stations to examine compliance with hand signals and horn use when passing through a known work zone between those stations.

D. Requirements of DRPT Representatives

DRPT staff members and designated contractors may perform independent observations of operations, maintenance work, and facility conditions at any time from public areas without being escorted by HRT personnel. Inspections taking place from public areas, such as onboard trains, in stations, or from the street, will not be announced to the personnel performing the operations or maintenance being observed. In such situations, DRPT representatives will not foul any track at any time. DRPT must coordinate with HRT to schedule an escort if specific inspections will require access to the right-of-way. DRPT does not need to coordinate with HRT in advance for inspections (particularly unannounced inspections) taking place in a private facility, such as a maintenance facility; however, HRT will notify on-site management upon arrival. DRPT representatives will abide by all HRT safety rules and regulations while on HRT property, including roadway worker protection requirements.

During inspections, DRPT representatives will **not**:

- Directly inform any HRT employee directly of a potential rule violation, unless immediate intervention is the only way to prevent injury or death.
- Instruct or supervise any operations employee on rule compliance or job performance. Suggestions may be directly offered to maintenance personnel conducting work and later relayed to management.
- Discuss the results of observations with patrons, other HRT employees, or the media.

If a DRPT representative witnesses a major operations rule violation that could affect the immediate safety or security of the Tide but does not warrant personal intervention as described above (e.g., a train operator using a cell phone), the DRPT representative should immediately call the modal Operations Control Center, **757-222-6063**, and provide the controller with a train number, location, and complete description of the observation. It is not the role of DRPT to interdict an employee rule violation.

E. Reports and Corrective Actions

For some inspections, DRPT will hold an informal debriefing with on-site management present at the end of the session to cover results and recommendations. For other inspections, such as routine observations of operations and station conditions, no debriefing will take place. In all cases, results will be described in an inspection report.

DRPT will publish the inspection report within 15 days after conclusion of the inspection activities. Each report will contain a brief description of each activity performed and the associated methodology. For each inspection, the report will contain a description of any violations, potential hazards, deficiencies, and/or areas for improvement. DRPT will send the report to HRT safety or security management and the departmental directors responsible for the functions inspected. Following report publication, DRPT strongly encourages HRT to respond with actions taken to correct any identified safety or security concerns. DRPT also encourages HRT to develop, propose to DRPT, and implement CAPs in response to the identified concerns. Responses or CAPs will only be required if noted in the inspection report; in such cases, a deadline for response or CAP proposal will be specified. If DRPT does not require responses or CAPs, it may follow up on the corresponding deficiencies during a future inspection.