

## Provincial Railway Guides

Section:

**ADMINISTRATION**

Subject:

**RAILWAY EMPLOYEE QUALIFICATION  
AND MEDICAL FITNESS FOR DUTY**

It is the responsibility of all provincially-regulated railway operators to ensure all of their employees in safety critical positions are qualified and fit to safely carry out their job duties. This guide is intended to set out the minimum requirements for ensuring ongoing fitness of employees working in safety critical positions for provincially-regulated railway operators. It is expected that all provincially-regulated railways will adhere to this guideline.

### INTRODUCTION

*The Railway Act* authorizes the Minister to require provincial railways to submit a Safety Management Plan (SMP) in a form and with contents acceptable to the Minister.

As part of a railway's SMP, it is a railway operator's responsibility to develop a plan that ensures all of their employees in safety critical positions are qualified, medically fit, able to carry out their duties and do not have a medical condition that could compromise safe railway operations.

### DEFINITION OF SAFETY CRITICAL POSITIONS

Because of variation in specific job titles and employee duties, the Province requires each railway to file a list of safety critical positions as part of the railway's overall safety management plan. As a guideline, the provincial railways should adopt the Railway Association of Canada's (RAC) suggested list of typical occupations and job duties that would normally be considered Safety Critical Positions as noted and referenced in the RAC Canadian Railway Medical Rules Handbook.

The RAC occupation list would define an employee as being in a safety critical position if their job duties include any of the following:

- Locomotive Engineer
- Conductor
- Assistant Conductor (Brakeman)
- Yard Foreman
- Rail Traffic Controller (Train Dispatcher)
- Operators of Specialized Equipment operating as trains
- Assistant Superintendent (Trainmaster)
- Superintendent
- Assistant Chief Rail Traffic Controller
- Chief Rail Traffic Controller

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### **SAFETY CRITICAL POSITION QUALIFICATIONS**

It is recommended that all employees in safety critical positions or employees that are directly involved in the movement and operation of railway equipment receive training and have previous experience in the practical application of the following rules which may be applicable to their specific job:

- Locomotive Operations, Train Handling, and Car Switching & Securement
- Core Railway Safety Rules
- Canadian Rail Operating Rules
- Railway Freight and Passenger Train Brake Inspection and Safety Rules
- Railway Locomotive Inspection and Safety Rules
- Railway Freight Car Inspection and Safety Rules
- *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Regulations* (if applicable)
- Passenger Handling Safety Rules (if applicable)
- Railway Passenger Car Inspection and Safety Rules (if applicable)

As a minimum, it is required that railways develop qualification, training and certification plans and policies for locomotive engineers/operators, and conductors that are consistent with and comply with the *Railway Employee Qualification Standards Regulations*.

### **RAILWAY MAINTENANCE SUPERVISORS**

It is recommended that employees not directly involved in the movement of rail equipment, but who are otherwise designated as being responsible for inspection of, and supervising the maintenance of railway infrastructure receive training and have previous experience and knowledge of the practical application of the following subjects:

- Canadian Railway Operating Rules
- Core Safety Rules
- Track Inspection and Maintenance
- Saskatchewan Track Safety Standards

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**ALL OTHER  
RAILWAY  
EMPLOYEES**

It is recommended that all other railway employees that do not fill safety critical positions but do operate rail equipment or supervise maintenance of railway infrastructure receive training in core safety rules and railway operations as a minimum.

**PERIODIC  
MEDICAL  
ASSESSMENT**

Railway employees working in Safety Critical Positions should not carry out their duties if they have a medical condition that will impair their performance and could result in a significant incident affecting the health and safety of employees, the public, property or the environment.

It is the responsibility of each provincial railway to develop, as part of their SMP, a company policy and/or plan that is appropriate for their specific company which works to ensure their employees are adequately fit and able to conduct their specific job duties. The ultimate decision and responsibility of ensuring employees can safely conduct their job duties lies with both the railway management and employees.

Employees in safety critical positions shall go through periodic general medical assessments once every:

- 5 years for employees 18-45 years of age
- 3 years for employees 46-65 years of age
- 1 year for employees 66 years of age or older

To provide a reference or basis for the medical assessments, it is recommended that provincial railways and their employees' physicians utilize the Railway Association of Canada Railway Medical Rules Handbook as a relevant guide to developing their medical certification policy and for conducting periodic medical assessments. As an alternative, and as a minimum, it is also acceptable for provincial railway employees and their physicians to utilize the SGI Commercial Drivers Licence Medical Report in conducting medical assessments.

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### REFERENCED STANDARDS, RULES REGULATIONS AND LEGISLATION

The Saskatchewan Track Safety Standards (source: Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure)  
 Canadian Rail Operating Rules (CROR) (source: Transport Canada)  
 Canadian Railway Medical Rules Handbook (source: Railway Association of Canada)  
*Railway Employee Qualification Standards Regulations* (source: Transport Canada)  
 Work/Rest Rules For Railway Operating Employees (source: Transport Canada)  
 Railway Freight and Passenger Train Brake Inspection and Safety Rules (source: Transport Canada)  
 Railway Locomotive Inspection and Safety Rules (source: Transport Canada)  
 Railway Freight Car Inspection and Safety Rules (source: Transport Canada)  
*Transportation of Dangerous Goods Regulations* (source: Transport Canada)  
 Passenger Handling Safety Rules (source: Transport Canada)  
 Railway Passenger Car Inspection and Safety Rules (source: Transport Canada)  
 SGI Commercial Drivers Medical Report Form (source: SGI)  
*The Saskatchewan Employment Act* (source: Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety)

### CONTACT

For more information on the topics referenced in this guideline and additional information on medical assessments of railway employees, contact:

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