

ONRSR Fact Sheet

Interface Agreements – Information for Road Managers

September 2019

The Rail Safety National Law (RSNL) requires that road managers and rail infrastructure managers enter into interface agreements to manage the risks to safety at interfaces.

What is an interface agreement?

An interface agreement is a written agreement for managing the risks to safety at interfaces.

Interfaces include, but are not limited to, where a railway crosses a public or private road or footpath (including by a bridge, tunnel, overpass or underpass).

These agreements involve describing the roles and responsibilities of the parties involved.

Agreements may include multiple road and/or rail infrastructure managers and may cover multiple interfaces.

What is required to be included in an interface agreement?

The minimum requirements of an interface agreement are set out in section 105 of the RSNL and must include provisions for:

- > Implementing and maintaining measures to manage identified risks.
- > Evaluation and revision of those measures.
- > The roles and responsibilities of each party in relation to those measures.
- > How parties will communicate about and monitor compliance with their obligations under the agreement.
- > The process for review and revision of the agreement.

ONRSR has developed a template for interface

agreements which can be downloaded from www.onrsr.com.au.

Which road managers are involved?

Road managers of public roads *must* seek to enter into interface agreements with rail infrastructure managers to manage risks to safety arising from their road crossings.

Road managers of private roads are required to enter into interface agreements *if* the responsible rail infrastructure manager has determined that risks to safety must be managed in conjunction with the relevant road manager.

Maintenance responsibilities

As a guide, the road manager is usually responsible for maintaining:

- > the surface and pavement of roads and footpaths up to the road maintenance boundary
- > anything under or supporting a road or its surface or pavement up to the road maintenance boundary
- > any bridge, tunnel, causeway, road-ferry, ford or other work or structure forming part of a road system or supporting a road
- > any bridge or other work or structure located above, in or on a road
- > advance warning signage/road markings
- > advance active warning devices (if installed)
- > any traffic control devices, electricity equipment, emergency telephone systems or any other facilities in relation to the above
- > line of sight from road users to the rail corridor

The rail infrastructure manager is usually responsible for maintaining:

- > anything prescribed by the RSNL to be rail infrastructure (such as tracks and associated structures, signalling and communications systems, control systems, and data management systems)
- > active and passive level crossing control devices
- > pedestrian mazes
- > line of sight along the rail corridor
- > roads and pedestrian crossings over the track area and up to the road maintenance boundary

Road maintenance boundary

Road managers are expected to maintain the roadway, pedestrian crossings and relevant road infrastructure but not rail infrastructure (which includes railway tracks and associated railway track structures).

Hence, as a general rule, ONRSR's expectation is that unless there is an existing agreement or a legislated requirement in place, road managers are responsible for maintenance up to one metre from the outermost rails at level crossings.

Note: In some jurisdictions the maintenance boundary is prescribed by legislation unrelated to the RSNL. In Queensland and Tasmania, the prescribed boundary is 0.6m from the outer rail, and in South Australia, the legislated distance is one metre.

In Western Australia, maintenance boundaries are agreed in line with legislation and Main Roads WA Crossing Control Policy and Guidelines.

Register of interface agreements

Road and rail managers are required by the RSNL to maintain a register of interface agreements to

which they are a party, including arrangements determined by ONRSR under section 110 (if applicable).

ONRSR may give directions

If ONRSR is satisfied that a rail infrastructure manager or road manager is unreasonably refusing or failing to enter into an interface agreement, or is unreasonably delaying the negotiation of an agreement, ONRSR may give that party a written notice requiring them to enter into an agreement by a certain date.

Compliance with any direction or written notice issued by ONRSR is mandatory and failure to comply could incur penalties.

Relevant Legislation

Interface Agreements:

Sections 105-111 of the Rail Safety National Law

Maintenance Boundaries:

- > Tasmania: Rail Infrastructure Act 2007 Sections 36 and 37
- > Queensland: Transport Infrastructure Act 1994 Section 251
- > South Australia: Railways (Operations and Access) Act 1997 Section 13
- > Western Australia: Public Works Act 1902 Section 103

Further information

- > ONRSR website
- > Fact Sheet – Interface Agreements
- > Template interface agreement for rail or road crossings
- > Using the template interface agreement for rail or road crossings