Changes to Operational Signalling Competency Requirements

Queensland Rail signalling competencies in the Rail Industry Worker System

Queensland Rail has received feedback from industry, that the specific Queensland Rail signalling competencies in the Rail Industry Worker System need clarification. At the same time there are additional competencies needed to cover new technologies, such as ETCS. Queensland Rail has therefore undertaken a review of its Rail Industry Worker competency framework. The review is substantial and comprehensive but does not materially affect workers already in the system. Rather, it is a clarification of the rules already in place. The main changes are listed below.

1. **Separation of engineering streams from non-engineering**
   Many Queensland Rail signalling functions require a Bachelor of Engineering or similar qualification acceptable for professional membership of Engineers Australia. In several cases comparable work may be performed by experienced staff with alternative technical qualifications. The two sets of qualifications lead into different career pathways and have been separated into distinct competency streams. For example, Test Engineer versus Tester-in-Charge.
   In addition, all engineering services must be undertaken or directly supervised by a Registered Professional Engineer under the Registered Professional Engineers Act (Queensland). The RIW framework identifies services covered by this law.

2. **Separation of proficiency levels**
   Signalling competencies in general exist at three proficiency levels: (1) Novice; (2) Practitioner; (3) Expert. The earlier version of the framework was unclear about the differences in qualifications and experience needed, particularly between Levels 1 and 2. The new version describes qualifications and experience at all applicable levels, for all competencies. In particular, it details the experience and mentoring needed to progress from Level 1 to Level 2.

3. **Separation of trades qualifications**
   Queensland Rail recognises various trades and other qualifications 'less than degree'. These are Electrical Mechanic Licence, Railway Signalling Cert III and Cert IV, IRSE License, Diploma, Advanced Diploma, and AQF equivalents. The new version of the framework clarifies which qualifications and combinations thereof are needed for specific roles and proficiency levels.

4. **Show career development pathways**
   The changes described in the previous points means that an individual can see more clearly what they must achieve to progress in their career. Career development pathways have been mapped out in the Queensland Rail competency framework.

5. **Renaming of roles**
   A few role titles were inaccurate and have been renamed. For example, a Signal Technician Maintainer becomes a Signal Maintenance Electrician.

6. **Introduction of new roles for new technologies**
   ETCS signal design and testing requires specific skills. Competencies have been added to the framework to cover this.

Rail Industry Workers with an existing Queensland Rail competency may keep working and will receive a new, equivalent competency in due course.

Rail Industry Workers holding a Signalling and Operational Systems role/s where a lower-level competency has been removed or a new assessment proficiency has been added will have 6 months to meet the new requirement before the role shown as invalid in the system. The 6-month grace period is to 30 June 2024.