

Capability & Competence in Sentinel

Formal Reviews in recent months have identified that Assured Providers are relying on their trainer/assessor capabilities list on Sentinel in isolation when planning delivery of courses and assessments. The two lists displayed on Sentinel are **not linked**.

Trainer/Assessors must hold current and **valid competence and capability** to be able to deliver an event.

All Assured Providers must regularly check **competence and capability**, when assigning trainer/assessors to the delivery of courses and assessments in order to ensure that the Assured Individual is both currently competent and has been awarded capability on Sentinel.

Checks also need to be made to make sure that the Assured Provider has been awarded the capability on Sentinel before an event is delivered under their Assurance.

On-line Exams after completing Initial training

Formal Reviews in recent months have identified that where Assured Trainer/Assessors complete initial training, Assured trainer/assessors are then not completing trainer exams or interim assessments. This results in their competence in Sentinel becoming **invalid**.

When an Assured trainer/assessor has attended initial training, their competence automatically reverts to operational competence cycle (i.e. 2, 3, 4 or 5 years). On-line exams are **mandatory** for all Assured Trainer/Assessor.

In this **exceptional** instance, the status of the Assured Trainer/Assessor in Sentinel must be reverted to operational in order to undertake the required number of operational shifts relevant to the competence and successfully complete any required post-mentoring assessments.

The on-line exam must then be taken before the operational 9-15-month interim assessment window has closed

Successfully completing the on-line exam will then reset their competence to the required 12-month duration for trainer/assessor and the timing of the annual on-line exam moved to the date that they were completed, which may be different from the time that the Assured Trainer/Assessor is used to.

All Assured Providers should check their competence management systems and make sure that all trainer/assessors and competence administrators understand this process.

Any Assured Provider who has any concern regarding this should contact NSAR for guidance as instances of Assured Trainer/Assessors not undertaking their annual trainer exams could be subject of Formal Review.

Appendix 2 & upskill evidence changes

The Appendix 2 has been re-published and notified through Skills Backbone alerts. The form is now a Signature Declaration Form as the remainder of the 'Appendix 2' has been automated within Skills Backbone software.

Evidence requirements for applications has been increased for upskilling. Assured Providers must upload the assessments completed and/or training register as applicable.

The NSAR QA Manager will then verify assessment documentation and feedback any findings within the Freshdesk ticket as an additional support service and part of approving the application.

The Evidence requirements are clearly defined in Skills Backbone at the upload screen and therefore please ensure that all evidence listed is provided to prevent delay to the processing of your application.

Freshdesk **cannot** be used to submit applications for movements, upskilling or deactivations. The Skills Backbone user guide clearly defines the process required. Submissions directly to Freshdesk **will not** be processed.

Events Calendar locations and times

NSAR continues to note **inadequate** information provided in the events calendar.

All Assured Providers are reminded of the mandated timescales to upload events to the Events Calendar:

- No later than 16:00 on 25th of each month for the following months delivery plan
- No later than 16:00 on a Friday for the week coming
- Immediately upon confirming any urgent delivery during the current week

NSAR requires this information to support unannounced observations and visits. In order to do this; times, dates, trainer names and location addresses must be detailed in full, accurate and current.

Any Assured Providers repeatedly found to not be uploading to the calendar in line with these requirements may be sanctioned.

Freshdesk Tickets

Increasing numbers of Freshdesk tickets are raised with the 'department' as *Skills ID, Standards* or left blank. All Assured Provider queries, including Skills Backbone queries, must be raised as '**QA**'.

Please ensure that your call is logged for the correct department. If calls are not logged to the QA Department there may be a delay to your query finding the QA Team.

Approved Site List

The Approved Site List is now online within Skills Backbone and is available to all Assured Providers by logging in to Skills Backbone. If an Assured Provider is not named as a provider approved for a site already in Skills Backbone, then this **must** be requested and approved before any training is delivered.

Any courses delivered at sites by an Assured Provider that are not listed in Skills Backbone as approved will be referred to the Formal Review Team and may be considered to be delivery of training on an unapproved site.

Assured Providers are advised that Formal Reviews of this nature impact individuals trained/assessed as their awarded competence may be removed.

Formal Review email address

NSAR now has a dedicated email address to report concerns and communications relating to RTAS Formal Reviews.

If any Assured Provider, Trainer and/or Assessor notice or are informed of activity which they believe is potentially in breach of the RTAS Rules and/or Network Rail relevant standards then please report it to NSAR at FormalReview@nsar.co.uk. A member of the Formal Review Team will then contact you to undertake initial fact-finding activities.

Electronic Logbook vs paper logbook

NSAR has received comments on the format of the Electronic Logbook in Sentinel and how it impacts the use of paper logbooks. The below FAQ has been reviewed and confirmed by Network Rail as still current and accurate. The link to the full Q&A publication is [Sentinel Site Access Q&A session](#)

Question 8

Q: Can recording use of competence in the Sentinel mobile app replace the use of the paper logbook?

A: Competences can be recorded by a card checker, via the app, but it is not mandatory to be done this way. When a card checker records use of competence in the mobile app then it is stored as an electronic copy in the individual's [MySentinel account](#), which can be used as an alternative to their paper logbook. Please note the mobile app can only record Sentinel competences and it does not replace any other sections of the paper logbook.

Trainers / assessors determining if an individual is eligible for training can check one or the other or both to make sure that they have seen all records. It may be possible that workers will use one or the other in between training / assessment and therefore to gain the full picture then both would need to be checked.

Competences recorded in the Sentinel mobile app do not have to be duplicated in the paper logbook.

Communications and Skills Backbone System

Assured Providers will have noted that they have received communications within Skills Backbone including this Briefing note. Please be aware that communications will be made in the new Skills Backbone and/or Freshdesk. The reading of these notifications are recorded within Skills Backbone so NSAR is aware that communications issued through the system have reached the intended users.

A Do Not Reply header has been added to the accreditationadmin@nsar.co.uk email account to support movement of all communications to the software platforms that have been implemented.

PTS Initial Track Walk Duration

All Assured Providers are reminded that PTS Initial track walk durations are clearly recorded within the Network Rail mandated lesson plan as **90 minutes** with no more than 6 delegates.

Any activities of the practical assessment that take place on training layouts are **in addition to the 90 minutes** mandated in the lesson plan.

Additionally, the track walk must take place 'on or near the line'. Rule Book Handbook 1 defines 'on or near the line' as:

'On or near the line

You are on or near the line (shown orange in diagram HB1.1) if you are:

- *within 3 metres (10 feet) of a line and there is no permanent fence or structure between you and the line*
- *on the line itself.*

You are not on or near the line if you are on a station platform unless you are carrying out engineering or technical work within 1.25 metres (4 feet) of the platform edge.'

All Providers are therefore reminded that, in line with the Rule Book, the use of train station platforms only for a Track Visit, is in contravention of the Rule Book.

OTP Core assessment

All Assured Providers are advised that OTP Core Assessments can take place as desktop assessment events where OTP Core is being reassessed stand alone. Where additional competences are being assessed, the surveillance form is required to evidence competence of delegates for all competences being assessed.

CPD Dispensations

The 2018-2019 CPD year closed on 30th June 2019. CPD dispensations awarded for the 2018-2019 CPD year have now **expired**.

The 2019-2020 CPD year started on 1st July 2019 and CPD required hours for all Assured Trainer/Assessors has reverted to 30 hours. In order to amend the required hours for any Assured Trainer/Assessor for the 2019-2020 CPD year, a new dispensation request must be submitted again in writing to Freshdesk.

And Finally

Forthcoming NSAR Events are detailed on our website [QA Workshops & Forums 2019 – National Skills Academy for Rail](#). Please don't miss your opportunity to catch up with NSAR work and network with your peers

Any Further queries

For any QA queries or to contact your QA Manager please raise a Freshdesk Ticket in the normal way <https://nsar.freshdesk.com/a/dashboard/default>